

**SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP**

**Appendix 1**

**MONDAY 8th FEBRUARY, 2021**

**MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP  
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Members present: Councillor Kyle (Chairperson);  
Alderman Rodgers; and  
Councillors Lyons, Magennis and O'Hara.

External Members: Mrs. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;  
Mr. J. Currie, Community and Voluntary Sector;  
Mrs. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;  
Ms. J. Irwin, Community Relations Council;  
Mr. M. McBride, Education Authority;  
Mr. I. McLaughlin, Community and Voluntary Sector; and  
Superintendent G. Pollock, PSNI.

In attendance: Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;  
Ms. D. McKinney, Programme Manager;  
Mrs. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

**Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillor M. Kelly, Mr. J. Donnelly, Miss G. Duggan and Mr. P. Mackel.

**Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 11th January, 2021 were taken as read and signed as correct.

**Declarations of Interest**

Mrs. B. Arthurs declared an interest in item 3 (d), namely, Peace IV Updates – update on BPR Theme in that she is an employee of the Forward South Partnership, which acts as the delivery agent for two of the Peace IV projects, and she left the meeting whilst the agenda item was being considered.

Mr. J. Currie declared an interest in item 4, namely, Update on Good Relations Plan 2020/21, in that he is an employee of the East Belfast Community Development Association, which received funding under the Good Relation Plan.

**Membership of Partnership**

The Chairperson welcomed Superintendent G. Pollock to his first meeting and on behalf of the Partnership asked that its thanks be conveyed to Superintendent K. McMillan for her contribution.

He also advised that Dr. Hanore and Mr. M. McGinley had resigned from the Partnership and expressed thanks to both of them for their participation and commitment.

The Good Relations Manager advised that nominees would be sought from the Interfaith Forum and The Executive Office to replace the vacant positions.

Noted.

### **Presentation on Interface Work from International Fund for Ireland - Peace Walls Project**

The Partnership was informed that Ms. S. Lorimer, Mr. S. Oliver, Mr. S. Corr, Ms. M. O'Prey and Ms. C. McMillan, representing the International Fund for Ireland - Peace Barriers Programme (PBP), were in attendance in order to provide an update on the IFI Survey Findings of November 2019 – Peace Barriers Project. This had involved working with residents living beside Belfast Peace Barriers.

The representative thanked the Chair for the opportunity to present the findings and commenced by providing an overview of the Programme Areas:

- Black Mountain Shared Space Project (BMSSP)  
UpperSpringfield/Moyard/Springhill/Highfield/Springmartin/  
Ballygomartin and wider area
- Duncairn Community Partnership (DCP)  
Lr Nth Belfast/ Duncairn/Limestone/New Lodge/Tiger's Bay
- Greater Whitewell Comm Surgery (GWCS)  
Shore Rd/Whitewell/ White City areas/Serpentine/Throne
- Imagine Project  
Lower Oldpark/ Cliftonville/ Cliftonpark Ave/Manor St areas
- TASCIT:  
Twaddell/Ardoyne/Upper Ardoyne/ Woodvale/Shankill Communities in  
Transition Programme

She advised that the respondents to the survey were residents from across twenty-one separate Super Output Areas (SOAs) and she then provided an overview of the breakdown of the demographics and area profiles of the respondents along with the findings.

The Partnership was advised that the PBP was seeking to assist communities to overcome and remove some of the most sensitive and complicated barriers to Peace, with engagement and encouraged dialogue they were trying to help grow support for change to barriers. She then provided an overview of some of the positive engagement work which had resulted in:

- a clear evidence of positive attitudinal change in both communities to barrier removal in all six areas;
- a growing support for immediate change to barriers, with evidence that both communities were open to greater change in the future;
- both communities expressing hope that Peace Barriers would not be an issue for future generations;

- an increased percentage of respondents stating that Barriers had no 'positives' with awareness that their retention had negative impacts at both a community and individual level;
- the increased engagement and building of trust between those living on either side of barriers was felt to be having a positive impact, with measurable change in interaction levels.

The Survey findings had indicated that attitudinal change towards peace barrier removal would be enhanced by longer-term regeneration initiatives offering a new 'normal' for residents by creating wider community benefits in place of the barriers, for example, Green Spaces or Parks that would be accessible to all. It was further noted that such a transformative change would be contingent on external resources and support being in place which would enable the physical changes to barriers to take place quickly, once community consent had been reached, and Belfast City Council's role in this, as one of the key stakeholders, was noted.

The Partnership then viewed photos which showed positive examples of barrier removal, including Serpentine Road (BCC-led project which was co-funded by DoJ 2019), Duncairn Gardens/Hillman Court (DoJ led project) and plans for the Regeneration/Removal at the BMSS/Finlay Site.

The Partnership noted the benefits of creating shared spaces and how the use of these spaces helped to build greater cross-community cohesion and confidence. The importance of engaging with the local community was highlighted, especially with individuals and communities that had not previously participated in community development or peace building activities. The representatives referred to the success of the TASCIT (Twaddell Ardoyne Shankill Communities in Transition) and the R-City youth project that had come together for the recent Christmas tree lighting event on the Crumlin Road, with the lights having been switched on by the Lord Mayor.

During discussion the Chairperson referred to the successful progress to date with many of the projects and stated that he would like to see these achievements better promoted to demonstrate that, with dialogue and effort, progress and change was achievable.

Several Members specifically referred to the success of the Black Mountain Shared Space Project and applauded the volume of work already done to progress this initiative. It was noted that there was more work to be done, particularly in relation to linking the area up through the Forth Meadow Community Greenway, the Members stated that they would be keen to see more community engagement with young people.

The representatives concluded their presentation by thanking the Good Relations Officer, Ms. M. Hand for her hard work and commitment to the work and also thanked the Partnership for the opportunity to present on its progress.

The Chairperson of the Partnership thanked the representatives for their detailed and informative presentation and they left the meeting.

The Good Relations Manager advised that the draft Good Relations Action Plan 21/22 which was due to be discussed later in the meeting, had made provision for working with community groups, including those mentioned earlier to support work around interfaces.

## Peace IV Updates

### Update on Peace IV Secretariat

The PEACE IV Programme Manager provided the Members with an update in respect of the Secretariat activity associated with the implementation of the Peace IV Local Action Plan.

The officer reported that as the Members were already aware the ongoing government restrictions continued to have a severe impact on delivery.

Approval from the SEUPB in regard to the Project Modification requests were ongoing. Further clarification had been sought for modifications to BPR3 and BPR5. The requests for reduction in participant targets had not been approved and the SEUPB had advised that participant targets would be reviewed in Quarter 2, 2021. Difficulties in achieving targets continued to be highlighted to the SEUPB monthly and through quarterly reporting.

The Programme Manager advised that it was reasonably foreseeable that targets, as per the original Belfast Local Action Plan (LAP), were unlikely to be achieved, principally due to the impacts of Covid 19 and the ongoing government restrictions.

The modifications permitted to date by the SEUPB had been relatively minor. To proactively address this issue and also to highlight the risks of contractual obligations and implementation, Senior Management were progressing with a legal opinion. Correspondence would be issued to the SEUPB, as the Managing Authority of the PEACE IV Programme, in due course.

She reported that the PEACE IV Managers Forum, a collective group of PEACE IV Managers from all 17 Local Authorities delivering LAPs, had also highlighted collective concerns regarding implementation of the Programme, including inconsistencies in the approach to modifications, prolonged decision making, delays in reimbursement of claims and disregard for government legislation. The Forum had agreed to highlight these concerns in written correspondence to the SEUPB and to request a blanket extension to the Programme of at least one year. In addition, Local Authority risks were to be discussed collectively through SOLACE. She stated that it was anticipated that this collective approach would prompt the SEUPB and the Accountable Departments to seek appropriate mitigations with the EU Commission.

She also updated that:

- St Comgalls - The SEUPB had approved the award of the contract and final procurement checks had been completed and a meeting with the preferred contractor had taken place.
- Programme Workplan – the draft programme of virtual events was currently being developed.
- Verification and Audit – AGRS was finalising the internal audit report, which would be issued in February 2021.

The Partnership were informed that claims for all aspects of the Programme for Period 24 totalling £710,727 were currently being verified by the SEUPB. Preparation of Claims for Period 25 due for submission on 28th February 2021 were underway. In addition, the forecasting exercise to identify the maximum extension period possible, as well as any

potential underspend was nearing completion. Preliminary indications were that an extension to at least December 2022 was feasible within the current financial allocation.

Noted.

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

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 Children and Young People’s (CYP) 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**

#### **Project Updates**

#### **3.1 CYP 1 – Tech Connects**

GIGA Training (Afterschool’s & Digital Arts Academies (Tech Camps) (6-16 Yr. Olds) A Digital Arts Academy aimed at participants aged 12-16 (Lot 2) is planned for 15-18 February 2021. The focus is on music production and creating / producing mixes using a variety of cultural forms of music.

The project will launch via a media launch, through press release and social media given that the proposed launch scheduled for January 21 was cancelled due to restrictions.

The delivery partner is reviewing further guidance on school closures given the restriction extension announced on 21 January 21 and is considering the approach to progress Afterschool’s clubs, both in the school & community settings.

#### **Belfast Metropolitan College (Digital Insights Programme) (17-24 yr. olds)**

Belfast Metropolitan College and their delivery partner Bytes are continuing with targeted recruitment. The virtual programme includes online mentoring support. Cohort 2 completed sessions on 16 & 17 December 2020 and analysis of monitoring and evaluation is being progressed using Registrations & Baseline surveys. Cohort 3 is scheduled to take place 17-18 February 2021 – Eventbrite registration currently live on social media.

The modification to allow for flexible delivery of the Insights programme has been approved by SEUPB, however the level of flexibility will be agreed a case by case basis with the CYP TPM.

### **3.2 CYP 2 - Playing our Part in the City**

SEUPB approval was given to condense the timescale for Active Community Networks to complete year 3 targets , via a compressed delivery method i.e. week long programme or 5 full day Saturday sessions. However due to revised government restrictions, which prevent gatherings, the activity scheduled for the mid-term break in Feb 21 has now been delayed to 5 March 2021.

Members should also note that SEUPB also approved a reduction in contact hours from 44 to 26 hours for young people and from 30 to 24 hours for parents, for participant cohorts impacted by Covid 19.

Discussions with the delivery partner on further modification, to extend delivery for year 3 targets beyond March 21 are ongoing.

### **3.3 CYP3 – On the Right Track – Sports and Personal Change elements**

Participant targets of 1800 remain high risk due to the current government restrictions and the uncertain environment. Sports club closures and differing guidance from sporting governing bodies have also been major barriers in terms of participation. The project has an ambitious 2020 target of 592 to achieve by December 2021 and a further 2022 target of 591 by end of June 2022.

This volume of programme delivery may prove difficult, if restrictions remain for an additional period of time.

The delivery partner is focusing activity on participants undertaking the OCN qualifications rather than the sporting activity given the current restrictions. Mechanisms to facilitate this activity are being explored, initial plans include staggered start times and smaller group sizes in order to comply with social distancing requirements.

#### **Personal Change**

Participants involved in activity throughout 2020 are nearing completion, with participants achieving the required contact time of 265 hours. The celebration event planned for January 21 has now been rescheduled to March 21 to enable recognition of participants' achievements throughout this pandemic.

Extern have issued the Personal Change Programme E-Zine for December 2020 and this is embedded on the Extern Personal Change dedicated webpage. This communication contains

information on wide range of good practice in working with young people.

Recruitment of the final cohort, to meet the project target is progressing with virtual home visits to take place with potential participants, The delivery agent currently has 16 referrals with the next cohort due to commence in April 21 and complete in December 21.

#### **3.4 CYP 4 – Cooperation Ireland ( Young Advocates)**

Project activity has been paused from November 20 due to COVID and the delivery partner had planned to remobilise activity beginning February 21 via a condensed format, utilising longer sessions and day activities in order to meet cross community contact time.

Discussion with Cooperation Ireland on the remobilising of the project are ongoing, and it is likely that the pause on activity will be extended due to the extension of restrictions to March.

The delivery agent had submitted a proposed programme & content delivery to take place during condensed residential activity. However this is to be re-evaluated, based on the current travel restrictions.

However, Cooperation Ireland have been able to utilise the support of their respective partners as well as social media platforms to generate local interest. They are considering working on a short video and will explore using local press where possible. At this stage, participants have been identified by partners with young people yet to be registered for activity.

#### **3.5 CYP 5 – NIHE Local Area Network Partner Delivery**

The virtual Launch of the NIHE programmes, both Children & Young People combined with Building Positive Relations is to take place via social media on 11 February 2021. The launch will contain representation from the CEO of SEUPB and the Shared City Partnership Chair. Details on the launch will be issued to all members.

The Digital Inclusion contract has been awarded to Wheelworks and NIHE is conducting an initiation meeting to confirm delivery arrangements.

The procurement document for the Social Justice tender have been approved by SEUPB and will go live via E-tenders NI. It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded in February 2021.

Following a recent pilot using engagement boxes to explore cultural education, a further modification to extend this approach to the remaining 4 networks has been approved by SEUPB. The engagement boxes are delivered to each participants home and

**contain good relations focussed arts and crafts activities for participants to complete. Participants then engage and share the learning from the activities through facilitated online sessions.**

**The specific content of the engagement boxes is to be explored by NIHE and will be confirmed through the procurement exercise to secure a provider, which is currently ongoing. Due to the recent extension of government restriction, this innovative approach enables involving isolated / vulnerable participants with lack of access to digital technology.”**

The Partnership recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report.

### **Update on Shared Spaces and Services (SSS) theme**

The Programme Manager provided an update on the progress made to date in respect of the SSS theme, within the Peace IV Local Action Plan. She advised that, as with the other projects, the ongoing government restrictions continued to impact the implementation of both the Shared Space and Services (SSS) capital and programming elements.

She referred to a number of capital projects which were being undertaken as part of the initiative, including:

- **Springfield Dam** – the project opened to the public in December 2020 and was being well used by all sections of the community with positive and encouraging feedback being received. The park opening hours were in line with other Council parks 7:30 a.m. to sunset and no reports of anti-social behaviour had been highlighted. Community youth outreach continued through the Forthspring Inter Community Group supplemented by joint patrols by BCC, SNOs and the PSNI. Clonard Monastery Youth Centre had paused outreach work in line with EA’s policy on outreach youth provision during current restrictions.

The latest Government COVID Restrictions had impacted the allocation of the remaining £6,000 Social Clause to schools for biodiversity activity at the Dam site.

- **PEACE IV Network Scheme – Capital Works** - The contract award for the wider network had been approved by the SEUPB. The approved contractor would commence work on site at Section 1 Glencairn in February 2021. Discussions continue with DfC and DFI in relation securing formal commitment of funding for the capital works.

In regard to programming, the Partnership was informed that all aspects of programming were progressing where possible, although COVID related restrictions had resulted in delays.

In regard to the other Programmes:

- **Dialogue and Engagement Project** - the final report had gone to print, with copies due to be received early February 2021. An Action Plan based on the report recommendations and the appropriate



procurement approaches were progressed. Quotation documents for further engagement and facilitation, along with an ITT for the development of a management model were also proceeding. The officer advised that, for the development and success of the Greenway, it was critical that dialogue and engagement aligned with the capital works as each of the sections were developed with the community receiving updates through contact lists and supported projects.

- **Shared History, Heritage and Identity Content / Narratives for Shared Space** - COVID restrictions continued to impact engagement with communities with the delivery partners still focusing on research. Discussions with Physical Programmes to align the research, public engagement and the development of narratives with the capital work had taken place. Virtual discussion sessions were planned for February, subject to the easing of restrictions, on-site sessions would commence in open spaces in March 2021.
- **Shared Space Volunteer Training** - Promotion of the volunteer walk and cycle leaders' projects to attract participants was being finalised and would be issued early February. Online engagement with participants was scheduled for mid-February 2021 and venues for face-to-face delivery in March 2021 was currently being explored, subject to government restrictions. The procurement for Shared Space Ambassadors, Heritage and Nature Guides was progressing and was anticipated it would be advertised via public tender during February 2021.
- **Springfield Dam activities** - All projects and activities would promote the park as shared and inclusive of all and include shared use of the on-site modular building. Projects and activities continued to be developed, however, delivery was on hold due to COVID restrictions.

As requested at last month's meeting, the Programme Manager drew the Partnerships' attention to details in respect of the Council's Social Clause Policy. During discussion a Member thanked the officer for the information and stated that he would liaise further with her to discuss further maximising training and placement opportunities.

The Partnership were advised that, to date, all Peace IV costs had been fully reimbursed by the SEUPB, as the funding body, subject to eligibility expenditure. Details of the Department for Infrastructure contribution to the project was being progressed and confirmation of Department for Communities input was being prioritised.

The Partnership recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report.

#### **Update on Building Positive Relations - (BPR) 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 Building Positive Relations (BPR) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

The Shared City Partnership should note the contents and appendices of the report and consider the following proposals requested below for approval:

### **BPR 4 Belfast and the World –**

- Further extension to mid-March 2021 to allow for Ligoniel and Ballynafeigh groups to complete;
- 26 contact hours to be made up of 13 online delivery and 13 hours self-directed learning using course materials provided.

## **3.0 Main report**

### **Key Issues**

Delivery of project activity is continuing where possible, although government restrictions introduced in December 20 (and changing ever since) impacted the delivery of condensed programmes and residential activity that was scheduled for October / November/ December.

### **3.1 BPR1 – Cross Community Area Networks**

The project team have received positive responses from all key players within the majority of the identified CCAN areas. Internal scoring/evaluation of the one submission received is now complete and is awaiting SEUPB approval prior to appointment. It is anticipated that the Good Relations programme will commence mid-late February. The ITT for the Place Visioning programme is under NIHE internal review and NIHE anticipates commencing public procurement exercise in late March 2021. A Joint virtual launch with the CYP Programme is on schedule for the 11th February.

### **3.2 BPR2 – Creative Communities Project**

The Artist/Heritage residency programme has been interrupted due to recent COVID restrictions. The Woodvale/Ardoyne cluster will pause until March '21 as participants have limited access to online technology. The Shankill/Clonard will continue to deliver on line following the delivery of their photography/selfcare 'Starter Packs' Divis/Lower Shankill, St Malachy's/Albert Foundary FC and Carlise Circus will continue to meet on line with the Steering groups to finalise their project design.

It is anticipated that 3/8 clusters will commence Spring 2021.

Exploratory discussions continue with the LGBTQ+ Thematic cluster in relation to establishing a Steering Group. Ongoing discussions continue with Malone Integrated College representatives with a view to review the situation after March 5th when it is anticipated schools will reopen.

### **3.3 BPR3 – Transform for Change Project**

Year 1 delivery was completed mid – October, with 13 TLP courses delivered across 11 Clusters. 145 participants have completed TLP element with an 86% completion rate.

Year 2 Autumn cohorts completed with 107 participants verified as completed. Spring cohorts (Jan – March 2021) have commenced on 14th January with 100 confirmed learners registered.

Approval for support has been requested from NSM/NIMS for Area Teams to assist in the delivery and progression of project development workshops and ideas for the £4,000 Resource Allocation to the cluster has been requested and yet to be approved.

The organisation of local community engagement events, City – wide networking events and a cross border/UK study visit is currently on hold.

### **3.4 BPR4 – Belfast and the World (BATW)**

Corrymeela continues to work with two live cohorts- Ligoniel (-to make up shortfall from Year 2) and Ballynafeigh. In order to complete programmes and ensure contact hours have been met, the delivery agent had arranged for residentials to take place in late January. However, due to government restrictions they have been unable to take place, despite four attempts.

The Delivery Agent has requested a further extension to allow for the completion of the above cohorts due to additional responsibilities (primarily home schooling). They anticipate both completing their BATW programme by mid- March 2021 via a blended approach (online and postal service) as small group work sessions remain prohibited. This would seem to be a reasonable approach and Members are asked to agree this approach and the extension until March 2021.

The final Year 3 BATW course will be delivered on line and commence mid-February with 20 participants registered. A further two open calls for online delivery will be made in Spring and late Summer '21 to meet year 4 deliverables.

Due to current restrictions, two Civic led events are currently in planning phase to deliver on line. It is anticipated these will be held

late March and mid-May with the latter marking 1921 through a Play focusing on Partition.

EU Study trips are currently on hold due to COVID restrictions.

### **3.5 BPR5 – Supporting Connected Communities - LINCS Projects**

The delivery agent continues limited project delivery during ever changing restrictions. They are currently planning a schedule of events/workshops for 2021 and have held sessions such as Holocaust Memorial Day and Arts & Cultural workshops in partnership with Artsekta.

Members should note that access to online platforms continues to pose a challenge for this project's target audience and as such core participant numbers have been significantly affected.

Further modification proposal for delivery is currently with SEUPB for consideration.

### **3.6 BPR5 – Traveller element of Supporting Connected Communities**

This project is being managed by Belfast City Council and further to the recent recruitment exercise, an appointment has been made to the position of Traveller Support Officer. It is anticipated that the successful applicant will commence mid – late February 2021.

### **3.7 BPR5 – Roma elements of Supporting Connected Communities**

This project has now been mobilised and is being delivered by Forward South Partnership.

The appointment of the Roma Support Hub Coordinator is now in place with a commencement date of 01/02/2021. Further recruitment exercises will be required for the remaining two posts, Advice worker and Capacity Officer.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

All BPR project delivery partners are regularly reviewing delivery methods and contractual deliverables which will determine the level and impact of COVID 19 crisis.

#### **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 agree:

- a further extension to mid-March 2021 to allow for Ligoniel and Ballynafeigh groups to complete; and

- 26 contact hours - to be made up of 13 online delivery and 13 hours of self-directed learning using the course materials provided.

### **Update on Good Relations Plan 2020/21**

The Partnership considered the following 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 note the contents of the report and recommend to the Strategic Resources and Policy Committee that a follow up event be organised with Professor Waller to explore further the themes discussed at the online seminar on 26th January 2021.
- Members are requested to note the potential for underspend within the Good Relations Action Plan 20/21 due to the current pandemic and subsequent restrictions and that the Chief Executive has written to The Executive Office to ask for an extension to the funding to allow end of year flexibility.

#### **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 has provided a

total allocation of approximately £740,000 for the action plan reflecting the level of resource available.

- 3.2 Members will also be aware that the Partnership 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 the ongoing Community Provision Recovery Funding programme.
- 3.3 Members have also been advised of a number of projects which have 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..
- 3.4 Officers wish to highlight three projects which are being delivered through the Plan despite the ongoing restrictions which are in place in response to the current Pandemic.

#### Four Corners Festival:

- 3.5 In November, Members had agreed to set aside an amount of up to 5k towards a citywide event programme. Members may wish to note that £2,780 has been allocated to the 4 Corners Festival which takes place annually in the first week of February. It features innovative events designed to entice people out of their own corners of the city and into new corners where they encounter new perspectives, ideas and friends. The theme of this years' Festival is 'Breathe' reflecting a desire to breathe hope into our city add fostering creativity and resilience as we respond to the challenges of the pandemic. The Festival has been moved entirely to an online format.
- 3.6 The Good Relations Action Plan contributed towards the cost of 4 events over the week including :
  - Breathe Out Hope – With John Paul Lederach, Pádraig Ó Tuama & Raquel McKee  
Sunday 31 January 2021, 19:00
  - Film Night – Rough Justice - Monday 1 February 2021 - 7:30 pm
  - Catch Your Breath: Resilience Practitioners' Workshop - Sharing notes on how to build inner strength - Tuesday 2 February 2021 - Co-led by Rev Dr Lesley Carroll and David Westerlund
  - Building Breathing Room for Diversity - 'I can't breathe' - Wednesday, February 3 at 7.30 pm

#### Holocaust Memorial Day

- 3.7 On Tuesday 26th January to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, Council hosted a virtual event attended by the Lord Mayor, and Professor James Waller, Cohen Professor of Holocaust and Genocide Studies at Keene State College, New Hampshire. The

event focused on why the Holocaust matters in today's deeply divided world.

**3.8** Professor Waller presented an insightful input reminding participants that as we commemorate the victims of the Holocaust, we are also challenged to recognise the Holocaust as a historical event with contemporary lessons for today's deeply divided world. Professor Waller outlined that commemorating the Holocaust reminds us of the diligence necessary to promote and protect human rights, the deep commitment to nurture inclusive democratic institutions, and the willingness to see our neighbour in the face of 'the other', rather than as a threat. He shared with the participants that commemoration of the past must be followed by responsibility to the present and our shared future. Dr Katy Radford chaired the event and the subsequent question and answer session.

**3.9** The event was attended by 100 people and some of the feedback included:

- I thought this was an important subject and was very ably presented by Prof. Waller.
- I thought that how he linked other divided societies with Northern Ireland was really helpful - demonstrating how the holocaust could be replicated in other countries, if the risk factors continue to subtly develop was a revelation to me. Thank you for bringing this event to the public.
- I am very grateful to the Good Relations Team in BCC, the Lord Mayor, Prof. Waller and Dr.Katy Radford for marking HMD with this important event and hope that there will be more events like it. I found it very educational and inspiring.
- A really informative and clear account that should inform the understanding of the audience from all backgrounds.

**3.10** Given the interest and the relevance to the current political and social climate globally and locally, and Members are asked to agree Officers arrange a follow up event to further the discussion around the 'hard' issues, time permitting before the end of March.

#### Decade of Centenaries

**3.11** Members will recall that as part of our agreed Decade of Centenaries Programme, a large conference was organized for April 2020, titled: 'Violence, Conflict, Militarization and Displacement; Belfast in 1920'. Over 140 people had registered for the conference which unfortunately had to be cancelled as a result of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. In autumn last year, we were able to revisit this and the conference has now been completed with all of the planned content captured in an online recorded project.

- 3.12 The Nerve Centre undertook all of the recordings of the talks and panel discussion, which will be located on the Council's website and also on the Creative Centenaries website for people to access anywhere. The speakers were Dr. Éamon Phoenix, Jimmy McDermott, Dr. Brian Barton, Liz Gillis and Dr. Alan Parkinson. A panel discussion of all of the speakers was moderated by Deirdre McBride.
- 3.13 Our Decades of Centenaries programme, which has been running since 2011, reflects on significant events in the city's past, through programmes and events, in order to build a shared understanding of history in a way that can build good relations and foster reconciliation.

#### **Update on Programme Expenditure**

- 3.14 As advised at the December meeting, the Community Recovery Support Grants Schemes, both micro and medium, closed on 11th and 18th December respectively. Since then, Officers across the City and Neighbourhood Services Department have been assessing and signing off the micro and medium grants and liaising with groups. However as Members will be aware, the additional restrictions regarding activity brought in just before Christmas and subsequent extension of restrictions until 8th March has impacted upon the groups' ability to deliver prior to the end of the financial year. The restrictions have also impacted upon the projects which would have been delivered by Officers or third parties.
- 3.15 Therefore, Members are asked to note that while Officers have sought to deliver activity virtually and have sought to maximise the Programme, there is potential for underspend within the Programme due to the circumstances created by the pandemic.
- 3.16 Members are also asked to note that the Chief Executive has written to the Permanent Secretary of The Executive Office to ask for an extension to the funding to allow for end of year flexibility which would assist in addressing the issue of underspend. Pending a response, a further report will be brought back to Members at a future meeting.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

All activity has taken place within existing budgets.

#### **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."



A Member thanked the staff for the Holocaust Memorial Event which she felt was both engaging and relevant and stated that she looked forward to more engagement events as they helped to support the Good Relations outcomes.

The Partnership recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee adopt the recommendations as outlined in the report.

### **Good Relations Action Plan 2021/22**

The Partnership considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 Members will be aware that the council submits an annual action plan to the Executive Office (TEO) every year in order to draw down funding for the good relations work of the council. TEO have requested submission of this years’ action plan by 22 February 2020.**

**Members will be aware that Action Plans are to be based on an audit of good relations issues and need within the Council area. Members will recall that the most recent audit of good relations needs was completed at the end of 2019.**

**The purpose of this report is to advise of the content of the draft Action Plan for 21/22 and seek approval to forward the Plan to TEO.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1**

- To recommend to the Strategic and Policy Resources Committee that the attached draft Action Plan 2021/22 be submitted to TEO.**
- To note that in order to meet the deadline set by The Executive Office, that the plan will be submitted in draft, subject to approval by Council at the beginning of March.**
- Members are also requested to note that this Action Plan submission is subject to amendment during the assessing and scoring process that will be undertaken by TEO. The Council will be notified of any changes in the final approved Action Plans.**

#### **3.0 Main report**

**3.1 The Good Relations Action plan which is submitted to TEO on an annual basis is designed to outline local responses to locally identified good relations issues. In order to inform development of the action plan, councils are obliged to carry out an audit of local good relations needs every three years.**

**3.2 Members will recall that the most recent audit of good relations needs was completed at the end of 2019.**

- 3.3 Members may recall that 19/20 was the first year that councils were awarded indicative three year funding. Action Plans were completed for 2019/20 with Action Plan summaries for 2020/21 and 2021/22. However, due to the current circumstances, the original summaries have been revised to take the impact of the pandemic into account.
- 3.4 TEO have advised that their opening budget position for 21/22 has not yet been confirmed, However, in the absence of confirmation, Officers have drawn up the Plan based on last years allocation of approximately £571,000.
- 3.5 Officers have developed the draft action plans based on the findings of the audit and also on the findings of consultations undertaken with the community and voluntary sector over the past year, as communities respond to the needs presented within their areas. It should be noted that some of the recommendations, particularly in relation to grant aid amendments, cannot be implemented immediately, and that an approach to grant funding for next year has yet to be approved by Council. However, the draft plans do implement some of the recommendations in relation to a realignment of funding towards strategic programmes rather than grant aid.
- 3.6 Officers will engage further with the SCP, elected members and other relevant stakeholders to develop the delivery of strategic pieces of work.

#### Planned Intervention

- 3.7 In addition, Members may wish to note that previously, the Planned Intervention portion of the Plan would have been funded at 100% from TEO and would have been had its own separate letter of offer up until 2 years ago. However, this year, TEO have advised that they are bringing the funding into line with the rest of the Council Programme and they are requesting that Council provide the customary 25% match funding.
- 3.8 This affords the Partnership the opportunity to decide how these funds should be allocated within the Action Plan.
- 3.9 In recent years, Members will be aware that the number of applicants to this fund has decreased significantly. This is partly due to the prioritization by TEO of their Summer Camps programme and the Education Authority's Intervention programme, which together, receives around £1.5M.
- 3.10 However, a number of recommendations in our last audit would also reflect the need to refocus this element of the Action Plan namely:
- A new small seeding grant for those organisations that feel they lack capacity, are systemically disadvantaged or are new to good relations;

- Commitment to an annual funding application process and to longer-term (two or three year) grant aid for some of the more impactful applications;
  - A commitment to strategic funding on issues to be determined by the Shared City Partnership possibly starting at 20% of the existing budget;
  - Renaming of its grant assistance the shared city grant programme to ensure consistency with the strategic thrust of other Council delivery including on good relations.
  - Reaffirm the role of the Shared City Partnership, including being part of Council analysis of the issues, needs and threats over a ten-year period;
  - Provide a budget for the Shared City Partnership to undertake research and analysis for Council;
  - Undertake strategic intervention with budget on enhancing intervention on the removal of interface barriers/ ‘peace walls’;
  - Ensure there continues to be a city-wide, consistent approach to good relations while inputting at local area level.
- 3.11** Given the above recommendations, coupled with the approach to community recovery support grants and potential impact of restrictions if in place at that time, Officers would propose that the Planned Intervention Grant Programme cease and instead, the funds be directed to a targeted Strategic Intervention programme distributed on an area basis.
- 3.12** This would ensure that the approach could be targeted, strategic and proactive and could include work at interface areas or on good relations issues impacting the specific area. Work could take place all year round and not just at certain times of the year. 15k would be allocated to each area with the condition that any project must address good relations issues and one of the T:BUC priorities. This allocation would be discussed at Area Team level meaning there would be complementarity and a coordination of resources. The projects will be agreed by the relevant Good Relations Officer, Neighbourhood Integration Manager and Neighbourhood Services Area Manager, the latter of which will have delegated authority.
- 3.13** A copy of the draft proposed Action Plan 21/22 was issued with the agenda for Members consideration and approval.

#### **Financial & Resource Implications**

The plan will be 75% funded by TEO with the remaining 25% included in the Council’s 20/21 budget. The Council has made provision to support Good Relations Activity with an amount which is in excess of the required 25% contribution included in the budget for 20/21. Funding supports a portion of some of the salaries within the Good Relations Unit. The programme bid 21/22

**totals £775,903, with an approximate amount of £573k being requested from TEO.**

**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."**

The Partnership recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee adopt the recommendations as outlined in the report.

**Issue Raised Verbally at the Meeting – Councillor O'Hara**

With the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor O'Hara requested that a letter be forwarded to the Belfast Multicultural Association, on behalf of the Shared City Partnership, to condemn the arson attack which had occurred on 15th January, 2021.

The Partnership agreed that the aforementioned letter would be sent to the Belfast Multicultural Association.

Chairperson