

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY 7th JUNE, 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. O. Barron, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust;
Miss. G. Duggan, Belfast City Centre Management;
Mr. C. Gardner, Good Relations, TEO;
Mrs. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
Ms. J. Irwin, Community Relations Council;
Mr. I. McLaughlin, Community and Voluntary Sector; and
Ms. A. M. White, British Red Cross.

In attendance: Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;
Ms. L. Holmes, CYP Thematic Manager;
Mr. D. Robinson, Good Relations Officer;
Mrs. K. McCrum, Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Election of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

It was proposed by Councillor Lyons, seconded by Councillor Magennis and agreed that Councillor Kyle be reappointed as the Chairperson and Councillor O'Hara as the Deputy Chairperson to the Shared City Partnership from June, 2021 to June, 2022.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillor M. Kelly, Ms. B. Arthurs, Mr. J. Donnelly, Mr. M. O'Donnell and Father. E. O'Neill.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th May, 2021 were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were recorded.

Presentation on the research into Council's Response to Covid

The Partnership was reminded that, at its last meeting, it had agreed to receive a presentation from representatives of Blu Zebra regarding its research into the Council's

Response to the Covid-19 pandemic and accordingly Ms. Therese Hogg and Mr. Bruce Hogg were welcomed to the meeting.

Ms. Therese Hogg commenced by providing an overview of the work undertaken during the Covid pandemic. She referred to the Council's immediate response to the pandemic through the lens of a good relations perspective and how the Council's Good Relations Strategy had been borne out during the emergency response to the pandemic.

She then drew the Members' attention to a detailed Covid response timeline from February – September 2020, along with the details in respect of the response to the pandemic from both local community representatives/groups and Council staff. She stated that it was important that the response was carefully analyzed to ensure that was built upon for the future and to ascertain if it could assist with the recovery of the City in the longer term as part of the recovery programme.

The Members noted the importance of joined up working, which had helped ensure that hard to reach vulnerable people and communities had been reached during the crisis and they were content that this had been successful. In terms of good relations outcomes, it was noted that generally, the pandemic had united people. Covid-19 had ignored and continued to ignore traditional community boundaries that for many years had caused division within the City, this in itself had created opportunities for cross community building in terms of leadership, information sharing and communication, infrastructure, networking, ways of working, focus on poverty, section 75 vulnerable groups and in general terms ensuring that no one had been left behind.

Whilst the many positives of joined up working were acknowledged, including the huge input from local businesses in donating their time, money and supplies, a Member highlighted that the political climate had changed during the pandemic and he specifically referred to the recent civil unrest in the City and stated that he would like to have seen this referenced within the report.

The representative concluded by detailing/highlighting the following next step messages to the Partnership:

- the importance of continued investment in community infrastructure to support the recovery;
- the need to cultivate integrated services at a local area-based level-new area working and thematic approach;
- the continued need to investing in neighbourhoods, creating a sense of belonging, trust, confidence and hope-ensuring residents could move freely across the City;
- the need to build on the tacit knowledge, skills and capacity of all players to cultivate and embed new relationships within and between the communities;
- the need to encourage young volunteers and leaders being vital for the enhancement and development of future relationships across the City; and
- the need to keep collaborating and being imaginative, agile and resourceful.

She advised that the transformational journey had already commenced, new connections had been formed and the recovery plans should seek to maximise and harness the benefits from new strategic investments, emerging developments and funding opportunities. She also stressed that leadership at all levels was essential and highlighted

that decision makers needed to engage with communities to evolve and build on the four GR T:BUC themes.

Several Members welcomed the research and stated that they would be keen to build on the progress that had been achieved at a community level during the pandemic and to use the experience as a learning exercise, focusing on preventative measures going forward rather than relying on the crisis focus approach that had been necessary during the pandemic.

The Good Relations Manager referred to the new Area Working approach that the Council had adopted and stated that she felt that the Council could further build on this work and engage with communities through this work channel.

Following discussion, it was agreed that, should the Members wish to add any further comments regarding the findings, they would forward these directly to the Good Relations Manager.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for the update provided and they left the meeting.

It was subsequently agreed:

- that the Good Relations Manager would submit a report on the findings and any comments she received to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which, once endorsed, would be referred to the Living Here Board;
- that the COVID-19 Response report and comments from the Shared City Partnership would be forwarded to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in a separate report; and
- that the Good Relations Manager would submit a report to a future meeting of the Partnership to give the Members the opportunity to consider what areas they might wish to prioritise within the next steps section of the report, taking into account that £10,000 has been set aside within the Good Relations Action Plan 2021/22.

Findings from Shared City Partnership Workshop held on 10th May 2021

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Members that, at the April meeting of the Shared City Partnership, the Members had raised concern regarding the recent violence and civil unrest in the City and also specifically in regard to sectarianism, how to tackle it and their fears for the future of the many young people who had been involved in the violence and the problems that this might have for their future prospects. The Members had discussed civic and transformative leadership and considered how as a civic society the Council and indeed the people of Northern Ireland could better respond to sectarianism. The Members had agreed that further discussion was required within the context of community planning and the recovery programme from the Covid-19 Pandemic.

This had resulted in discussion at the May meeting, where Dr. Duncan Morrow had facilitated a discussion of the Partnership which had been aimed at achieving the following outcomes:

- identifying 2/3 key issues which were of most concern to the Partnership;
- identifying practical actions the Partnership could take to address these issues; and

- agreeing the 2/3 key requests/advice that the Partnership would wish to give to the Council and/or other Agencies.

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Members that this had been addressed specifically by focussing on the following questions, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting:

1. In the context of recent and ongoing events, as a Member of the Shared City Partnership, what are the good relations issues which concern you most?
2. What do you see as the most important priorities for the Shared City Partnership to concentrate on?
3. What are the practical actions which the Shared City Partnership can take in response to these priorities?
4. Given the advisory role of the Shared City Partnership, what are the key advice/requests the Shared City Partnership wishes to convey to Council, other agencies and Departments?

The officer then drew the Members' attention to the notes from the discussion and provided a synopsis of the proposed actions, which included details in respect of messages that the Partnership wished to convey to the Council, agencies and departments along with the proposed next steps, as follows:

Key Advice/Requests

- Direct engagement with Youth Services – the Council should be assured that youth work was resourced at the appropriate level and that adequate responses were in place;
- District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships should focus and report on relationship between the PSNI and working-class communities – where there are gaps and how these could be filled;
- Investment in cross community networks needs to be guaranteed and sustained;
- Note the potential for difficulties arising during the summer period and develop intervention programmes, which would consider potential reactions in a post lockdown context; and
- Important that the Council sets the tone, with clear communication and messaging, acting as a calming influence in times of tension and difficulty.

Next Steps

- Convey Workshop analysis and priorities to the Council and the Shared City Partnership;
- Engage with Youth Service seeking a presentation on best practice;
- Potential project on developing understanding of politics for young people; and
- Report to the Living Here Board to set out the findings.

Several of the Members welcomed the discussion that had already taken place but requested, given the importance of the subject matter, that this conversation be continued to ensure that the proposals were implemented and that any opportunities identified were actioned.

Following consideration, it was agreed that a workshop be convened to consider the outcomes from the facilitated discussion in more detail. In the interim, the workshop analysis and priorities would be conveyed to both the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and Living Here Board. It was also agreed that officers would engage with the Youth Service seeking a presentation on best practice and consider a potential project that might help develop an understanding of politics for young people.

Home Office's New Plans for Immigration

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of the Home Office’s Plan for immigration and to highlight the concerns raised by the Belfast Refugee and Asylum Forum¹.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the concerns raised by the Refugee and Asylum Forum in relation to the Home Office’s proposals for Immigration and to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that they endorse the responses made by the Refugee and Asylum Forum.**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1 Published for consultation in March 2021, the Home Office’s Plan for Immigration proposes a significant overhaul of the immigration system and of the asylum system - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration>**
- 3.2 Members of the Refugee and Asylum Forum are gravely concerned about the proposals and their potential impact on individuals, communities and society in Northern Ireland. The Forum believes that a number of these proposals tread on devolved competencies**

¹ The **Refugee and Asylum Forum** is an informal network of organisations with direct experience of providing support and services to asylum seekers and refugees in Belfast. Our membership is diverse and includes small community organisations, national charities and some statutory agencies. Our collective expertise is wide and spans health and social care, accommodation, integration and participation, legal rights, welfare as well as policy development.

and will encroach on, and may restrict, devolved powers in a range of areas.

3.3 Members of the Refugee and Asylum Forum are asking the Shared City Partnership to consider their concerns and to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that they endorse their response paper, attached, to the Home Office.

3.4 The Home Office stipulates that the New Plan for Immigration has the following three objectives:

- 1. To increase the fairness and efficacy of our system so that we can better protect and support those in genuine need of asylum**
- 2. To deter illegal entry into the UK, thereby breaking the business model of criminal trafficking networks and protecting the lives of those they endanger**
- 3. To remove more easily from the UK those with no right to be here.**

3.5 The Refugee Asylum Forum have recognised some of the positive proposals within the plan such as:

- A commitment to increase safe and legal routes for asylum seekers including increased support for refugee resettlement programmes, refugee community sponsorship and a commitment to explore humanitarian visas.**
- Increased funding for refugee integration that will focus on progress to employment as well as wellbeing, language and social bonds.**
- Addressing some of the anomalies in British nationality law causing injustice e.g. at present, some children cannot acquire their father's citizenship if their mother was married to someone else.**
- Expanding the eligibility criteria for refugee family reunion by raising the age from 18 to 21 for unmarried dependent children to join both parents who are refugees in the UK.**
- Granting leave to remain to survivors of human trafficking.**
- Granting Indefinite Leave to Remain to persons who arrive through refugee resettlement.**
- Recognition of the importance of quality immigration advice early on in the asylum process.**

3.6 The Refugee Asylum Forum have also noted a number of areas of concern with the new proposals, which are summarised below,

some of which they believe might have the potential to impact the Council as well as impacting the lives of those seeking asylum.

- 3.7 The first area of concern, raised by the Refugee and Asylum Forum, is the Home Offices proposal for a differentiated approach to asylum claims. Home Office Proposal:

A new differentiated approach to asylum claims will be adopted. Only refugees who enter the UK through refugee resettlement programmes will be granted refugee status. Persons who enter the UK through irregular means will not be granted refugee status but instead may qualify for temporary protection.

- 3.8 The Refugee Asylum Forum response note: this year marks 70 years since the adoption of the 1951 Refugee Convention, which was developed to address the horrors of the Holocaust and the mass displacement of people following World War II. The Nazi persecution of Jews, Roma, persons with disabilities, LGBT, political dissidents and others did not happen overnight. Many of the persecuted groups had sought to leave Germany in the 1930s. However, the imposition of strict immigration admission criteria and quotas meant emigration became impossible for many. Six million would lose their lives.

- 3.9 The Refugee Asylum Forum recommends that Refugee status should be granted on the basis of need for protection; distinguishing between refugees based on their route of entry to the UK is a false distinction and will cause harm. Withholding refugee status from persons who enter the UK irregularly is akin to penalising refugees and is contrary to the Refugee Convention.

- 3.10 The second area of concern, identified by the Refugee and Asylum Forum, is the Home Offices proposal for Temporary protection. Home Office Proposal:

Anyone who claims asylum outside refugee resettlement routes will only be eligible to receive 'temporary protection'. This is a new type of status valid for no longer than 30 months, after which individuals will be reassessed for return to their country of origin or removal to another third country.

- 3.11 The Refugee Asylum Forum response notes that: The Preamble to the Refugee Convention commits to assure refugees 'the widest possible exercise of the fundamental rights and freedoms'. This proposal does the very opposite by stripping away the rights of persons who should be considered refugees under international law.

- 3.12 The Refugee Asylum Forum notes that: Restricting access to public funds will result in costs shouldered locally by the Executive Office Crisis Fund, emergency services and the voluntary and community sector. The proposals also risk making more asylum seekers destitute and vulnerable to exploitation and

thus undermines the 2021/22 Modern Slavery Strategy for Northern Ireland.

- 3.13 The third area of concern identified by the Refugee and Asylum Forum is the Home Offices proposal for Inadmissibility and safe country Home Office Proposal:

Anyone who arrives into the UK through irregular means and who did not arrive directly will be considered inadmissible to the asylum process. The Home Office will seek to ‘rapidly return’ inadmissible asylum seekers to any third country.

- 3.14 The Refugee Asylum Forum response notes that: This proposal inserts an additional stage into an asylum process that is already long and complicated. As such, the asylum process will be lengthened for most.

- 3.15 The Refugee Asylum Forum notes that: Many asylum seekers will be in limbo whereby they are physically present in NI but unable to access the asylum determination procedure. Designing a system that puts a number of people outside of the standard asylum process and existing protections will create considerable difficulties for NI agencies and support organisations.

- 3.16 The fourth area of concern identified by the Refugee and Asylum Forum is the Home Offices proposal for Reception centres Home Office Proposal:

New ‘asylum reception centres’ will be developed to provide basic accommodation where claims are processed for persons deemed inadmissible.

- 3.17 The Refugee Asylum Forum response notes that: The Home Office’s own evidence on refugee integration highlights the importance of contact between the refugee and host communities. Policies of exclusion permit misinformation, fear and hate to take hold. Confinement is particularly difficult for victims/survivors of modern slavery and of gender based violence. Detaining women who have already survived trauma and violence inflicts immense harm and retraumatises them. Levels of self harm and suicide are higher in immigration detention than in the prison system.

- 3.18 The Refugee Asylum Forum also noted that: Direct Provision has been used in Ireland for 20 years and has been repeatedly criticised by international and national human rights organisations.

- 3.19 The Refugee Asylum Forum highlight: A policy whereby asylum seekers are housed separately from everyone else in society will clearly run counter to the Executive Office Racial Equality Strategy’s commitment to inclusion and the T:BUC commitment to shared spaces and to welcoming and embracing diversity.

- 3.20 The fifth area of concern identified by the Refugee and Asylum Forum is the Home Office's proposal around the requirement to make immediate disclosure. Home Office Proposal:**

There will be a 'one stop' single assessment of asylum claims. Asylum seekers will be required to raise all protection related issues ahead of appeal.

- 3.21 Refugee Asylum Forum response notes that:** There are many reasons why asylum seekers and victims of trafficking – especially those who have experienced gender based violence or persecution because of sexual orientation- are unable to disclose all relevant information at the initial stage. This is particularly the case for children. The Home Office's own trafficking guidance acknowledges that 'a symptom of post-traumatic stress is avoidance of trauma triggers' (i.e. disclosure) and that 'because of these symptoms, a person may be unable to fully explain their experience until they have achieved a minimum level of psychological stability'. In its guidance on gender, the Home Office states that late disclosure should not automatically prejudice a woman's credibility, in recognition of a number of barriers to disclosure including guilt, shame, concerns about family 'honour' or fear of family members. Accordingly, this new proposal on disclosure runs counter to the Home Office's own policy.

- 3.22 The sixth area of concern identified by the Refugee and Asylum Forum is the Home Offices proposal for Working with local authorities and partners to seek returns. Home Office Proposal:**

The Home Office will work with local authorities and partners to seek to enforce returns – including removing asylum support for individuals who fail to comply with attempts to remove them.

- 3.23 The Refugee Asylum Forum notes that:** This proposal constitutes a significant encroachment on NI devolved powers. In NI, the functions of 'local authorities' are delivered by various agencies including Social Services, Councils and government departments. When a NI agency exercises its functions, it is doing so within a clearly defined legislative framework. These proposals could result in the Home Office directing a NI agency in the operation of its powers in a competency devolved to NI.

- 3.24 The Refugee Asylum Forum notes that** The Executive Office Racial Equality Strategy 2015-25 states that 'while immigration policy is made in Westminster, the Executive does have powers to address some of the problems faced by those living under immigration control here, including asylum seekers and refugees'.² The Home Office should not seek to fetter the Executive's powers with regards to providing an appropriate response to persons subject to immigration control. In short, the Home Office should respect the integrity and independence of NI's agencies including government departments and Councils.

² [Racial Equality Strategy 2015-2025 \(executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk\)](http://executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk) 9.5

If the Home Office pursues this policy, it should not be implemented in NI. Forum members recall that the ‘right to rent’ provisions of the Immigration Act 2014 have never been implemented in NI. Forum members also note that when the Home Office introduced new enforcement powers in December 2020 to be used against foreign nationals who were rough sleeping, a number of GB councils refused to cooperate with the scheme.

- 3.25 **The seventh area of concern identified by the Refugee and Asylum Forum is the Home Offices proposal for Increased criminal penalties relating to irregular migration Home Office Proposal:**

Additional or increased civil and criminal penalties will be introduced. For example, the maximum sentence for facilitating unlawful migration will be increased to life imprisonment. Border Force powers will be strengthened to include the interception, search, seizure and disposal of vessels.

- 3.26 **The Refugee Asylum Forum notes:** that members deplore the activities of human traffickers who move people across borders for criminal exploitation and activities of smugglers who charge extortionate sums to transport people in dangerous conditions. Nevertheless, it appears that no consideration has been given to what these proposals might mean in NI: indeed, it makes no reference to NI or the presence of a land border.

- 3.27 **The Refugee Asylum Forum notes:** Crossing the border is an everyday reality for many people on this island. The proposed penalties, including an extension to the Clandestine Entrant Civil Penalty Regime could have serious implications for NI, including for hauliers, transport providers – e.g. Translink bus drivers – as well as for groups travelling across the island of Ireland for social, recreational, religious purposes, etc.

- 3.28 Refugee and Asylum Forum members are asking Northern Ireland policy makers and politicians to oppose these proposals given their impact on Northern Ireland, on devolved powers and their impact on the lives of those seeking protection.

Financial & Resource Implications

There are no direct resource implications.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

The Council has been proactive in the last number of years in supporting Asylum Seekers and Refugees within the city and developing numerous initiatives to build relations between communities. During the Covid Pandemic the Council received significant recognition for the support undertaken to promote the inclusion of vulnerable Refugees and Asylum Seekers living in the City.

In 2019, the Council launched its new and revised Good Relations Strategy. This strategy sets out a vision of a Shared City – a city reimagined, connected and resurgent; delivering inclusive growth that leaves no-one behind. The strategy acknowledges that promoting and achieving Good Relations is ‘everyone’s business’ and contains 5 outcomes which seek to build Good Relations: through civic leadership/governance; shared and connected spaces; shared services; effective partnerships and through an intercultural city.

The Home Office’s Immigration Plan contains a number of proposals that would impact the lives of asylum seekers living in Belfast and undermine the process of promoting an inclusive and intercultural city for all.”

The Partnership noted the Home Office’s proposals for Immigration and recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it endorses the responses made by the Refugee and Asylum Forum.

Council Structures working with groups aligned to those mentioned under the Good Relations Duty and the following 'Hate Crime Categories' - Disability, Transgender Identity and Sexual Orientation

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

Background

- 1.1 At the meeting of the Shared City Partnership in March, Members had asked that a further report be submitted to the Partnership outlining the current structures within the Council for working with groups aligned to those mentioned under the good relations duty and the following ‘Hate Crime Categories’ - disability, transgender identity and sexual orientation and how these should relate to the work of and representation on the Shared City Partnership.
- 1.2 The good relations duty for Council and all public bodies is governed under Part 2 of the above legislation and only includes the three categories of religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 1.3 At present, no specific offence of ‘hate crime’ exists in Northern Ireland. The Criminal Justice (No. 2) (Northern Ireland) Order 2004 (the 2004 Order) was introduced to ensure that the perpetrators of offences aggravated by hostility received a higher sentence following conviction. This law enables a sentence to be increased where it is proven that the basic offence of which a person has been convicted was motivated by hostility against one of the currently protected characteristics (race, religion, sexual orientation or disability) or where the offender demonstrated hostility against one of those characteristics either at the time of committing the offence or immediately before or after it.

1.4 The findings of the recent independent review of Hate Crime in Northern Ireland undertaken by Judge Desmond Marrinan was published in late 2020. One of the recommendations was that: all current protected characteristics in Northern Ireland – race, religion, disability, and sexual orientation should continue to receive protection, together with the new recommended protected characteristics of age, sex/gender and variations in sex characteristics. For the avoidance of doubt, the protected characteristic of sex/gender includes transgender identity.

1.5 The findings of the report are still being considered and these can be found at <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/justice/hate-crime-review.pdf>

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of this report and the proposed next steps.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 At the present time the Council has a variety of committees, groups, forums, and partnerships dealing with equity and diversity.

3.2 These responsibilities can relate to the promotion of equality of opportunity and /or good relations on one or more grounds of difference or emerge in response to a particular event or concern, with statutory duties also providing a backdrop to these initiatives.

3.3 While some operate as consultative bodies or as regulatory mechanisms, others are charged with bringing forward policies or developing action plans such as the Good Relations Action Plan, Race Action Plan, LGBT+ Action Plan and Disability Action Plan.

3.4 A list of those groups aligned to those mentioned under the good relations duty and the following ‘Hate Crime Categories’ - disability, transgender identity and sexual orientation is available.

3.5 In addition, some of these groups are comprised of Council Officers, Council Officers/Elected Members and may also include external partners/representatives such as the Shared City Partnership, the Youth Forum or the Migrant Forum or the BCC Consultative Forum. Increasingly, while external members may not sit on the fora as a member, they regularly attend in an advisory capacity such as Rainbow or the Women’s Resource Development Agency.

3.6 All of these groups have developed a terms of reference and in combination, the existing structures have succeeded in

addressing a wide range of issues (often contentious) attaching to equity and diversity

- 3.7 Members will be aware that the thrust of the work of the Council is driven by the Belfast Agenda and Members will be aware that a number of structures with various external partners responsible for delivery have also been established to oversee the programmes of work such as the Living Here Board. In the past year, a Community and Voluntary sector Panel has also been established to ensure that the sector's voices are represented as part of the community planning process; to develop and improve cross sectoral relationships and partnerships and to promote effective community engagement.
- 3.8 Members may wish to note that staff from the GR Unit are involved with/report to a number of these structures as a regular attendee or to present on relevant issues issues.
- 3.9 As Council has adopted the Good Relations Strategy which has the strapline – ‘Good Relations is Everyone’s Business’, this is a crucial link to all the business, policies and programmes which Council develops or supports.
- 3.10 Members will also recall that a Review of the Shared City Partnership’s membership and terms of reference was undertaken in 2018 and completed in 2019. The role and purpose of the SCP was agreed as :to assist the elected political leadership of the Council, staff, diverse civil society interests and partnering agencies to engage pro-actively on all Good Relations issues on behalf of citizens and be a collective voice, promoting a common vision for Good Relations in the City.
- 3.11 The Partnership has previously written to the Executive Office requesting flexibility in its Good Relations funding and requested that the Executive Office consider extension of its Good Relations duties to the hate crime categories.
- 3.12 TEO advised that all projects to be funded through the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) must deliver against one of the 4 T:BUC priorities. There is nothing to prevent groups such as LGBGTQ+, Disability Groups, Women’s Groups etc. applying to the DCGRP for funding to take forward Good Relations work as long as they meet one of the four key priorities as referred to above.
- 3.13 TEO appreciated that funding will not be available for every activity undertaken by these groups. However, they may be able to access other funding provided by other Departments under their respective strategies for activities that do not meet the specific T:BUC priorities such as the Department for Communities or the Department of Justice.
- 3.14 The Department for Communities leads on policy regarding sexual orientation and disability, has also begun work in the development

of a number of new social inclusion strategies including a Disability Strategy, a Gender Strategy and Sexual Orientation Strategy. The Department held pre-consultation meetings on the planned development of these strategies which are due for completion at the end of the year.

- 3.15 In relation to consideration of the extension of the good relations duties to include the hate crime categories, TEO advised that Section 75 is a matter reserved to Westminster and there is currently no active consideration or review of the provision that they are aware of.
- 3.16 However, Members may wish to note that in work within the field of equality and diversity and indeed within the Review of Hate Crime, it is recognised that most people have multiple identities and can be part of more than one category i.e. an individual can be disabled and from the BAME community. This should be considered when designing terms of reference for structures/groups to ensure that the focus is brought to the role and purpose of the group.
- 3.17 A list of structures which focus on other Section 75 groups which were recommended to be included in hate crime legislation in the Review of Hate Crime is available for reference.

Next Steps

Given the significant number of structures which are in existence, Members may wish to consider the following as next steps with a report to be brought back in due course:

- Officers to consider the current community planning structures and to examine how the above Strategies and voices of those groups which are included in the hate crime categories are included in the development of plans for the City.
- The issue of how the voices of these groups feed into policy and programmes be considered at the Equality & Diversity Strategic Network whose membership includes the Strategic Directors of Place & Economy and City & Neighbourhood Services (currently vacant) and is chaired by the City Solicitor. It meets three times a year and its terms of reference includes: to provide a cohesive space to be informed about, discuss and propose recommendations to address corporate equality and diversity key initiatives in NI / Belfast. The relevant Plans mentioned in 3.3 are also brought to this group in the first instance.

Equality & Good Relations Implications

All Council Strategies and policies are subject to the equality screening process to look at the impact of such a policy or Strategy on groups listed under Section 75.

The District Council Good Relations Programme and the PEACE IV Programme have been screened previously.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial or resource implications.”

The Partnership noted the significant number of structures already in existence and agreed the proposed 'next steps' as outlined in the report and that an update report would be submitted to a future meeting which would also give consideration to the possibility of extending the membership of the Shared City Partnership.

Membership of Partnership - Recruitment for Community and Voluntary Representative for East Belfast (verbal update)

The Chairperson reminded the Members that Mr. J. Currie, the representative for the Community and Voluntary Sector in the East of the City, had resigned his position from the Shared City Partnership as he had taken up new employment.

The Good Relations Manager advised that, following a recruitment exercise which had previously been endorsed by both the Shared City Partnership and Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, interviews had been held on 3rd June. She advised that it was being recommended that Ms. Ashleigh Roberts be offered the position.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it endorse the appointment of Ms. Ashleigh Roberts as the Community and Voluntary Representative on the Shared City Partnership, representing the East of the City.

DiverseCity and Refugee Week – 14th – 21st June 2021

The Good Relations Manager advised the Members that to mark and celebrate Refugee Week, the Council would be hosting a series of free online workshops and she provided the details, as follows:

- **Strategies for addressing Anti-Muslim Hostility - Thursday 3rd, 10th, and 17th June. Each session would run from 12 noon to 1.30 p.m. and participants must commit to attend all three sessions**

A three-day online workshop which would provide a brief overview of the history and diversity of the Muslim community in Belfast. It would provide an understanding of what constitutes anti-Muslim hatred, the demographics of perpetrators and victims, the trigger points, and the impact of online trends and far right groups. It would also provide practical skills for interrupting anti-Muslim hostility.

- **International Organisation for Migration (IOM) UK Global Refugee Information Session – Thursday 15th June 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

This session would explore the global context of refugees, including reasons for displacement, consideration of the routes and journeys that refugees make, and the cultural adjustment process often faced in their new country.

- **Small Worlds – Wednesday 16 June 12 noon -1.30 p.m.**

This online workshop would provide a space for participants to meet people from different backgrounds and parts of the world, now living in Belfast. It would provide a glimpse into the lives of people who had been forced to seek asylum, giving participants the space to ask questions and to hear the real stories from people navigating the asylum system.

- **A Taste of South Africa - Friday 18th June 10 a.m. -11.30 a.m.**

This online workshop would provide a unique opportunity for an in-depth conversation with Trevor, who had sought asylum in Belfast. It would allow participants to gain some understanding of the hard decisions he made leaving his native South Africa and his subsequent experiences of settling in and carving out a new life in Belfast.

- **Where are you from? Where are you really from? - Thursday 24th June 2 noon -1.30 p.m.**

This introductory workshop would allow for respectful and fun conversations around diversity, culture, traditions, language and experience. It would explore serious content in a nonjudgmental way and enable participants to understand how culture affects behaviour.

The Good Relations Manager referred to the Good Relations Action Plan and the research that had previously been agreed in respect of the lived experience of people from BAME communities. She advised that she was pleased to report that both the Public Health Agency and Health and Social Care Trust had offered additional funding which would enable this work to be undertaken as a collaborative project.

The Members were advised that they were welcome and encouraged to attend any of the workshops which could be booked by emailing goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk

Noted.

Update on Decade of Centenaries Programme

The Good Relations Manager provided the Members with an update in respect of projects which were being delivered as part of the Decade of Centenaries Programme. She reminded the Members that, as well as Council funded activities, the Council had received £87,700 in funding from the Shared History Fund to deliver additional projects, namely:

- Drama and animation programme as part of the King's Speech event on 22nd June 2021 and live performances in the Autumn to schools and youth groups;
- The restoration of the chairs in the Council Chamber, used by the King and Queen on the occasion of the inauguration of the NI Parliament in 1921;
- A digitised artefacts and stories trail project related to 1921;
- A time capsule project with the Lord Mayor and young people; and
- End of Decade of Centenaries Conference in March 2022.

The National Lottery Heritage Fund was administering the Shared History Fund on behalf of the Northern Ireland Office.

She continued that, in addition to these events, others had already been delivered or had been planned, which had been funded or supported by the Council, these included:

- An online conference on Violence, Conflict, Militarisation and Displacement: Belfast in 1920;
- An online panel discussion on “100 years of Northern Ireland; how has it gone?”;
- The successful programme of events for the Civic Weekend at the start of May;
- Illumination of the façade of City Hall on 22nd June;
- Cycle 100 events;
- Discussion events in the autumn; and
- Northern Ireland Office Arts Project.

She advised that some of the events had been delivered virtually and the recordings were available to watch on-line via the following link <https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/decadeofcentenaries>.

The Partnership noted the update provided.

Peace IV Updates

Update on Secretariat

The Good Relations 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 Partnership noted that with the relaxation of Health Protection Restrictions, planning for project recovery was now progressing, albeit gradually and with lower levels of participation. Delivery Partners were utilising bubbles and larger venues / transport to ensure compliance with government restrictions.

The Partnership noted that project recovery planning indicated that the expected level of achievement of participant targets at the end of extended delivery to December 2022 would be approximately 87% for the CYP theme and 82% for the BPR theme. The Officer detailed that, as project mobilisation and the appointment of delivery partners for the SSS theme progressed, it was estimated that delivery would be a minimum of 85% of targets.

Delivery partners were seeking a range of mitigations, including extended delivery timeframes, flexible and condensed delivery approaches, reduced contact hours, replacement of cross border activity as well as budget realignment.

The Good Relations Manager drew the Members' attention to a summary of the recovery position, included below as Appendix 1. This document detailed the mitigations required by the delivery partners and following consideration it was agreed that discussions and the necessary approvals on the mitigations required by the projects be progressed by the Programme Board and SEUPB.

The delivery of project activity continued to be impacted by government restrictions and recovery was very gradual with delivery partners reporting lower engagement levels online.

The Members noted that the two virtual events held in May were well attended with 42 attending the Polish Culture Café and 92 people attending the webinar on working together at Interfaces and noted the events scheduled for June, as follows:

Month	Events
June	Webinar - Media's Role in Peace Building Wednesday 9th June Culture Café - The Chinese Community Wednesday 16th June

The PEACE IV Internal Audit conducted by AGRS had concluded and three issues relating to governance and implementation had been highlighted. The Secretariat was progressing the recommendations with Annual Assurance statements issued to delivery partners and the On the Spot Visits processes being reviewed and scheduled. Reconvening the Thematic Steering Groups was considered regularly by the PEACE IV programme board taking into account work pressures. Revised implementation plans for project activity would also be progressed further as recovery of project activity increased.

The Partnership were informed that period 25 claims for the Children and Young People (CYP) and Shared Spaces and Services (SSS) themes had now been fully reimbursed. Reimbursement of the Period 25 claim for the Building Positive Relations (BPR) theme remained outstanding. Up to and including claim 25, the SEUPB had reimbursed £1,149,364 in relation to the CYP theme and £1,589,170 for the SSS theme, all themes totalling £3,954,208.

The Claims for Period 26 were being finalised, with an estimated total claim value of £546K across the three themes.

The Partnership recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agree that the discussions and necessary approvals, set out in the document below, regarding the mitigations required by the projects be progressed by the Programme Board and the SEUPB.

Appendix I – Summary of PEACE IV Project Recovery

CYP Project	SEUPB Target	Contractor Target	Expected Level of Achievement against SEUPB target	Mitigations Needed
CYP 1 Tech Connects Afterschool / GIGA Training	1152 (combined) 490	490	1128 (97%) 404 (82%)	Extension to October 22 Condensed Delivery
CYP 1 Tech Connects Tech Camps GIGA Training	490	490	460 (94%)	Extension to October 22 Condensed Delivery
CYP 1 Tech Connects – Insights project Belfast Met	160	180	130 (81%)	Extension to August 22 Flexible delivery approach
CYP 1 Tech Connects – ACT Achievement	n/a	134	134	N/A
CYP 2 Playing Our Part Active Communities Network (ACN)	640 CYP 100 Parents	640 100 Parents	640 (100%) 100 (100%)	Reduction in contact hours Condensed delivery
CYP 3 On the Right Track Sports Project Leisure / Sports inc OCN Training via ACN	1800	1800	1392 (77%)	Extension to December 22 Flexibility to replace residential activity and cross border activity with further sessions Budget realignment
CYP 3 Personal Change Extern	40	42	43 (102%)	Replacing Cross border activity Reduce contact hours

CYP 4 Young Advocates Co-Operation Ireland	80	80	80 (100%)	Reduced contact hours and condensed delivery
CYP 5 Local Area Networks NIHE	900	900	750 (83%)	Flexibility in approach Condensed delivery Reduced contact hours
CYP TOTAL	4612	4756	4033 (87%)	
BPR Projects	SEUPB Target	Contractor Target	Expected Level of Achievement against SEUPB target	
BPR1 (Cross Community Area Networks CCAN) NIHE	900	1044	1044 (100%)	Extended delivery to Sept 22. Flexibilities in delivery approach, composition of networks and areas as well as condensed delivery
BPR2 Creative Communities BCC – Tourism, Culture, Arts & Heritage	400	400 reduced to 264 3600 planning phase	144 (55%)*	Reduction in participant numbers / cluster and reduction in contact hours
BPR3 Transform For Change NICVA	960	960 reduced to 934	620 (67%)	Continued increase in OIG tolerance for contact hours to 30% thereby accepting 21 hour contact per person Rescoping of study visits and community events
BPR4 Belfast and the World Corrymeela	200	200	190 (95%)	Condensed delivery into residential in Autumn 2021.
BPR5 LINCS Northern Ireland Alternatives	80	80 increased to 96 as part of modification	96 (100%)	Extended delivery to Feb/Mar 22.
BPR5 Roma Forward South Partnership	20	20	20 (100%)	None identified at this time
BPR5 Traveller BCC TSO	40	40	40 (100%)	Revised groups sizes 4 x10 6 months extension.
BPR6 St Comgalls Copius Consulting	40	40	40 (100%)	None identified at this time
BPR Projects	2640	2638	2174 (82%)	
SSS Project	SEUPB Target	Delivery Partner Target	Expected Level of Achievement against SEUPB target	
SSS Youth Civic Education	600	600 (20 Pilot Project)	Public Procurement pending Estimated 510	None identified at this time

Update on Children and Young People's (CYP) Theme

The Partnership considered the undernoted 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)

Digital Summer camps are now being promoted online and registrations to date have been encouraging with over 200 participants registered with availability of up to 440 potential spaces available across both of the age group. With the programmes now being delivered face to face, the uptake has been higher due to access to equipment and Wi-Fi. The intention is to deliver 50 young people per lot, per week at Girdwood for ages 6-11 and Fifth Element building as a venue for ages to 12-16. Both venues are easily accessible and will enable compliance with health and safety regulations regarding social distancing etc.

The programmes have will a range of digital technologies including graphic design, music technology, film making, and animation with good relations creative exercises and activities throughout.

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

With this age group being hard to reach, recruitment has been lower than expected due to both lack of equipment and the lockdown. Belfast Metropolitan College aim to slowly reintroduce face to face training by hosting a workshop in the BMC E3 Campus on the 4th June for previous participants. This preliminary activity will enable BMC to re-examine the numbers targeted for face to face delivery and ensure compliance with social distancing, room occupancy and the Health Protection rules and guidance.

A more targeted marketing exercise aimed at approaching specific groups and geographical areas has been adopted and subject to

uptake, BMC may also explore options to make the programme mobile and deliver locally within a community group setting. Planning for the remainder of 2021 is ongoing with BYTES Project and other project partners to ensure progress towards target of 160 is achieved.

3.2 CYP 2 - Playing our Part in the City

Covid has impacted the delivery timeframe of the programme, the Year 3 cohort is now fully recruited with 160 young people and 25 parents with activity due to complete by the end of July 2021.

Online sessions for a small number of hours, mainly to enable the evaluation of the sessions have been approved. Members should note that a modification to reduce contact hours was approved by Programme board / SEUPB as follows:

Young People from 44 to 32 hrs
Parents from 30 to 28 hrs

The Reduction in hours will ensure that the project is completed with minimal disruption. With year 4 still on target to commence in July & complete by Dec 2021.

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

As restrictions have eased in both the Sports & Youth sectors recovery of project activity is gradually progressing with the CYP Thematic Project Manager linking in with participant groups. Pairing of clubs, scheduling of the delivery of OCN training for existing sports clubs and addressing queries on the programme are continuing. Condensed delivery via weekends/longer sessions over the summer to achieve the required cross community contact time face to face is being explored.

Due to the current travel ban, cross border residencials are on hold this element will be subsidied with teambuilding day activities in order to develop and build on the cross community personal relationships/ friendships.

Further restrictions lifting should prove advantageous for the programme to progress with recruitment and delivery. The recruitment exercise for the lead Project Officer is ongoing.

Personal Change

Members are reminded that the final cohort of 19 young people have registered and are attending ongoing Mentoring sessions. Online Activities commenced in February and progressed to face to face delivery in April. Group work sessions have commenced with participants completing 1 OCN to date. Residential activities in NI and Educational Visits are being planned for May 2021, with sporting Activities scheduled for May – June onwards.

Recent group work focused on addressing issues that young people have been facing in their communities including the recent disturbances and public upset that has taken place. In collaboration with the PSNI. Extern have facilitated discussions with young people to discuss the impact on the police, community and the young people involved.

3.4 CYP 4 – Cooperation Ireland (Young Advocates)

Members should note that a change of delivery to enable condensed activity primarily through residential based work was approved by the PEACE IV Programme board and SEUPB. This decision was based on the feedback from the current partner organisations across Belfast including R City, Saints, Holy Trinity YC and East Belfast Alternatives.

Cooperation Ireland is now commencing delivery from May/June 21 through to December 2021, although the PEACE IV team has recently been notified of a change in staff allocated to the project which may impact delivery. The delivery partner is committed to delivering 60 hours cross community contact hours required to the 32 participants remaining to be recruited and will consider if an extension of 3 – 4 months into March 2022. This request falls into the current parameters of the Children & Young People Letter of Offer and will not require SEUPB approval. Delivery will be monitored, and a potential modification request may follow.

3.5 CYP 5 – NIHE Local Area Network Partner Delivery

Due to the ongoing concern regarding NIHE achieving the expected targets, Council has requested a detailed Recovery Plan/ Implementation plan/ Procurement plan for both the CYP and BPR themes to evaluate risk. CYP/ BPR Thematic Chairs will be briefed following NIHE discussions and receipt of plans to determine whether the level of risk should be escalated further

Wheelworks is currently delivering the digital engagement programme to the current participants. Although it should be noted that NIHE's current offering to participants is limited, due to the procurement challenges and delays directly impacted by COVID. Fluctuating relationships with community groups and participant engagement also present challenges for NIHE. The risk to Council of non-achievement is being closely monitored.

Given that NIHE is a delivery partner with Council in the programme, officers are working closely with NIHE to address issues such as delays in procurement, claims and monitoring data.

3.6 Financial and Resource Implications

Period 25 CYP claim totalling £104,574 has now been fully reimbursed. To date SEUPB has now reimbursed £1,149,364.74 in relation to this theme. Claims for the Period 26 reporting period are being prepared for submission to SEUPB by 28 May deadline.

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 Equality Consultative Forum was further consulted on 18 November 2020.”

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 Good Relations 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 but it was hoped that the easing of COVID restrictions would contribute towards enabling the progress of both elements.

She also advised that a presentation, updating on progress and project activities, had been made to both the recent meetings of both the North and West Area Working Groups.

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

Springfield Dam - although support for outreach work from the social value clause had ceased on 30th April 2021, Clonard Monastery Youth Centre and Forthspring Inter Community Group continued to include an element of outreach work on the site, through their existing work. Bio-Diversity projects for 3 local Primary Schools (PS) close to Springfield Dam (Naiscoil antSleibhe Dhuibh, Springfield PS and Blackmountain PS) were being supported as part of the remaining social value clause associated with Springfield Dam.

Following requests from the local community, the Council had agreed to the naming of the new bridge in Springfield Dam. The process would follow the Council’s policy and comprise of a three-stage process which she detailed for the Members. She advised that the consultation would be conducted via the Council’s consultation platform Engagement HQ and it was hoped that it would open at the end of May 2021 and conclude by the end of June 2021.

PEACE IV Network Scheme – Capital Works - The official project launch / sod cutting had taken place on 27th May 2021 in Glencairn Park with the Lord Mayor and representatives from SEUPB, DfC, DfI and the SCP Chair in attendance. The launch marked the start of construction works across the wider network. The contractor was due to commence work in Section 1 (Glencairn / Clarendon) on 14th June 2021, with completion scheduled for December 2021. Estimated dates for planning decisions for Sections 2 (Invest NI site) and Section 3 (Whiterock and Falls Road) were June and July 2021, respectively, with work due to commence on both in August 2021, with completion in May 2022 for Section 2 and December 2021 for Section 3. The estimated dates for planning decisions for Section 4 (Bog Meadows) and Section 5 (Broadway / Transport Hub) was October 2021, with work expected to commence on Section 4 in January 2022, and on Section 5 in February 2022. Work was due to be completed on both Sections 4 and 5 in September 2022.

Engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community to provide regular updates was being prioritised. A Management and Maintenance Working Group, to review the

whole life costs and necessary maintenance arrangement for FMCG had met on 11th May 2021.

Regarding programming, the Partnership was informed that all aspects of programming were progressing where possible.

In regard to the other Programmes:

- **Shared History, Heritage and Identity Content / Narratives for Shared Space**

With the easing of COVID restrictions, face-to-face group sessions were being planned with a provisional date of 19th June 2021 having been set for a group session in Section 1 (Glencairn / Clarendon), with further sessions to be scheduled.

- **Shared Space Volunteer Training**

The tender call for the delivery of the remaining Volunteer Training elements, Shared Space ambassadors, history guides and nature guides had closed on Monday 17th May 2021. The assessment process was currently ongoing.

Virtual sessions, focusing on course induction, monitoring and evaluation had been facilitated during April and Mediation training had been delivered virtually by Intercom on 12th May 2021. The first face-to-face training sessions had been delivered in Springfield Dam's carpark, on Monday 17 May 2021, to the cycling volunteers. Other training sessions, including that for the walking volunteers, had been planned for June 2021.

- **Dialogue and Engagement Project (young people, residents and BME groups)**

The assessment process had been completed and the SEUPB had approved the contract award to Dr Mary Dellenbaugh-Losse, commencing on 1st May 2021.

Planning of engagement activity was progressing with individual discussions with stakeholders scheduled for late May / early June 2021, ahead of facilitated on-line workshops and a resident's survey between June and September 2021.

- **Governance / Management Model**

The assessment process was progressing with the moderation panel having met on 11th May 2021. Approvals to award the contract were progressing under delegated authority and from the SEUPB. Once approvals were in place, the successful contractor would be notified.

- **Youth Engagement and Civic Education**

Public procurement for a delivery partner to engage with 600 young people in cross community activities, including 200 to participate in facilitated sessions on themes such as racism, sectarianism, alcohol / drug abuse, mental health, etc. had opened on Friday 28th May 2021.

- **Springfield Dam activities**

With the easing of COVID restrictions plans for activities that would promote the use of the site were being progressed. A Men's Shed initiative with initial project activity on the crafting of Hedge Chairs was due to commence in July and the recruitment of participants was progressing.

- **Modular Building**

Issues with the fire alarm and emergency lighting checks had been reverted to the contractor. The building would remain closed until fire and emergency compliance had been approved. A report with options for interim management arrangements had been updated with new information around a bookings process option.

The Partnership were advised that the Period 25 claim totalling £196,726 had been fully reimbursed. Up to and including claim 25 SEUPB had now reimbursed £1,589,170 in relation to this theme. The claim and reporting for Period 26 was currently being prepared.

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

Update on Building Positive Relations Theme (BPR)

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

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Face-to -face activity across all BPR projects is gaining momentum as easement of restrictions continues.

3.1 BPR1 – Cross Community Area Networks

CCANs across the City has re-engaged following a period of disengagement due to recent community un-rest with the exception of one CCAN in West Belfast. We have been advised that a longer period of time is required to build relationships within the two communities separately. The Good Relations programme will commence in June with empathy auditing, together with the Shared History and Mental Health workshops.

Two key residents' organisations from the East and North CCAN's have withdrawn from the project due to unforeseen circumstances with replacement groups interested which will be followed up on.

The Place Shaping tender continues to progress internally with public advertisement anticipated mid-June 2021.

Following a recent recruitment exercise, NIHE have able to appoint a P/T Digital & Communications Officer who will take up post 1st June. However, NIHE will require to undertake a further exercise to replace one of the GRO's following their departure.

3.2 BPR2 – Creative Communities Project

The Artist/Heritage residency programme has resumed face-to-face delivery with the youth focused Woodvale/Ardoyne Cluster. Participant numbers remain low at 12/33. The Project team and Cluster Steering Groups are exploring alternative options to enhance participant numbers. The Shankill/Clonard cluster continues to deliver online successfully with 32 participants and plans for a residential are underway. As restrictions continue to ease, the Divis/Lower Shankill, St Malachy's/Albert Foundry FC and Carlisle Circus clusters are preparing for face-to-face group sessions in the coming weeks.

The Artist in Residency for the East Belfast Thematic Cluster is anticipated to commence over the summer period following the procurement exercise. The LGBTQ+ Thematic Cluster continues to communicate online and is currently planning for project idea facilitative sessions.

Exploratory conversations are underway with Malone Integrated College as to level of interest the school's priorities following re-opening.

3.3 BPR3 – Transform for Change Project

Transformative Leadership Programme: Spring cohorts (Jan – Mar 2021) have now completed the Leadership Training element with 80 learners (subject to approval). Interest remains high across a further 5 Cluster areas currently participating in North and Upper Springfield Road, Colin, Belvoir/Taughmonagh/Finaghy. Local project development continues across the City and include Community Gardens, Art installation, Branding and Identity, Intergenerational events and Multi-Cultural festivals. Development of project plans continue online while Cluster participants attempt to schedule convening face-to-face to further implement projects subject to Government guidance and legalisation.

Following easement of COVID restrictions, plans to convene the organisation of local community engagement events and cross border/UK study visits will resume. A virtual city-wide 'networking' event will be held on the 10th June focusing on innovative, transformative models of collaborative approaches to Peace

Building. This is a closed event for TfC participants only and will include local case studies and keynote speakers from Scotland. Members will be encouraged to participate, and an invite will be circulated in due course.

3.4 BPR4 – Belfast and the World (BATW)

Both the Ligoniel and Ballynafegh cohorts have now completed the programme with the open online cohort due to complete at the end of June. The Delivery Agent is on target to complete the year 3 target with 96% completion rate.

For the final year, a further BATW course is currently being promoted with a blended approach of online, small group work sessions, residential and study tours. It is anticipated to commence late June. The remaining, and last, cohort is anticipated to commence early Autumn.

The second Civic led event (Play focusing on Partition) will take place in Autumn, anticipated with a live audience.

The delivery of the EU Study trips remains on hold as some travel restrictions to EU countries persist. Consideration of alternative trips across NI and ROI continue to be explored with the Delivery Agent and their Steering Committee.

3.5 BPR5 – Supporting Connected Communities - LINCS Projects

The organised walks around local places of special interest continue and has proved to be an extremely successful approach to re-connecting participants. With participant re-invigorated enthusiasm, the project team are currently revising and planning for summer and Autumn programmes and events.

BPR5 – Traveller Project - Supporting Connected Communities

Mobilisation of the project is continuing with the ITT for the Traveller Support Hub now open on eTenders with an anticipated contract start date of 1st September. The project will be launched on the 2nd June via social media and promotional flyers and posters now in circulation.

With the easement of COVID restrictions engagement plans are underway to meet key individuals from the Traveller community and promote the programme further. On the back of these introductions and trust building meetings, it is anticipated that the Culture and Heritage workshops will commence in early Autumn. Exploratory discussions are underway with the organisers of the West Belfast Féile an Phobail with a view to including one of the Traveller Intercommunity festivals in the Programme.

BPR5 – Roma Project - Supporting Connected Communities

This city-wide Roma Support Programme is progressing well with full complement of staff now in place. The project will be virtually launched on the 15th June and plans are underway to commence face-to-face appointments w/c 31st May albeit in a phased manner within the *Roma Support Hub*. The engagement plan is operational with key stakeholders with the *Building Positive Relations* programme anticipating commencing face-to-face sessions over the summer period.

3.6 BPR6 – St. Comgalls

Delivery Agent and partners are due to commence workshops w/c 7th June and plans are underway for project launch, first project seminar and project networking event.

To date, the Delivery Agent and partners have recruited 26 adults and 24 young people.

3.7 Financial & 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.

To date all PEACE IV costs for the BPR Theme, up to Period 24 totalling £1,215,673 have been fully eligible and reimbursed by SEUPB.

3.8 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 Equality Consultative Forum was further consulted on 18 November 2020.”

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

Chairperson