

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY 9TH NOVEMBER, 2020

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Kyle (Chairperson); and
Councillors M. Kelly and
Smyth.

External Members: Mrs. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mr. J. Currie, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Miss. G. Duggan, Belfast City Centre Management;
Mr. S. Hamilton, Chief Executive, of the Belfast Chamber
of Trade and Commerce;
Mrs. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
Ms. J. Irwin, Community Relations Council;
Superintendent. K. Moore, PSNI;
Mr. M. McBride, Education Authority;
Mr. M. McGinley, Good Relations, The Executive Office; and
Ms. Ann Marie White, British Red Cross.

In attendance: Mr. S. Lavery, Interim Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;
Ms. D. McKinney, Programme Manager;
Ms. L. Dolan, Good Relations Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillor Magennis and
Mrs. O. Barron, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

Minutes

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

Declarations of Interest

Mrs. B. Arthurs declared an interest in item 3, namely, Peace IV Updates, in that she
is an employee of the Forward South Partnership, which acts as the delivery agent for one of
the Peace IV projects.

Schedule of Meetings 2021

The Partnership approved the following schedule of meetings for 2021 and agreed that
it should continue to meet at 1.30 p.m.:

- Monday, 11th January;
- Monday, 8th February;

- Monday, 8th March;
- Monday, 12th April;
- Monday, 10th May;
- Monday, 7th June;
- Monday, 9th August;
- Monday, 6th September;
- Monday, 11th October;
- Monday, 8th November; and
- Monday, 6th December.

Presentations by Projects funded under Shared and Safe Community

The Partnership was reminded that, at its last meeting, it had agreed to receive presentations from representatives from the following organisations: East Belfast Community Development Agency, the Consortium working on the Refugee and Asylum Seekers Projects and Forward South Partnership to hear more about the invaluable work of these organisations and to help the Partnership understand the impact of the Covid pandemic on BAME communities. Accordingly they were welcomed to the meeting and presented in regard to their work over the pandemic.

East Belfast Community Development Agency – Mr. J. Currie and Ms. A. Lojek

Ms. Lojek commence by providing an overview of the East Belfast Community Development Agency which included its mission and aims for the future. She explained that East Belfast had experienced a change in demographics and was now a very diverse area to live but whilst some ethnic groups had integrated well, others needed support and assistance. She detailed the many challenges that faced newcomers and highlighted that there was a new wave of Romanians, refugees and asylum seekers that all required support. In addition to this, she outlined that the existing local community also needed support as unfortunately there was lots of fear and cultural misunderstandings coupled with the changes that Brexit might bring.

The representative specifically referred to the Covid-19 support that had been implemented and detailed the range of community support that had been available during the pandemic, this included the East Belfast helpline which closed on 3rd July, online workshops and Hug in a Box parcels for those living with dementia. She referred to the signposting on the EBCDA website in respect of providing details regarding local community support and also detailing the specific help and assistance available in East Belfast in response to the pandemic. More information in respect of this was available on the EBCDA website [here](#)

Covid 19 Response for the Refugee and Asylum Community - Ms. D. Wright and Mr. R. Doherty

Ms. Wright, commenced by explaining that the Covid-19 Response for the Refugee and Asylum Community was a Partnership that had been established to ensure a food response during the Covid-19 pandemic. She advised that Belfast Roundtable was part of the Partnership along with Belfast Homeplus, NICRAS, Embrace, South Belfast Foodbank and Storehouse. It was part of a bigger partnership under the NI Refugee and Asylum Forum and aimed to ensure that vulnerable people's needs were met and not duplicated.

She detailed that help in the form of both funding and the provision of food parcels had been provided by the following organisations:

- Department for Communities;
- Belfast City Council;
- Minority Ethnic Development Fund;
- The Executive Office;
- Community Foundation NI;
- National Lottery; and
- Migration Exchange

The support from the various organisations had been invaluable but she explained that it had required a central point of contact to coordinate and ensure that the support was delivered to those in need, hence the formation of the response team.

Mr. R. Doherty from Homeplus then addressed the Partnership to outline some of the work undertaken. He advised that an asylum seeker had £37.00 a week to live off. At the start of the Covid-19 outbreak many of the existing support mechanisms for refugees and asylum seekers had been closed down due to social distancing measures. At this stage, with the use of volunteers and staff, the team had aimed to ensure that these vulnerable people had received not only received culturally appropriate food parcels but also support for loneliness and appropriate advice that was given via a manned telephone helpline.

The Partnership noted that support had been provided to 184 single asylum seekers, 171 families and also to 100 families who were refugees.

Forward South Partnership – Mrs. B. Arthurs and Ms. M. Vartejanu

Mrs. B. Arthurs advised that the Forward South Partnership (FSP) had also been working with the Covid-19 Response for the Refugee and Asylum Community and she commended the work had been undertaken with collaborative working.

Ms. M. Vartejanu advised that the FSB had been invited by Belfast City Council and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to administer and manage a citywide Covid-19 helpline which would enable Roma families to access appropriate support services in their own language, based on the need of the Roma Community. The helpline had been active from 22nd April and would remain operational until 31st December.

The Partnership was advised that the aim of the helpline was to ensure, through collaborative working with key stakeholders, that relevant advice was given to the Roma community during what was a critical time. She detailed that the project operated remotely by telephone 25 hours per week, Monday – Friday. It either offered free advice or signposted individuals in respect of food and supplies (nappies, milk vouchers and toiletries), housing matters, benefits and immigration advice.

The initiative had been hugely successful with 800 people having used the service up to 1st November, support had been provided in their own language and almost 150 users had returned to avail of the service each month. In addition, the service noted and identified trends and gaps that existed and tried to bridge these gaps accordingly.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Partnership, thanked the various representatives for their hard work and commitment during the pandemic and for the invaluable support and

assistance that they had provided to people within the BAME Communities within the Belfast City Council area.

Several of the presenters asked that their thanks be recorded to the Council for the financial and practical support that their organisations had received which had greatly assisted them in progressing their work stream.

The Partnership discussed the level of deprivation that continued to plague many of these communities and specifically referred to the fact that digital poverty had been extremely prevalent over the pandemic which had often prevented people from accessing up to date information.

The Partnership thanked the representatives for their informative presentations at which point they left the meeting. The Democratic Services Officer undertook to circulate the PowerPoint presentations and the video link to the Members of the Shared City Partnership.

Peace IV Updates

Update on Peace IV Secretariat

The Partnership considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress report in respect of the Secretariat activity associated with the implementation of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.**

2.0 Recommendations

The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources committee that they note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Covid 19 Impact

The tighter government restrictions announced on 14 October significantly impacted planned delivery of project activity and the PEACE IV workplan. Where possible activity was moved online or rescheduled, details are reflected in the Thematic Update reports.

It should be noted that online activity has resulted in lower participant numbers due to barriers including access to equipment, lower attention span, ability to complete work in own home and privacy issues.

3.2 Project Modifications

The PEACE IV team continues to be in close contact with all delivery partners to determine the impact on project delivery and consider relevant project modifications. A separate report on Covid 19 Impacts and Project Modifications has been compiled for members to consider.

In light of changing circumstances full budgetary review and financial modelling is being progressed to ensure budget availability for any extension request.

3.3 Underspend proposals

SEUPB has confirmed approval for the St Comgalls proposal submitted to utilise the BPR underspend. Steps to mobilise the project via a procurement approach is progressing, it is anticipated that the tender call will open mid November 20 with appointment of a contractor in January 21.

Liaison with SEUPB regarding the necessary budget adjustments on eMS regarding the underspend is progressing.

3.4 Programme Workplan

A final virtual tour of City Cemetery took place on 19 October with over 20 attendees. Due to tighter government restrictions, specifically guidance on non essential travel, the drive in cinema planned for 7 November has been postponed. A call for storytellers as part of the virtual 10x9 event on Peace has been issued. The 10x9 event is scheduled for 25 November and invitations will be issued to members in due course.

3.5 Verification and Audit

An internal audit of the PEACE IV Local Action plan is to commence in December with preliminary information to be submitted to AGRS in November 20.

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

All PEACE IV costs are recoverable from the funding body subject to eligibility.

SEUPB has fully reimbursed all claimed expenditure up to and including Claim 23 (May-Aug 20) totaling £2,942,180.68
The breakdown across themes is as follows:

- CYP: £935,588.49
- BPR: £1,086,458.99
- SSS: £920,133.20

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The draft plan has been equality screened and discussed at the Equality Consultative Forum on 13 May 2015.”

The Partnership agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to note the information contained within the report.

Modification Paper

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with an update on the current impact of the COVID 19 crisis on the PEACE IV Programme, outline activity and actions to date and highlight the key modifications required to progress implementation of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report and consider the modifications as outlined subject to approval by SEUPB.

- To submit a request to SEUPB to:
 - Reduce the contact hours for all projects as outlined in the modifications in Appendix I, with no impact on the allocated budget.
 - Extend the Letters of Offer for all themes to 31 December 2022 with an extended delivery timeframe for project activity to September 2022. This request is subject to a full budgetary review. The timeframe will be re-assessed in 6 months.
 - Reduce participant numbers as outlined and to delegate authority to Good Relations Manager and PEACE IV Manager to agree appropriate targets and proportionate budget amendments for projects
 - Realign KPIs and budgets in line with modifications requested.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Implementation of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan continues to be adversely impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic and government restrictions. As such the Council will face significant pressures on the revenue and capital programmes under PEACE IV to ensure Council can meet its contractual obligations. SEUPB has indicated that an extended delivery timeframe will be approved they have advised there will not be any additional funding.

3.2 The PEACE IV team and Delivery Partners have worked diligently throughout the pandemic to progress project activity, engage community groups and recruit participants using alternative approaches.

- 3.3 Modifications to project activity have been implemented over the last 7 months, including moving to online activity, smaller group sizes, reduced contact hours and amended activity, the ongoing government restrictions are significantly impeding recovery and project progress.
- 3.4 Project activity has gradually been recommencing, however the recent restrictions have resulted in the mitigations to progress previously postponed activity being suspended or delayed further. Most face to face community activity has either being replaced with online activity or delayed, in addition camp style / residential activity being deferred.
- 3.5 Where possible delivery partners continue to implement projects:
- project activity via online platforms, although limited
 - engagement / mentoring with some participants on a 1-1 basis is ongoing at a project level
 - administrative activities such as procurement is proceeding
- 3.6 However, it should be noted that participation levels in projects / sessions are significantly reduced. By way of example, participant levels for one project reduced from 80 to 13 when online delivery was implemented. Lack of equipment, low attention span, voluntary participation and privacy have been highlighted as rationales for these reduced levels. In addition, many community groups / organisation have suspended their activities and venues, normally used for community activity, remain closed.
- 3.7 Whilst SEUPB acknowledges that Council is 'in the eye of the storm' in delivering PEACE IV activity during this challenging time, modifications have been relatively limited and requests to reduce participant targets, particularly for the Children & Young People theme have been refused.
- 3.8 The Council's current Letters of Offer for all themes are to 30 June 2022 and PEACE IV staff contracts are in place to 31 December 2021.
- 4.0 **Project Impacts / Modifications**
- 4.1 Project delivery has been closely monitored on a monthly basis through contract management meetings, online activity reports and risk trackers as well as monthly thematic meetings with SEUPB.
- 4.2 Measures to enable social distancing such as larger buses, larger venues, smaller group sizes and more 1-1 engagement and facilitation has increased costs for delivery partners.
- 4.3 Following the recent government restrictions and working on the basis that some level of restrictions will remain in place for the next

6 months, delivery partners have submitted project modifications for consideration, as outlined in Appendix I.

- 4.4 The proposed modifications are submitted based on the activity and results that can realistically be achieved over the next 6-9 months (taking into account Government restrictions) and amendments required to enable the achievement of results as close to the original project as possible.
- 4.5 Given the broad scope of projects and differing stages in delivery, project modifications need to be considered on a case by case basis.
- 4.6 PEACE IV delivery agents are making every effort to engage and recruit participants, however as payment for several projects is based on deliverables, some partners are expending huge efforts and yet may not get fully reimbursed.
- 4.7 All delivery partners have provided a commitment to deliver as close to the contractual obligations as possible.
- 4.8 However it should be noted that several partners have advised they do not have the resources to continue delivery beyond the current contract period, principally 31 December 2021. As such, there will be no opportunity to make up the shortfall in targets incurred during 2020.
- 4.9 Other risks to implementation of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan, due to Covid 19 and the overstretched community infrastructure are:
 - Not achieving participation targets / results
 - Increased costs of delivery
 - Withdrawal by delivery agents
 - Potential ineligible spend

As government restrictions continue to change, the successful delivery of the programme remains indeterminate in a very challenging and the ever changing environment.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The proposed modifications are broad ranging and have been considered by the Thematic Project Managers and the PEACE IV secretariat taking into account the current PEACE IV Output Indicator Guidance and modifications approved to date.
- 5.2 On this basis it is recommended that Council submit a request to SEUPB to:
 - Reduce the contact hours for all projects as outlined in the modifications in Appendix I, with no impact on the allocated budget

- **Extend the Letters of Offer for all themes to 31 December 2022 with an extended delivery timeframe for project activity to September 2022. This request is subject to a full budgetary review. The timeframe and staff contracts will be re-assessed in 6 months.**
- **Reduce participant numbers as outlined and to delegate authority to Good Relations Manager and PEACE IV Manager to agree appropriate targets and proportionate budget amendments**
- **Realign KPI and budgets in line with modifications requested.”**

The Programme Manager advised the Members that some of the modifications requested were outside of the normal tolerances adopted by SEUPB, however, it should be noted that the tolerances had not been amended to reflect the impact of Covid-19.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it adopt the recommendations.

Update on Peace IV – Children and Young People (CYP) Update

The Partnership was provided with an update on the progress to date in respect of the CYP theme, under the Peace IV Local Action Plan.

The Members were advised that under CYP1- Tech connects, the recruitment for delivery of Tech Camps by Giga Training through Digital Arts Academy during Halloween had taken place. Contingency plans to move the programme online had been required which resulted in lower levels of participation. They noted that engagement with schools had also progressed and that the Belfast Metropolitan College had commenced recruitment for an online Insight Programme which was scheduled to commence in early November.

In respect of CYP 2- Playing our Part in the City, the Members were advised that, as a result of Covid 19, the realignment of milestones and extension for Year 3 to March 2021 had been agreed. In addition, there had been a condensed delivery format of a week-long camp during Halloween which had been approved by the SEUPB. Recruitment was also continuing and the Members noted that new parents had engaged with the project.

Under CYP 3 - On the right track- The Members were advised that, unfortunately, the Government and Sporting Body restrictions had significantly impacted upon delivery. They noted that the realignment of milestones/payment schedule for the OCN element delivered by ACN had been approved by the SEUPB. On a positive note, a meet and greet had taken place with Mr. C. Frampton and Mr. P Barnes on 5th October.

The Officer reported that retendering for venues activity had closed on 9th October with one submission being received for Lot 7 County Dublin. No bids had been received for Lot 5 County Leitrim and Lot 6 County Navan. Subsequently, negotiated procedures/direct awards were under consideration.

With regard to the Personal Change element, the Partnership was informed that due to small participant numbers, Extern had continued to engage participants and delivery activity included educational visits, day activities and planning for residentials was underway.

Under CYP4- Young advocates, the Members were informed that discussions with community groups to recruit cohort 4 had been ongoing, with anticipated delivery via bubbles and blended learning. Subject to the level of recruitment, an option to pause the project activity was under consideration.

The Members were advised that under CYP 5-NIHE Local Area Network partner delivery, procurement for the delivery of activities was being prioritised. Engagement was ongoing, however, club closures, restrictions within Education Authority premises and overall restricted activity as a result of the pandemic was having a knock-on impact upon delivery and it was likely that an extension beyond December 2021 would be required.

The Partnership noted the update.

Update on SSS theme

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress report in respect of the Shared Spaces and Services (SSS) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

Implementation of both the Shared Space & Services (SSS) capital and programming element is continuing on a phased basis with current work focused on Springfield Dam. Monthly management meetings to monitor the level of risk, progress and status of the project are ongoing – Appendix I Risk Tracker and Appendix II RAG report refers.

3.2 A very successful media campaign, including a video, to launch Forth Meadow Community Greenway took place on 20 October 2020 with extensive coverage on social media including BBC NI, Newsletter online, Belfast Live, Belfast Times, U105, MSN online. Newspaper coverage also included Daily Mirror, Newsletter and Shankill Mirror. A publication incorporating a map and details of the key sections is currently being developed and will be circulated to key stakeholders at the end of November. Appendix V refers.

Capital Works – Forth Meadow Community Greenway

3.3 Springfield Dam

Works are nearing completion however due to material shortages, the handover date has been delayed until the end of November 2020.

3.4 A closed call for applications for support under the Social Value Clause in the Springfield Dam contract was issued to 10 voluntary community organisations. 3 applications were received and assessed. Awards to two organisations to provide outreach work to address anti social behaviour have been approved and are progressing. The third application failed on eligibility. Support under the Social Value Clause will be for the period October 2020 to January 2021.

3.5 **PEACE IV Network Scheme – Capital Works**

The assessment process to appoint a contractor under a single party framework is now at the final stages and approvals from SEUPB will then be progressed. The proposed schedule for works is to commence with Section 1 Glencairn to Ballygomartin and then to Section 3 Springfield Road and Falls Park in 2021.

3.6 **Programming**

Implementation of programming aspects has progressed where possible.

3.7 **Pilot Youth Civic Education Project**

Final attendance records and evaluation have been submitted and the final payment is being processed, after which the project can then be closed.

3.8 **Lanark Way Fitness Project**

Clonard Neighbourhood Development Partnership, as project lead, have submitted the required attendance records and attitudinal surveys. A project evaluation is due before final payment can be processed and the project can be closed.

3.9 **Dialogue & Engagement Project**

A Webinar event to share the results of the recent online survey took place on 21 October. Participants had further opportunity to contribute to key questions on the use and management of the Greenway. 251 people responded to the online survey, 81% (204 people) identifying as local residents and 83% (209 people) saying that local residents should be involved in the management of the Greenway. Further details on the survey results on the use and management of the Greenway are outlined in Appendix III and IV. With ongoing restrictions around COVID 19, the final stage of the project is to be agreed along with completion of the final report/action plan and it is proposed that MDL is invited to the next meeting of the SCP to present the final report.

3.10 Shared History, Heritage and Identity Content / Narratives for Shared Space

Following a negotiated tender approach, approved by SEUPB, a contract award to a consortium of Mediation NI and the Osborne Partnership is progressing.

3.11 Shared Space Volunteer Training

Approval is being progressed with SEUPB to award contracts to Sustrans for the delivery of cycle and walking lead training.

Feedback from interested parties on the Ambassadors, Heritage and Nature Guides is being sought in order to determine the next steps.

3.12 Springfield Dam activities

The ever changing government restrictions have impacted the development and implementation of an animation programme to mark the opening of the Dam and encourage community usage. Discussions are ongoing with Council's Parks and Community Services department, community organisations and external providers regarding potential programme activity

3.13 Financial and Resource Implications

PEACE IV costs are recoverable from SEUPB, as the funding body, subject to eligibility of expenditure. Discussions with the key stakeholders regarding wider community benefit and contributions to the project are being progressed and prioritised.

3.14 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The draft plan has been equality screened and discussed at the Equality Consultative Forum on 13 May 2015."

The Partnership agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to note the information contained within the report and agreed that MDL be invited to the next meeting of the Partnership to present its final report in respect of the management of the Greenway.

Update on Peace IV - Building Positive Relations

The Programme Manager provided the Partnership with an update on the progress to date in respect of the Building Positive Relations (BPR) under the theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan. She referred specifically to a number of projects including:

- BPR1-Cross Community Area Networks;
- BPR2- Creative Communities project;
- BPR3- Transform for Change Project;
- BPR4- Belfast and the World (BATW); and
- BPR5- Supporting Connected Communities.

As part of BPR1, the Programme Manager advised that all CCAN areas had been identified and approved and the project team had received positive responses from all key players within the CCAN areas in relation to participant recruitment. The ITT for the Good Relations Programme was anticipated to commence early 2021, subject to SEUPB consideration and approval prior to a public tender exercise. It was noted that the ITT for the Place Visioning Programme was currently under NIHE internal review.

Under BPR2, it was reported that the Arts/Heritage residency programme was anticipated to commence during November in the following areas: Woodvale/Ardoyne; Shankill/Clonard; Carlisle Circus; Divis/Lower Shankill; Football thematic cluster between Albert Foundry and St Malachy's Football Club.

The remaining 3 clusters had moved to a thematic basis, SEUPB approved, Inner East-East Belfast Women's groups; Colin/Dunmurry/Suffolk- LGBTQ+; Village/Broadway. Proposal had been submitted to the SEUPB seeking it to consider working with Cross community group of students from Malone Integrated College. It was anticipated that this programme would commence in Spring 2021.

Under BPR3, it was reported that 12 courses across 10 interface clusters had completed in year 1 with 128 participants verified as completed to date. Year 2 had commenced during mid-September with 110 currently registered in the following Cluster areas, Inner East/Short Strand; Lower Ormeau/Market; Falls/Shankill; Suffolk/Lenadoon; Upper Springfield Rd; Colin and North Belfast. The 7 identified Cluster areas in North Belfast had merged to create one large group due to the low uptake across all clusters. A second North Belfast Cluster was due to commence mid-November with 14 registered to date. The Partnership was advised that securing participation from Council staff and statutory sectors had increased, however, representation from political sectors had remained low which presented a continued challenge.

The Programme Manager reported that the delivery of collaborative project workshop, which was led by the Council, had been impacted by the pandemic. Workshops were currently underway in the Lower Oldpark/Manor Street; Falls/Shankill; Suffolk/Lenadoon; Crumlin rd/Ardoyne/Glenbryn. Efforts were ongoing to try and re-energise participation in Village/Westlink; Lower Ormeau/Market. Inner East/Short Strand's project (Kids Zone/Urban garden at this interface).

The Partnership noted that unfortunately the organisation of local community engagement events, citywide networking events and a cross border/UK study visit were all on hold due to the current government restrictions.

Under BPR4, it was reported that: Year 2 (2019) participant group (24 ppl) and Year 3 cohorts (Shankill Women's Centre Health and Wellbeing group (26ppl) and Ballynafeigh Community Development Association (14ppl), these were due to complete mid-November 2020. A third year 3 cohort were currently being sourced and it was anticipated that it would commence early 2021. Officers were hopeful that the organisation of two plays (commemorating Peace Day and Partition) would be able to be held during Spring 2021, this would be subject to the government guidelines in place at the time of the proposed events. The Partnership noted that the Project Co-Ordinator was currently liaising with TPM and BCC Good Relations staff in relation to centenary events in 2021.

The Partnership was advised that 38 participants had been successfully selected to participate on the EU trip to Belgium in late March. Council staff were currently finalising the arrangements and a pre-visit workshop had been scheduled to be held on the evening of

10th March in Belfast City Council. Again, these proposals would be subject to the Covid restrictions and government guidelines in place at this stage.

Under BPR5 – Supporting Connected Communities - LINC'S Projects, the officer advised that 34 core participants were currently active with 64 newly recruited participant's pre and during Covid -19. The delivery agent continued to engage with participants on a daily basis.

BPR5 – Traveller element of Supporting Connected Communities. The Programme Manager reminded the Partnership that this element of work was managed by the Council. She reported that a public recruitment exercise was currently underway for the recruitment of a Traveller Support Officer and it was hoped that the postholder would be in place before the end of 2020.

BPR5 – Roma elements of Supporting Connected Communities. The Partnership noted that assessment of the public tender, which had closed on 5th October, was currently underway.

Members welcomed the work that had progressed and stated that they recognised the difficulties that the current restrictions were having on the planned delivery of the projects. The Chair, on behalf of the Partnership, thanked the staff for their ongoing efforts and continued commitment to programme delivery.

Update on Good Relations Action Plan 2020/2021

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Council received a Letter of Offer from The Executive Office (TEO) towards the 20/21 District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) based on the action plan submitted to TEO in February 2020.

1.2 Subsequently, a draft Revised Good Relations Action Plan for 2020/21 was approved by the Council in August 2020 and was noted by the Partnership at its October meeting.

1.3 It was understood by Council and TEO that given the current environment, this would likely be the first of a series of revisions to the Belfast City Council Good Relations Action Plan in line with the direction of travel agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19 June 2020 and approved at Full Council on 1 July 2020. Further revisions to the plan will take in to account emerging community need as part of overall community recovery across Belfast and will be brought forward in due course in that context.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1

- Members are requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that a budget of up to 10k be set aside for a diversionary programme in North Belfast**

and that authority on spend on the programme be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services or his nominee.

3.0 Main report

Current Position

- 3.1 Council submits an annual Good Relations Action Plan for consideration by TEO in February of each year; TEO then issues a Letter of Offer based on identified need in each Council area and the level of resource available. A Letter of Offer was received for approximately £570,000 on 15th June 2020. This will provide a total allocation of approximately £740,000 for the action plan which required amendment to reflect the level of resource available.**
- 3.2 At the last meeting of the Partnership, Members endorsed the Council's approach to Community Provision Recovery and agreed that the budgets for Tranche 2 Good Relations Small Grants Scheme and St Patrick's Day be allocated to ongoing community provision recovery funding programme.**
- 3.3 Members were also advised of a number of projects which had been funded through the Plan which were developed in response to community need, assist in addressing social and economic recovery and meet the priorities under T:BUC..**

Diversionary Programme – North Belfast

- 3.4 The North Area Support Team has been engaging with a number of stakeholders across the area and incidents of anti-social behavior have been significant. These incidents have potential to raise community tensions in areas which are situated near interfaces or contested spaces. Support is being sought for a programme that will use a range of outdoor facilities to deliver activities and engagement involving sports coaching and workshops with young people who are at risk of becoming involved in ASB. This programme will be targeted towards young people from areas in north Belfast where there have been high levels of ongoing antisocial behavior such as Duncairn, Tigers Bay and New Lodge. This will include sports activities in football pitches and outdoor play areas owned by Belfast City Council and other sporting organizations as well as group work which will seek to build relationships and highlight the impacts and consequences of involvement in this type of behavior.**
- 3.5 In recent months, different areas in north Belfast have experienced sustained high levels of antisocial behavior. A range of statutory organizations and community partners are working together to try to address this issue and several summer programmes were delivered. The situation has been more challenging because of the current COVID 19 crisis which has impacted on the availability of centre based activities for young people as organizations seek to deliver services in line with changing government restrictions.**

- 3.6 There is a continued need to deliver services from November 20-March 21 to provide ongoing engagement opportunities. Given the restrictions on numbers who can engage in centre based activities, the provision of activity in more outdoor settings with fewer young people in each setting has been identified as an approach that will help to meet current gaps. This approach will seek to engage in or near where ASB activity is happening. Costs requested will be for facility hire, coaching/training and refreshments. A budget of up to £10,000 is requested to support this work across north Belfast. This will include a range of different areas in north which will allow the flexibility to deliver services in different areas as required.
- 3.7 In developing this programme, cognisance will be taken of the work being undertaken through the Education Authority, voluntary youth organisations and that supported through the DPCSPs to ensure there is no duplication.
- 3.8 This project fits within a number of TBUC priorities such as Children and Young People, Shared and Safe Communities and can be accommodated through Planned Intervention or the Interfaces Programme.

Financial & Resource Implications

This request can be accommodated within the existing budget.

Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs assessment

Screening and a rural needs assessment has taken place for the Good Relations Strategy. The councils' District Council Good Relations Action Plan is one element of this strategy."

In addition, the Good Relations Manager also advised the Partnership of the following matters:

Clean Space and Green Initiative – the officer sought permission to keep this in the budget for the forthcoming year, to a maximum of £5k.

Citywide Initiatives – the Partnership was advised that citywide festivals and events promoting good relations work would proceed online and she sought approval for a budget of £5k to be set aside to deliver this programme of work and that authority be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services or his nominee.

The Partnership was also asked to note that Blue Zebra had been appointed to undertake the Strategic Project listed under the BCC4 Civic Engagement and Learning Programme. In progressing to the recovery phase, this would capture the experience and learning from Phase 1 of the Council's response, in order to assist it in understanding how the learning could contribute to peacebuilding and in delivering appropriate and effective interventions moving forward as a City.

She concluded by advising that the Council would be running an online event to commemorate the 2021 Holocaust Memorial Day, further details would follow in due course.

Members of the Partnership recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that:

- a budget of up to £10k be set aside for a diversionary programme in North Belfast and a further budget of £5k for citywide initiatives aimed at promoting good relations work and to assist with the move to online delivery. Authority in regard to the funding for the programmes be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services or his nominee; and
- it agree a budget of £5k be set aside in relation to the Clean Space and Green Initiative.

Request to update Refugee Transition Document

The Good Relations Manager advised that it was proposed that the Refugee Transition Guide be updated. She advised that the Refugee Asylum Forum, in 2011, had previously identified an information gap relating to the provision of advice for people who claimed asylum and were subsequently granted refugee status. Once a refugee was given a positive decision by the Home Office to stay in Northern Ireland, they had 28 days to leave the supported accommodation which had been provided to them as an asylum seeker. After 28 days not only must they leave their supported accommodation but in addition the benefits they received as an asylum seeker stopped. It was recognised that this situation could leave many people in a very difficult situation and even destitute unless they received quick and appropriate advice.

In response to this gap, the Council had commissioned the Law Centre to develop a guide which included comprehensive information in respect of the following:

- **Becoming a refugee:** UK law and practice as it related to those granted refugee status, humanitarian protection, discretionary leave or indefinite leave to remain;
- **Finding somewhere to live:** Information on temporary and permanent housing options, rights at each stage and how to access them;
- **Working:** Information regarding permission to work and advice on preparing for and accessing employment;
- **Accessing benefits:** The rights, entitlements and welfare benefits people are entitled to once they are granted permission to stay, including an easy to follow checklist documenting what people are entitled to and how to access such entitlements;
- **Family Reunification:** Information and advice on applying for family reunification;
- **Settling into life in Belfast:** Cultural and factual information on aspects of Northern Irish life that would assist with integration in Belfast;
- **Useful contacts:** Description and directory of other services / sources of information, including online guides specific to people granted refugee status, humanitarian protection, discretionary leave or indefinite leave to remain; and
- **Personal actions:** A personal information section for actions to be taken by the user and his /her advisor.

The guide had been used by advice workers and refugees and it was recognised as a model of good practice by the Department of work and Pensions. It was widely used and disseminated and had helped support the integration and inclusion of Refugees.

The Partnership was advised that the guide had been updated in 2017 and reprinted, however, lately organisations supporting refugees had indicated that a further update and reprint was now overdue to take account of changes in Universal Credit and wider support services for Refugees. It was felt that given the digital exclusion encountered by many in the Refugee community that a printed version was necessary.

The Good Relations Manager explained that, based on the previous guide and costs for print and translation, that a budget of £15,000 would be required. The Officer advised that this could be incorporated into the existing DCGRP budget.

A Member welcomed the fact that the guide was to be updated and she reiterated what a valuable a tool it was, not only to the refugee community but also to support organisations. She suggested that due to the fluid situation as a result of both the Covid 19 pandemic and Brexit that a smaller print run be undertaken initially which would enable the guide to be updated. Whilst she noted that a print run was necessary for those without digital access, she felt that a greater emphasis needed to be put into incorporating updated information more regularly, particularly in relation to changes to the Universal Credit system and felt that any such changes could be incorporated into the online version. In addition, she highlighted that many of the support organisations could access the guide digitally.

Members of the Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it approve the update, reprint, translation and digital upload of the Refugee Guide along with the associated expenditure taking into account the Member's comments.

Motion - Racism Free Zone

The Partnership was advised that at the Council meeting on 1st October, the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Canavan and seconded by Councillor Garrett, had, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f) been referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for its consideration:

“That this Council recognises that racism is a scourge across this society. This Council further recognises the positive contribution made: to society by those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds; deplores the discrimination Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities face regularly; condemns racism in all its forms; and calls on this Council to work together with the sector; local BAME representative groups; schools and colleges; private businesses; and public enterprises to ensure that this Council area becomes a racism free zone.”

The Committee had considered and adopted the motion at its meeting on 23rd October and had agreed that a report on the issues raised within the motion be considered by the Shared City Partnership.

The Good Relations Manager advised that officers were still preparing the report and she asked the Members to note that it would be submitted to a future meeting of the Partnership for consideration and discussion.

In the absence of Councillor Magennis, who had been unable to attend the meeting, the Chairman relayed to the Partnership a statement which he had forwarded detailing his support for the motion.

The Partnership noted that a report in respect of the Motion would be submitted to a future meeting.

Chairperson