

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY 7th MARCH, 2022

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillors Kyle, Carson and O'Hara.

External Members: Ms. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Ms. J. Irwin, Community Relations Council;
Mr. I. McLaughlin, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Superintendent Pollock, PSNI; and
Ms. A. Tohill, Good Relations, TEO.

In attendance: Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager;
Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;
Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE IV Programme Manager;
Mr. D. Robinson, Good Relations Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillor Hutchinson and also from Mr. J. Donnelly, Miss. G. Duggan, Ms. K. Jardine, Ms. G. Mornhinweg, Mr. M. McBride and Ms. Ann Marie White.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 7th February 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

Ms. J. Irwin declared an interest in item 3 (c), namely, Peace IV Updates – update on SSS Theme, in that ArtsEkta received funding from the Community Relations Council of which she was Chief Executive.

Mrs. B. Arthurs declared an interest in item 3 (d), namely, Peace IV Updates – update on BPR Theme, in that she was an employee of the Forward South Partnership, which acts as the delivery agent for one of the Peace IV projects.

Ms. A. Tohill declared an interest in Peace IV update reports 3(a) to 3 (d) in that she sat on the SEUPB PEACE IV Steering Group Committee and that as the accountable Department, The Executive Office had committed funding towards the Peace IV Programme.

Membership of Partnership

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Carson to his first meeting. He also advised that this was the last meeting for Superintendent Pollock, who was being replaced next month

on the Partnership by Superintendent Amanda Ford, and on behalf of the Partnership he expressed thanks to him for his contribution.

Noted.

Red Cross Refugee Briefing Session

The Chairperson, on behalf of the Partnership, asked that thanks be recorded to Ms. A. M. White for the successful and informative Red Cross Refugee Briefing Session that had been held on Issues Facing Refugees and Asylum Seekers on 22nd February.

It was noted that Ms. A.M. White had kindly agreed to facilitate a 'mop-up' session for those Members who had been unable to attend, and it had also been agreed that other interested parties could be invited to attend this session.

The Members were advised that details would be circulated in due course.

Noted.

St Comgall's Project Presentation on Educational Resources and Exhibition Materials Development

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. R. Crowe, Copius Consulting, Mr. M. Lyons, Redhead Exhibition and Mr. G. McConville, Falls Community Council, to the meeting.

Mr. Crowe and Mr. Lyons with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation provided a progress update on the BPR6 St Comgalls, along with an overview of the principle for the methodology for content gathering and the style and layout of the templates for the educational resources and exhibition materials for use in the St Comgall's exhibition.

The Partnership also considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress update on the BPR6 St Comgalls project and to seek approval in principle for the methodology for content gathering and the style and layout of the templates for the educational resources and exhibition materials for use in the St Comgall's exhibition.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report and agree

- (i) in principle, the methodology for content gathering, the style and layout of the templates for the educational resources and exhibition materials**
- (ii) To delegate authority to the Programme Board to agree the content of the final resource for full suite of the**

educational resources and exhibition materials, which will also be subject to SEUPB approval.

3.0 Main report

Background

- 3.1 This report provides context to a presentation to the SCP by PEACE IV delivery partner Copius, and their consortium partners Redhead Exhibition and Falls Community Council.
- 3.2 Members will recall the St Comgalls project was approved in 2019 to utilize underspend within the Building Positive Relations theme. Following a public procurement exercise, Copius Consulting in partnership with Falls Community Council and Redhead Exhibition were appointed to develop a suite of educational resources and exhibition products as part of an outreach and engagement programme.
- 3.3 This project focuses on the delivery of community-based programmes to develop an interpretative exhibition and educational resource packs on the history and experience of living in the Divis/Falls/Shankill area during the conflict through to the peace process.
- 3.4 The exhibition will be displayed in the St Comgalls Community Hub and the educational resource packs will provide added value. Development of St Comgall's is currently underway and will open in spring / summer 2022. In 2023, a new visitor exhibition will open within the complex.

The exhibition entitled 'Conflict, Trouble & Peace 1969-98' will explore life in the Divis and Falls area during The Troubles and interpret what life was like there during this period.

The interpretative exhibition on the history of the site will be researched, developed and designed through community-based programmes.

Key aspects of the exhibition will focus on:

- The building, a history past to present
- Social and economic History of Lower Falls
- Growth up the Falls and its place in Belfast
- The 'claim to fame' element of being from Lower Falls and idea of being from 'Down the road' or 'Up the road'

The exhibition will explore the social, political, economic and cultural fabric of life during this time as shaped and experienced by the community close to St Comgall's and its environs, with

reference also to the wider context of events and developments elsewhere in west Belfast, Belfast, Ireland, the UK and internationally.

The concepts for the wider exhibition have been developed by Falls Community Council in consultation with local historians, interpretive specialists and community sector representatives.

It is proposed that the exhibition will take visitors on a journey through The Troubles as lived and experienced by the community around St Comgall's.

3.5 Educational Resources:

The educational resources will be made up of activity sheets for teachers and pupils and be produced to complement curriculum requirements at key stage 3 and 4 for subjects such as History, English, Geography, Learning for Life and Work, Government & Politics and Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU).

The development of the activity sheets is part of work being conducted by Redhead Exhibition who have engaged an educational consultant in a programme of best practice research around what other museums and visitor centres are producing for schools. This work will also ensure that the activity sheets have currency for teachers and pupils alike and be curriculum specific as detailed above.

This educational consultant has researched and developed content for 15 worksheets that are representative of what visitors will explore and engage with when visiting the St. Comgall's Visitor Exhibition. These 15 worksheets will form the basis of the education pack made available to teachers and pupils and will be supplemented by other services as part of the overall education package on offer as part of the school visit. The 15 worksheets (examples of which are included in Appendix 1) have been selected from the 26 core content sections of the exhibition narrative as developed by Falls Community Council for the St. Comgall's Visitor Exhibition.

The educational resource content has also been developed using the Community Relations Council's principles created to inform how remembering in a public space is presented, namely,

- (a) Start from the historical facts;
- (b) recognise the implications and consequences of what happened;
- (c) understand that different perceptions and interpretations exist;

- (d) show how events and activities can deepen understanding of the period, and
- (e) all to be seen in the context of an 'inclusive and accepting society.

It should be noted this approach was used as specification for the decade of centenary exhibitions at City Hall and all other decade of centenary public interpretation works.

3.6 Exhibition materials:

The programme exhibition will incorporate wider programme content emerging from engagement activities completed throughout the lifetime of the programme, including for example, programme participant transcripts, shared learning, best practice and study visits etc. This content has been informed by the participants who are from the local Divis/ Falls/ Shankill area and were recruited to the programme on a 50% 50% cross community basis, ensuring the emerging content reflects a mixed perspective.

Recommendations:

- 3.7** Based on the above report and the presentation made to members, it is requested that member note the above approach and agree in principle, the methodology for content gathering, the style and layout of the templates for the educational resources and exhibition materials.

To expediate further delivery of the resource material, it is also request that the Partnership delegate authority to the Programme Board to agree the content of the final resource for full suite of the educational resources and exhibition materials, which will also be subject to SEUPB approval.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.8** There are no financial implications as the exhibition materials will be delivered within the current contract award and budget value of the BPR6 projects.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.9** 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 Chairperson thanked the representatives for their informative presentation and they left the meeting.

Following a query from a Member, the Programme Manager confirmed that the Members were not being asked to approve the final exhibition without sight but to delegate authority to the Programme Board to agree the final content. The Members were reminded that the SEUPB, as the funding body, would also be approving the content.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it agree:

- in principle, the methodology for content gathering, the style and layout of the templates for the educational resources and exhibition materials; and
- to delegate authority to the Programme Board to agree the content of the final resource for full suite of the educational resources and exhibition materials and noted that this would be subject to approval of the SEUPB.

Peace IV Update Reports

Secretariat Update

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 Members were advised that the project activity and project modifications to enable delivery was continuing to be closely monitored.

The officer continued that, as previously advised, the Thematic Chairs and the PIV Manager had met in early February 2022 to review project implementation and potential mitigations. The Members were asked to note the following key recommendations and actions that had been agreed by the Programme Board and to note that, where possible, these were being progressed by the PIV Manager:

- the SSS TPM and PP PM to continue to update the Programme Board in the absence of the SSS Thematic Chair. Input relating to issues on the ground to be provided to the TPM and PM through the West NIM;
- any challenges or accountability issues relating to the SSS theme to be highlighted to the PIV Programme Board;
- correspondence to be issued to all high-risk projects, CYP3, CYP5, BPR1 and BPR2 requesting an update implementation plan together with senior management assurance on project implementation;
- further guidance to be sought regarding the steps to be taken to ensure delivery of targets within CYP5;
- noted that all efforts to mobilise the Traveller support / capacity building programme had been exhausted. The market had been tested on numerous occasions and there was no organisation with the resource or capacity to deliver the project. Reallocation of the £66K to be explored;

- comms advice to be sought regarding the steps taken to mobilise the Traveller support/capacity element;
- a report highlighting the issues affecting delivery and risks to Council to be submitted to DMT for escalation; and
- the Chairs agreed there was clear evidence that current market and environmental conditions continued to impact delivery and that the ongoing issues needed be escalated to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Senior Officers with a view to meeting Senior Officers within the SEUPB to highlight concerns and discuss the need for flexibility.

The Programme Manager advised that recent discussions with the SEUPB regarding outstanding operational matters had highlighted the need to review the programme at a higher level. She advised that the SEUPB had provided the Council with the opportunity to reconsider delivery based on what could realistically be achieved and the modifications that were necessary at a programme level. The SEUPB had requested that a Business Case be submitted outlining the expected level of delivery, together with any mitigations required to enable Council to have more freedom to manage the programme within wider parameters, rather than those currently available. The SEUPB had indicated that reduced participants/contact hours might result in reductions in the Letter of Offer (LoO), however, any underspend could be reallocated to the capital works within the SSS theme, given the significant increased costs.

The Programme Manager advised that the PIV Team were currently liaising with the Delivery Partners to collate the business case for the SEUPB on what realistically could be delivered within the remaining timeframe. Given the need to urgently progress the business case and to enable consideration of it by the SEUPB Steering Committee at its April meeting, the Partnership agreed to recommend that authority be delegated to the Director of Neighbourhood Services, as the Senior Reporting Officer for PEACE IV, and to the Good Relations Manager to agree the necessary business case and to note that a further report would be submitted to the April meeting of the Shared City Partnership.

The Members also noted that the Programme Board had reviewed the LoO conditions in February 2022 and the specified conditions were either completed or currently being dealt with.

The Jewish Culture Café had been successfully delivered on a virtual basis on 16th February. An evaluation of the event was currently underway. Planning was also underway for the Future Peacebuilders Conference scheduled to be held on 8th March.

The Good Relations Manager highlighted that resource pressures within the PEACE IV team continued, with staff resource difficulties presenting significant risks to the delivery of the Programme given that activity was increasing.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Partnership, thanked the Peace IV Programme Manager and all the Peace IV staff for their ongoing commitment during what continued to be an extremely challenging work environment.

The Members noted that, as previously reported, the total spend of the programme to date up to Period 28 (October 21) was £5,683,940. The SEUPB had now reimbursed all Period 26 claims, with total claims reimbursement to date of £4,783,726. Reimbursement of Period 27 and 28 claims, with a combined value of £954,626, remained outstanding although

verification had commenced. The compilation of claims for Period 29, with an estimated value of £460K, was progressing to be submitted to the SEUPB by 28th February.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it grant delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services and the Good Relations Manager to agree the necessary business case/mitigations for submission to the SEUPB and to note that a further report will be submitted to the April meeting of the Partnership.

Children and Young People (CYP Update)

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 and Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report and related appendices and agree the following proposals:

CYP3 OTRT – to agree in principle, a contract uplift of up to 10% of the contract value, estimated at £20,000, subject to confirmation of costs, availability of funding and SEUPB approval

3.0 Main report

Project Updates

3.1 CYP 1 – TECH CONNECTS, GIGA Training (Afterschool’s and Digital Arts Academies (Tech Camps) (6-11, 12-16 yr. olds)

GIGA Training has completed delivery of the mid-term tech camps. Monitoring and Evaluation is currently being assessed to confirm number of completers. GIGA have reassessed the Easter Break programme and is planning to deliver limited programmes to aid achievement of targets, as many sessions have been oversubscribed. The Music/DJ sessions for ages 12-16 (Lot 2) during Mid -Term had little uptake and therefore, GIGA is rescheduling to Easter time. Members should note that planning for summer sessions is also progressing with GIGA currently identifying venues at present, before progressing towards live recruitment. With up to 400 young people taking part to date (47%), GIGA training is confident on delivering the full target of 859 by the end of summer 2022.

CYP 1 – TECH CONNECTS, Belfast Metropolitan College (Digital Insights Programme) (17-24 yr. olds)

Members should note Belfast Metropolitan College has recruited participants through Hazelwood Integrated College and had

identified challenges in retaining engagement with these young people in an after-school setting. A robust rationale to enable delivery during school hours has been submitted and recently approved by SEUPB. With the delivery agent already achieving 42% of the participant target of 160, there are 6 months remaining to recruit and condense delivery. Monitoring of targets and risk of delivery is continuing to be closely assessed.

3.2 CYP 2 - Playing our Part in the City

Final analysis of monitoring and evaluation data confirms that 610 young people have completed the programme from an initial target of 640. From a target of 100 parents to engage and take part, Council have confirmed that 109 parents have completed the programme. In terms of final performance this is equivalent to over 90% achievement of targets specified within contract and is in line with the Output Indicator Guidance threshold.

Active Communities Network is currently arranging a closure event, with a final short story to be shown and achievements of participants celebrated. Secretariat will seek SCP representation at this event, as well as other remaining closure events under the CYP theme.

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

Members are asked to note the addendum to extend delivery for Active Communities Network is being progressed along with confirmation of the additional costs including management costs, OCN costs and facilitator costs. Members are requested to agree in principle, a contract uplift of up to 10% of the contract value, estimated at £20,000, subject to confirmation of costs, availability of funding and SEUPB approval.

Members should note that the request to include participants who have undertaken OCN training as completed was declined by SEUPB. Members are also reminded of the high risks associated with this project, given that over 1100 participants are to be recruited across 6 months to August 2022. A robust business case for a reduction in targets and further mitigations will be made to SEUPB in due course.

Personal Change

Extern have fully delivered on the target of 42, as recent monitoring information confirms 43 completers to date. Attendance records confirm all participants have achieved 265 cross community hours and over. All participants have fully completed 7 OCN modules, as well as residential and sporting activities.

The final closure event is planned for Wednesday, March 2nd, 2022 from 6pm to 7.30pm and will be held at the MAC, St Anne's Square, Belfast. Invites were issued on 11 February 2022 via Eventbrite. Members are asked to note if they would like to attend and have

not received an invitation, they should contact the secretariat directly via the contact officer named within this paper. Numbers are limited as all previous participants are being invited to attend the celebration and the venue can only hold a certain number of attendees.

The final payment and report on the project are to be finalised by the secretariat. In addition, Extern will be submitting case studies to evidence the impact of the programme to date.

3.4 CYP 4 – Cooperation Ireland (Young Advocates)

The target of 80 participants has been achieved with participants having completed 60 hours cross community contact time. Project delivery is progressing with the launch of a final social campaign, which will focus on sexual harassment, through animation created by the Young Advocates. The campaign launch is scheduled to take place in Crumlin Road Gaol on 11 March 2022. Speakers at the launch include the Minister of Justice, the Lord Mayor of Belfast, and the Chair of Shared City Partnership Invitations to members will be issued in due course via Cooperation Ireland.

Further planning for the young people's conference, to take place in April 2022 is progressing. This event will be a mix of a conference and celebration, to mark the final closure event for the project. Morrow Communications will also progress the final short story footage for showcasing at the closure event.

3.5 CYP 5 – NIHE Local Area Network Partner Delivery

NIHE has now appointed the replacement programme manager. Delivery of project activity is continuing with some networks increasing contact hours.

Recruitment of further groups / participants is a priority with a balance of 757 participants to recruit. Further clarity on the request to use an SLA arrangement with participant groups has been submitted to SEUPB. Members are reminded of the high risk associated with this project and its current Red status in the RAG report.

NIHE has been requested to submit an updated implementation plan together with an assurance of delivery for projects under both CYP and BPR themes.

Further mitigations will also be discussed with NIHE in due course and a business case submitted to SEUPB for consideration.

3.6 Financial and Resource Implications

To date costs for the CYP Theme up to Period 26 totaling £1,296,859 has been fully reimbursed by SEUPB. Payment of Claims for Period 27 and Period 28 valued at £198,878 remains outstanding, with Period 27 currently being verified by SEUPB.

Period 29 covers the Period November to Jan is due for submission in February 2022.

**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 to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the report and agree, in principle, a contract uplift of up to 10% of the contract value, estimated at £20,000, for the CYP3 On the Right Track project, subject to confirmation of the costs, the availability of funding and the approval of the SEUPB.

Shared Spaces and Services (SSS Update)

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 implementation of the Shared Space and Services theme was progressing and drew the Members’ attention to the risks associated with delivery which had been attached as an appendix.

She then referred specifically to the Capital Works at the Forth Meadow Community Greenway.

PEACE IV Network Scheme – Capital Works - The works at Section 1, Clarendon / Glencairn, were scheduled for completion in early March 2022. The design team were finalising the signage with maps, names, narratives and points of interest highlighted. Following the PQQ exercise for the public art pieces, which had identified 6 artists, ITTs had been issued to the artists on 11th February, these would be open for 6 weeks (closing Friday, 25th March).

The work at Sections 3 and 4 had been delayed due to weather and were rescheduled to commence late February/early March 2022.

Work at Section 2 to address invasive species and contaminated land has commenced.

The Members were advised that Section 2 was currently subject to a Judicial Review which could result in further delays. The officer highlighted that any delay in terms of the timeline might jeopardize the funding for the project and the risk of financial and reputational implications for the Council. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had been updated of this risk at its February meeting and Legal Services solicitors had subsequently written to the Court seeking to expedite the hearing that was scheduled for mid-March 2022.

The officer highlighted that Section 2 was an integral element of the project as there were no alternative options available for this part of the route. If the Council did not deliver Section 2 then full delivery of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway project would not be possible.

Social Value Clause – One placement student and one apprentice were currently employed by the contractor who had attended meetings with Falls Community Council and Ulster Wildlife Trust to provide updates. The contractor had also indicated that it would be willing to meet with any local community groups interested in the works.

The delayed start dates for works packages in sections 3 and 4 and the ongoing Judicial Review for Section 2, had impacted on the contractor's ability to fulfil social clause Requirements.

The Members were asked to note that the Social Clause reporting requirements were being added to the agenda for the monthly contractor progress meetings to ensure that all outstanding requirements were met.

- **Programming**

Implementation of the programming aspects was progressing.

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

The discussion groups continued to be facilitated through Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, with Mediation NI chasing up outstanding Monitoring and Evaluation documentation.

The SEUPB had not yet approved the modification request for an increase to the tolerance for contact hours to 60% (reducing from 12 to 7 hours), however, they had given approval for the inclusion of participants from local schools (170 pupils) and agreed that 40% of the contact hours would be within school hours. To help with this engagement, the project team had enlisted the help of Corrymeela and individuals with youth work experience.

A walkthrough of Section 4 and 5 was being planned to look at possible locations for information panels, this would involve discussion and input from The Ulster Wildlife Trust and St. James Community Farm.

The Members noted that Equality Screening had now been completed on the narratives and information panels and it had been signed off with some mitigating actions. These included trying to ensure that all signage was accessible to people with disabilities and those who spoke other languages. The signed document would be included in the Quarter 3 Equality report to the Strategic and Policy Resources Committee.

- **Shared Space Volunteer Training**

Following completion of training, participants from the first group were now organising cycles / walks by themselves, along with some participants from the second Group. Some of the walk leads were looking at starting to lead their own groups in Section 1 and Falls Park and had asked for information around FMCG branding for possible promotion leaflets. The second group were continuing their training. Following the contract up-lift, Sustrans was now in the process of recruiting extra volunteer participants. As part of further recruitment, Volunteer Now had been making regular use of the building in Springfield Dam for information sessions. Volunteer Now was also looking at involving some of their volunteers in up-coming and planned events / activities with some of the other supported projects (for example, a large public event scheduled for Saturday, 5th March at Springfield Dam).

The Conservation Volunteers continued to recruit participants and had been asked to provide a recruitment and training plan.

All 3 project leads (Sustrans, The Conservation Volunteers and Volunteer Now Enterprise) had been in contact to discuss links and opportunities for collaboration and to avoid any conflict with project delivery.

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

MDL had submitted the final Dialogue and Engagement report, which had been reviewed by PEACE IV. The report, along with a summary table of recommendations, possible actions and links to existing supported project work, had been attached as an appendix to the agenda papers.

She explained that the next step was for officers to develop an action plan to address the recommendations and to this end a meeting was being arranged to discuss the recommendations from the MDL report and the North Belfast Youth Area teams report - "Waste 2 Space" as both reports included feedback from young people in relation to FMCG.

The Partnership Members noted that they were content with the recommendations, potential actions and linkages to any existing work.

- **Governance / Management Model**

Programme Board comments on the interim governance report had been collated and submitted to the delivery agent for action. Viatac had undertaken a visit to Belfast from 14th -18th February, this had included a facilitated workshop with key stakeholders at the Innovation Factory and a virtual discussion with Council officers, to discuss an initial draft of a suggested governance structure on 17th February.

Presentation slides that formed the basis of the discussion had been attached as a appendices to the agenda. The draft had been positively received and future workshops would involve both key stakeholders and Council Officers.

- **Youth Engagement and Civic Education**

There had been positive engagement with local youth organisations and links established with local youth / community safety forums, schools, and churches.

16 young people were in the process of being registered, with training commencing in February 2022. The project lead had received interest / commitment from a further 48 young people. As referenced above, a meeting was being arranged with the Delivery Partner and EA North Belfast Youth Area teams to discuss the reports referred.

- **Modular Building**

The modular building was being used regularly by the Volunteer Cycle/Walk Lead participants for use during their training and by Volunteer Now to facilitate Information/Recruitment sessions. It was anticipated that more projects and groups would make use of this venue with the easing of COVID restrictions.

- **SSS Activities and Animation Programme Co-ordinator**

ArtsEkta had provided a draft events/activities plan, showing which activity/event would take place in which section and if it was working in collaboration with other organisations.

Any delays or changes to the completion dates of any sections would require rescheduling and ArtsEkta would be kept updated of any changes.

Ahead of its first public event in Springfield Dam on 5th March, ArtsEkta had held a photolaunch at Springfield Dam on 21st February, the Lord Mayor and the SEUPB had both been in attendance.

The Partnership noted that the SEUPB had reimbursed all Claims up to Period 26 totalling £1,639,342. Claims for Period 27 (£85,411) and Period 28 (£97,387) remained outstanding, although initial verification had progressed, Period 29 claims covering November to January were currently being prepared for submission by the 28th February.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and the RAG Report and accept the recommendations, possible actions and links to existing supported project work contained within the MDL Dialogue and Engagement Project Report.

Building Positive Relationships (BPR Update)

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 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 and Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report and related appendices and agree the following proposals:

- BPR5 Roma- to extend project delivery until September 2022, this is within the current contract specifications for the Roma project and BCC Letter of Offer.**
- BPR6 St Comgalls (i) to agree in principle the methodology for content gathering, the style and layout of the templates for the educational resources and exhibition materials. (ii) to delegate authority to the Programme Board to agree the content of the final resource for full suite of the educational resources and exhibition materials, which will also be subject to SEUPB approval.**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Implementation of the project is ongoing and face to face activity continues to increase although Covid 19 impacts continue to affect elements of delivery and participation. Risks associated with delivery are outlined in Appendix I Risk Tracker and have recently been discussed with SEUPB.

3.1 BPR1 – Cross Community Area Networks (CCAN)

Progress in establishing all 6 CCANs is continuing, with the number of registered participants now increased to 103. The Period 29 quarterly report and supporting documentation has been submitted highlighting an increase in activities across each of the community area networks.

The submitted modification requests to extend the geographical scope for South and North Belfast to and include participants from the BAME community have been approved by SEUPB which is aiding delivery.

The new NIHE Programme Manager is now in post and is progressing implementation of the programme.

A fully revised implementation and delivery plan detailing timeline and objectives remaining across the BPR1 and the NIHE CYP programmes, together with assurances of delivery have been requested from NIHE.

3.2 BPR2 – Creative Communities Project

Delivery with established clusters is progressing. Members should note that following the withdrawal of St. Malachys from the Football Cluster, the artist in residence is exploring alternative options with Rosario suggested as a possible interested group. The other partner, Albert Foundry has 15 participants ready to engage and are eager to progress this cohort and the associated activities. The artist is to provide a full revision of his planned activity and workshop content together with a breakdown of participant numbers.

The East Cluster is keen to condense delivery and progress a planned residential as per STA request which remains with SEUPB for approval.

Members should note that the delivery lead within Creative Communities has been requested to provide a full and revised implementation plan across all delivery areas. As such each cohort will be required to outline the position in full to support the completion of the revised implementation plan. An assurance of delivery of the project from senior management has also been requested.

3.3 BPR3 – Transform for Change Project

Transformative Leadership Programme:

Recruitment of new cohorts has progressed with 107 participants registered, engaged and participating in the project and 21 participants have completed the ILM level 3 award and support sessions are ongoing.

The PEACE IV team continue to be involved in welcome and project development workshops and 3 scheduled introductions have been delivered across the partners

The action plan for the previous East cluster for the delivery of community workshops / trips has been approved and the Resource Allocation has been signed and procurement for activities has commenced. Two further Action Plans from South Belfast project development workshops are currently being assessed.

NICVA has appointed a new coordinator who is keen to involve participants in a codesign approach to the study and best practice visits and will liaise closely with the project manager to deliver these.

Members should note that the Project Support Officer has resigned, and a requisition has been progressed to the HR to recruit via an agency approach for 6 months.

3.4 BPR4 – Belfast and the World (BATW)

Year 4 groups, comprising of 46 participants have been actively engaging in project activity with some participants recently attending a residential at Ballycastle. Group work was captured by Morrow for the project film.

Planning for the Study visits is progressing and a full itinerary for residentials to Cork and Dublin have been shared. The Study Visits will comprise of 3 days of interaction, travel and facilitated by local experts. Similarly, a further 2, day trips are planned within Northern Ireland to comprise of the Antrim coast and Somme WW1 site which will also be facilitated by local specialists.

A further residential is also being planned in March to address any under delivery for participants which will ensure engagement hours are achieved and any missed learning opportunities are provided and availed of.

In terms of civic events. the development of the Partition play, which is a one-person performance, is continuing. The play will be recorded and then shown at an event, potentially to be held within City Hall pending approvals.

3.5 BPR5 – Supporting Connected Communities - LINCS Project

Of the 96 core participants, previously reported, 67 participants have completed their engagement hours with a further 28

attending on an ad hoc basis. It is envisaged the remaining 29 participants will achieve the required contact hours by September 2022

A summary of project progress to date is outlined below.

- South Belfast groups engaged in a total 18 sessions / events / workshops with a combined total of 67 contact hours.
- East Belfast groups engaged in a total 23 sessions / events / workshops with a combined total of 94 contact hours.
- North Belfast participants have engaged in 10 sessions / events with 32 contact hours.
- West Belfast participants have engaged in 21 sessions / events with 71 contact hours.

A further Inclusion Forum is scheduled for March and the delivery partner has decided on an online approach due to low attendance at the previous in person Inclusion Forum. The symposium has been rescheduled for early May 2022.

3.6 BPR5 – Traveller Project - Supporting Connected Communities

Delivery of the Genealogy programme of workshops was completed on the 15 February and planning for the exhibition is underway with the exhibition showcase is scheduled for March 2022.

The request for quotation for Empowering Young women workshop programme and exhibition was reissued with two submissions being received and currently being assessed. Scoping exercises for the further two workshop programmes are underway with some positive indications of interest. Further engagement and clarity on traveller engagement have been requested.

Discussions on other engagement opportunities are continuing, although it is challenging making direct contact with other potential Traveller participants. A revised implementation plan is currently being developed to provide assurances regarding delivery and targets remaining across the programme including how and when these will be achieved.

SEUPB has been advised of the nil response to the Capacity Building project and the options for reallocation of funding are under consideration.

3.7 BPR5 – Roma Project - Supporting Connected Communities

The Roma Support Hub is continuing to support in excess of 200 referrals during the quarter. Data from the Advice Pro system captured key elements of the nature of advice and guidance sought.

The advocacy training is scheduled to commence on 5 March 2022 and the English language classes across East and South Belfast are commencing in February and March 2022.

5 participants for the Advice training have been identified from the Romanian community. The level of qualification and the duration of this training is being finalised.

Planning of further intercultural events is progressing, with the QFT hosting an event for the Romanian and local community.

A fully revised implementation plan has been provided which is currently being considered.

Members are requested to agree the request from Forward South Partnership to extend project delivery to September 2022, which is within Council's current Letter of Offer timeframe. SEUPB will be updated on this position.

3.8 BPR6 – St. Comgalls

Following the presentation today by the project delivery partner, Copius, members are requested to agree the methodology for content gathering, the style and layout of the templates for the educational resources and exhibition materials.

Members are also requested to delegate authority to the Programme Board to consider and agree the content of the final resources to be used. The resources will also be considered and approved by SEUPB, and a further report will be presented to members in due course.

Workshops, seminars and networking events for youth and adult cohorts continue. The delivery partner has advised the second adult cohort is commencing sessions on 19 February 2022 and the workshops will then be fully recruited. Planning for the seminars is underway with National Identity in Sport and Historical Restoration identified as key topic areas, based on discussions with participants during workshops.

The project has been promoting inclusion in Networking events through partner organisations including: Black Mountain Shared Space, Forthspring, New City Life, Grosvenor, Shankill Women's Centre, although from March 2022, the event will open to public advertisement with associated comms.

Delivery of project activity is slightly behind schedule and a revised implementation plan has been requested to enable the realigning of targets and a possible extension.

Members should note that the overnight Study trip to Wolverhampton Art Gallery is being moved to NI and will include visits to the Tower Museum and Seamus Heaney Homeplace,

subject to SEUPB approval. Other trips to ROI will remain as planned due to relaxed restrictions.

3.9 Cinematography Project

Morrow Communications is continuing to film project activity as opportunities arise. Production of short films for CYP2 and CYP3 Personal Change has progressed, and they are to be showcased at closure events in March 2022.

Further filming / clips in production include Forth Meadow Community Greenway, BPR4 Corrymeela and the CYP4 Young Advocates campaign.

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

To date costs for the BPR Theme up to Period 26 totalling £1,847,524 has now been fully reimbursed by SEUPB. Payment of Claims for Period 27 and Period 28 valued at £573,231 remains outstanding, with Period 27 currently being verified by SEUPB. Period 29 covering the Period November to January is being prepared for submission on 28 February 2022.

3.11 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 to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it adopt the recommendations as outlined at section 2.0 of the report.

PEACE PLUS

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the development of the overall PEACE PLUS programme and specific updates on emerging work being undertaken as part of the first investment area that will open under this programme 1.1. Co-Designed Local Community Peace Action Plan for Belfast.

2.0 Recommendations

That Members note the contents of this report

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

SEUPB is currently seeking approval from the European Commission for the development of the PEACE PLUS Programme, a €1 billion investment to progress towards a peaceful and stable society in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland. It comprises of six themes, which encompass 22 individual investment areas for possible submissions for investment. An infographic illustrating the main themes of the PEACE PLUS Programme is shown in Appendix 1.

3.2 PEACE PLUS Overall Programme update

The following provides a brief summary of the key information emerging on the development of the overall PEACEPLUS Programme.

Summary

- SEUPB have submitted a finance agreement to the European Commission as part of the process to receive final approval for the overall programme.
- Local Community Peace Action Plans – will be the first programme to open with the earliest date for an open call expected to be April 2022 (though this may not be realistic as guidance on the expected co-design process, and submission of the plan has not yet been received from SEUPB).
- SEUPB advised that they are moving to a one stage application process, rather than two stages as in previous PEACE Programmes.

Other investment areas (out of the 22) that may open soon after 1.1. include:

- 1.4 Reimagining communities (€75 million available) - To create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of transformative shared spaces and services, which will support and embed peace and reconciliation.
- 3.2 Peace Plus Youth Programme (€47 million available) - To enhance the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background, develop their confidence and future potential and contribute towards the creation of a more cohesive society.
- 4.3 Victims and Survivors (€25 million available) - To create a more cohesive society through an increased provision of services.

The plans for all investment areas will be centred around three core themes:

1. Community regeneration and transformation;
2. Thriving and peaceful communities; and
3. Celebrating culture, diversity and inclusion.

More information on the overall Programme can be found at the link below:

Seupb.eu/sites/default/files/styles/PEACE%20PLUS%20PLUS%20Consultation/Peace%20Plus%20

[Programme%202021-2027%20-%20Programme%20Overview%20Report%20\(Final\).pdf](#)

3.3 Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plans (priority 1.1)

As with previous PEACE Programmes, one of the key investment areas for Council is the development of a Local Community Peace Action Plan for the city. This programme is under Theme 1: Building Peaceful and Thriving Communities (investment area total funding of €110 million). There is an expectation that Belfast may receive funding of at least £15 million (with a possible increase of up to £17 million or more).

3.4 PEACEPLUS Partnership

It is a requirement that each Action Plan should comprise of a PEACE PLUS local authority partnership which will oversee the co-design and implementation of a process in their local authority area which will be used to inform the development and delivery of an overarching PEACE Action Plan(s) ensuring alignment with the local Community Plan for the area.

The SEUPB have advised that they will not be overly prescriptive in terms of partnership composition, development process or selection, but rather they encourage that representation should be balanced, and as far as possible, should ideally include a range of the following:

Pillar 1 Elected Members	Pillar 2 Statutory Partners
Pillar 3 Social Partners - Geographical Community Representatives / Civic Society	Pillar 4 Social Partners - PEACE PLUS Target Groups; S75 / under- represented groups

Officers have been working with SEUPB appointed consultants (BLU Zebra and Locus Management) to scope possible options on the best partnership model for Belfast.

3.5 Resources to support the development of Priority 1.1

SEUPB have given approval to councils to use a maximum of €100k on resourcing the development of the plan. This expenditure can subsequently be included in the PEACE PLUS Action Plan application and when successful, will form part of the letter of award for reimbursement. Please note, this funding is for 1.1 Development of Local Community Peace action plans only; it cannot be used for other investment areas.

Recently, a draft budget had to be submitted to SEUPB at short notice for this allocation. This was based on the premise that it is subject to change, however, as with other PEACE Action Plans, Council needs support to help us undertake consultation and engagement and submit the bid for an action plan. Therefore, we are going to the market for consultancy support with a budget of 33,108 euros (£28,500).

This will include:

- **Phase one – Co-designed Consultation and Engagement**
To develop and facilitate a co-design approach to developing the plan and delivering on a consultation and engagement framework.
- **Phase two – Plan Submission**
The consultants will work with the local partnership, officers, stakeholders and members to develop the content for submission of the plan to SEUPB.
- **Phase 3 Post Submission – Follow up work with SEUPB**
The successful applicant will act as a first point of contact with SEUPB, answering queries and providing clarification on the initial submission.

Further reports on the progress of this work will be brought back to the SCP. In advance of this, a report on the approach to the oversight of PEACEPLUS will be brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

3.6 Financial and Resource Implications

External support for the development of 1.1 local action plans can be claimed from any future Letter of Offer from SEUPB but will be included in the final budget allocation.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

The Plan will need to be screened for equality and good relations implications along with completion of a rural needs assessment.”

During discussion a Member referred to the co-design and objectives and the need to ensure that the design reflected the objectives of the Peace PLUS Programme.

The Good Relations Manager advised that Officers would take this into consideration prior to it being issued.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the update provided and that updates would be submitted in due course.

Belfast Agenda Refresh and Action Planning

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To update the Shared City Partnership (SCP) on the development of the refreshed Belfast Agenda and to ask for feedback and input on the collaborative focus to Good Relations and Shared Future priorities over the next 4 years (2022 -24)

2.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i. Consider and offer comment on the emerging priorities for action for Community Planning linked to Good Relations/ Shared Future.**
- ii. Consider the role of the Shared City Partnership in this context and recognise the clear synergies and complementarity in terms of focus and ambitions.**
- iii. Note that a supporting action plan will be co-designed with the Shared City Partnership and partners and brought back for consideration in due course.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 sets out a statutory requirement for the review of community plans by Community Planning Partnerships within four years of its publication. As part of this process, Belfast Community Planning partners have committed to the development of the refreshed Belfast Agenda and supplementary delivery action plans which will provide the strategic focus for the partnership over the next four years (2022 – 26).

Whilst the Belfast Agenda – Community Plan provides the collaborative framework for our future city; the action plans will draw out the additionality and collaborative gain to be delivered through the community planning process. Detailed action plans will be co-designed with partners for each of the strategic priorities agreed and will take account and be tested against the principles of community planning (e.g. outcome focused, creates added value and is not business as usual) – see guiding principles outlined in Appendix 1.

In recognising the long-term focus and ambitions (2035) of the Belfast Agenda and the outcome of the first phase of engagement, it is proposed that the vision and long-term outcomes remain unchanged. Community Planning partners and stakeholders have identified nine strategic priorities to focus on to improve the wellbeing for everyone in Belfast. These include sustainable and inclusive economic growth, employability and skills, educational inequalities, housing-led regeneration, community and neighbourhood regeneration, health inequalities, climate, resilience and sustainability, sustainable transport and active travel and city development).

To help ensure that the different needs of all our citizens and communities are considered, four cross-cutting themes have also been identified, of which Good Relations/ Shared Future is one. These themes 'cut across' all the priorities, with both opportunities for greater collaboration and challenges which need to be considered. Collaborative actions relating to the cross-cutting themes will be developed and embedded within each priority, as well as specific actions which should be taken forward with a standalone focus.

3.2 Key Issues

With regards to areas of strategic intent for Good Relations, we want Belfast to be a city that is welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive for all. To do that we need to address inequalities and ensure that everyone is welcomed and treated with respect and dignity. Our priority through the Belfast Agenda will be to continue to invest in building relationships and outreach across all communities and parts of society to build the respectful and inclusive society that people told us they want; whilst also introducing new mechanisms and support to enable our new residents and communities to contribute to and share in Belfast's success.

Therefore, from the evidence base, we have identified the following areas of work which we believe could be significantly enhanced and progressed through Community Planning:

- 1. To create a shared and diverse city by ensuring the needs of newcomers and refugees are met and they experience a sense of equality and inclusion; and**
- 2. To enhance Good Relations across the city and build on the progress by supporting joined-up and innovative approaches to the new PEACE PLUS Programme.**

It is envisaged that oversight of the first area of work will fall under the work of the SCP given the clear synergies with its remit and focus. In addition, the SCP has oversight of the Inclusive Cities Project and will also link into the actions being co-designed as part of the Council's Race Action Plan.

Members should note that proposals regarding the emerging PEACE PLUS Programme will be brought back to the Shared City Partnership for consideration at a later date.

The focus on the 'needs of newcomers and refugees' has emerged in response to the research undertaken as part of the development of the Good Relations Strategy and Audit, the findings of the Covid research report and the outworking's of the first engagement phase around the refresh of the Belfast Agenda. A series of strategic intents (outlining what we seek to achieve) and possible measures of success have been developed and is attached at Appendix 2. Further work will be undertaken with partners and the Shared City Partnership to co-design supporting actions.

Our focus will be on building stronger foundations with individuals and communities so that those people who are most excluded and experiencing inequalities can share and benefit in the success of the city. Our goal is to build a shared society for all our residents. To do this, we will take a twin -track approach supporting integration and inclusion as well as addressing inequality, disadvantage and discrimination.

As Belfast continues to grow and address those continuing legacies of conflict, shared and inclusive is more than just about the two main communities. How we welcome and support new and minority communities will determine whether Belfast is a diverse and vibrant city where all people can live in peace and as equals. In the 2019 NI Life and Times survey, 30% of respondents thought that there is more racial prejudice in Northern Ireland now compared to 5 years ago. Recorded hate crimes and incidents show little improvement over this period. In the same survey, 65% of respondents felt that we had a duty to provide protection to refugees who are escaping persecution in their home country. However, a much lower proportion (39%) thought that Northern Ireland welcomed refugees. Over the past five years the number of displaced people has increased globally, and whilst not large, the asylum seeking and refugee population is growing in Northern Ireland, with the majority accommodated in the greater Belfast metropolitan area. However, many areas that receive new communities are also those with the highest levels of multiple deprivation, causing further stress to communities who themselves are recovering from division and conflict.

The NI Executive's Racial Equality Strategy 2015 - 2025 recognised the need for a separate Refugee Integration Strategy, to ensure a smooth transition between being an asylum seeker and a refugee and to ensure that refugees can build a new life here and realise their full potential. Over the coming years, we will work collaboratively with our community and statutory partners to develop an effective local intervention plan to support transition and integration of our new communities. The recent consultation on the Refugee Integration Strategy identified 4 high level outcomes:

- Refugees and asylum seekers are valued and respected
- Refugees and asylum seekers are safe and feel secure
- Refugees and asylum seekers exercise their rights and responsibilities
- Refugees and asylum seekers are supported to achieve their full potential

The action plan must also link closely with the outcomes agreed in the Good Relations Strategy and recommendations within the last Good Relations Audit.

This draft emerging action plan was presented to the Living Here Board of the Community Planning Partnership on the 24 January 2022. It is recognised that these areas of work cannot be undertaken by one agency and requires a significant collaborative approach, given that certain parts of the Plan require central government input.

Members are asked to consider the draft emerging priorities for action and offer feedback.

3.3 Next Steps

- i Agreement on the strategic intent aligned to each of the Community Planning priorities including the cross-cutting theme of Good Relations and Shared Future.
- ii Co-design with partners the supporting action plan (March - April 2022).
- iii Wider public engagement and consultation to refine and develop the refreshed Belfast Agenda (2022-2026) and underpinning action plan(s) (May - July 2022).

3.4 Financial and Resource Implications

No implications apart from Officer time at present. However, resources will need to be identified across partners for the supporting action plan.

3.5 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

Any emerging actions will be designed to enhance equality and good relations implications.”

During discussion several Members highlighted the importance of joined up working in terms of creating opportunities and information sharing and also discussed the need for good communication to ensure that people could see their work and proposals making a difference on the ground.

A Member specifically referred to section 75 vulnerable groups and stressed the need to ensure that no one was left behind, adding that this specific area also needed to be resourced and funded to ensure that progress was achievable.

The Good Relations Manager advised that section 75 groups were being considered to ensure an 'Inclusive Belfast' and that the issue raised was also being considered via the Community Planning Partnership and Living Here Board.

During discussion the TEO representative referred to the British Council's Social Cohesion in Europe report which she felt might be of interest to the Members of the Partnership. She advised that some of the findings might be worth considering whilst developing the approaches to building good relations and she agreed to forward this to the Democratic Services Officer for circulation to the Partnership Members.

The Partnership noted that a supporting action plan would be co-designed with the Shared City Partnership and its Partners and submitted for further consideration in due course.

Update on Research into Experiences of BAME and Traveller Communities

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Partnership that in September, as part of the District Council Good Relations Action Plan, Lucy Michael Research Training (LMRT) had been awarded a contract to undertake research examining the inequalities experienced by Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Traveller people residing in Belfast.

As part of the research, LMRT was to engage a small number of people from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Traveller backgrounds in the research, as peer researchers. Following an expression of interest for this aspect of the project, Dr Lucy Michael had received an overwhelming 40 responses from people representing these communities.

Given the interest in the research, and the impact of engaging wider numbers of people from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Traveller communities, in the research, as peer researchers, the Partnership was asked to consider allocating £6,000 of the current underspend, within the District Council Good Relations Budget, to LMRT. This would be used to assist with the development of a skills development and capacity programme that would engage increased numbers of people from BAME communities in the research.

The Good Relations Manager explained to the Members that this new proposal would enable value to be added to the research as it would allow enhanced engagement of participants from BAME communities. It would also provide the peer researchers with a sense of ownership of the research as well as life-long skills delivering training on the following:

- Research ethics and good practice;
- Facilitative leadership;
- Managing data privacy;
- Transcribing interviews; and
- Engaging with statutory bodies in relation to the report findings.

LMRT would be required to provide a report that measured the integration and good relations impact that involvement in the project had on the peer researchers.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the Council reallocate the underspend of £6,000, identified in the District Council Good Relations programme, to LMRT to enable it to widen the participation of peer researchers, from BAME communities, in the research and to provide a programme of skills development to enhance capacity.

Update on DCGRP Action Plan 2021/2022

The Good Relations Manager drew the Members' attention to the updated Action Plan that had been attached as an appendix to the agenda. She advised that officers had engaged with the various partners regarding all the projects within the Action Plan.

The officer referred specifically to the previous agenda item and the £6000.00 reallocation.

In addition, she advised that a Good Relations Fact/Information Sheet was also being prepared. She advised that this would provide key information and statistics on Good Relations areas of interest, such as the number of Interface Barriers in Belfast, the Number of Murals, the range of different languages spoken in Belfast, and information on how diversity within the City was being developed. She advised that the Good Relations section regularly received numerous queries regarding such information, and it was felt that a fact/information sheet would be a beneficial resource for local communities, other agencies and other Council Departments.

Noted.

Anti-Sectarianism and Good Relations

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To discuss the role of the Partnership in contributing to tackling sectarianism within our respective organisations and within our society.

2.0 Recommendations

That Members note the contents of this report and agree to further discussions on how the Partnership can develop strategies and plans that can effectively address sectarianism within all of our respective organisations and within wider society.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

Members will be aware that the Shared City Partnership has been in existence since the onset of PEACE III funding in 2008. Previously called the Good Relations Partnership, it was a successor to the original body, set up by the Council in 2003, titled the Good Relations Steering Panel.

3.2 One of the original aims of the Good Relations Steering Panel was to be a space for quiet conversations on sensitive issues, within a confidential and shared space. Indeed over the years, the Partnership has facilitated many conversations, often with external facilitation, on issues such as sectarianism, racism and has met to discuss outbreaks of violence on occasion. These

discussions have fed into the Council's programmes and actions in Good Relations.

- 3.3 Following a recent query from a member on whether the Partnership is doing enough to tackle sectarianism within our City, this paper is presented as a suggested starting point to help stimulate a discussion among members.
- 3.4 While the Partnership is only able to make recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it does, nevertheless, have a unique role within the Council's structures. It contains a range of people from a wide breadth of statutory, civic, faith and community perspectives, who all possess a leadership role within the City, as well as the full political spectrum within the Council. It has the ability to discuss issues of relevance and importance and can provide direction on many issues.
- 3.5 On the issue of tackling sectarianism, the Partnership, as a collective group, is in a rather unique and special position to challenge our City and Council. As a collective group, it can provide a unique perspective, suggestions, example, leadership and possible programme options.

3.6 **Context**

The Council's Good Relations Strategy rightly highlights sectarianism, racism and prejudice as being issues that hold us back from building good community and race relations in Belfast (GR Strategy; p.15) Under the Civic Leadership outcome within the Strategy, it seeks to *tackle sectarianism, racism, intolerance and disadvantage* (p.16). In seeking to spell out what this means, the Strategy says the following:

- 3.7 *Good relations and equality and promoting equity, diversity and interdependence are the planks of any good relations strategy and reflect government's agreed Together: Building and United Community Strategy and guidance. We must all address issues of inequality, sectarianism, racism and prejudice in all that we do. This includes addressing the physical and community division at interfaces, ensuring and promoting the safety and inclusion of vulnerable groups, tackling public displays of intolerance, sectarianism and racism, addressing hate crime, promoting equality, integration, cultural diversity and an intercultural city, tackling disadvantage and creating and expanding shared spaces and services.*
- 3.8 Further on, on p.22, the Strategy says:

We must also help to transform contested spaces in our city. There is still extensive residential segregation with accompanying security concerns, crime and visible displays of sectarianism, racism, intolerance and other forms of territorial marking.

- 3.9 In December 2018, a study ‘Sectarianism in Northern Ireland; A Review’, concluded that: ‘*Sectarianism remains a serious issue in Northern Ireland. Although it has deep roots in the past, it is important to address it now before it also shapes our futures*’.

The study makes a number of conclusions and recommendations, including:

- The issue of sectarianism must be prioritised and elevated to the top of the public agenda alongside the economy
- Sectarianism should be addressed from the centre of government, in a thorough and concerted manner on the basis of clear principles and policies.
- Investing in children and young people from an early age, especially those at risk of falling out of education, would have significant long-term benefits for individuals, communities and society.
- Government should establish a permanent programme to ensure that young people have clear alternatives to involvement with paramilitaries in areas of high paramilitary activity.
- Every child at school should be educated and encouraged to understand that they belong together with others of different backgrounds
- Alongside a focus on educational attainment to give young people opportunities in the labour market, there is a crucial role in connecting youth work with citizenship by engaging young people with values, contention and issues of lawfulness
- There are numerous opportunities within sports and the arts to create conduits for shared experiences and learning, and developing relationships based on performance and participation.
- Efforts to address sectarianism would be enormously helped from a designated communications strategy which could inform, entertain and energise.

- 3.10 The full report can be accessed here: https://www.ulster.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/410227/A-Review-Addressing-Sectarianism-in-Northern-Ireland_FINAL.pdf

- 3.11 Within this report and within what the Council has included in its Good Relations Strategy, it is clear that tackling sectarianism requires a holistic approach and response. This includes:

- Leadership from government, public institutions and business
- Awareness of what sectarianism is and how it is displayed
- Clear principles and policies to address sectarianism
- Maximising education, the labour market, sports and the arts to develop relationships among our citizens

- 3.12 **Suggested options for the Council**

Belfast City Council, as the Civic Leader for Belfast, can clearly play a central role in tackling sectarianism within the City. The Council has a range of services that could be utilised to contribute to a more holistic approach in addressing sectarianism, such as:

- The Council’s Good Relations programme;
- The Council’s Youth Council;
- The Council’s Economic Development programmes;
- The Council’s Sports Development, Culture, Arts, Heritage and Tourism programmes;
- The Council’s messaging, media and social media platforms.

3.13 While much of the Council’s interventions on Good Relations will have tackling sectarianism as an implicit outcome, most of the Good Relations work is concerned with building positive relations between youth, community and other groups.

3.14 However, if members of the Partnership felt it appropriate, the specific objective of tackling sectarianism could be made more explicit in the Good Relations Action Plan. This could be achieved through the inclusion of specific anti-sectarianism training being offered to funded groups as part of their Good Relations activities.

3.15 In addition, those other Council programmes that bring people together (as listed above) could be better utilised in having anti-sectarianism outcomes embedded within their work. Again, this could be achieved through messaging and programme content that would seek to explore the differences within the various cohorts of people that participate in these programmes as a means of educating people and reducing sectarian attitudes.

3.16 Suggested options for Partnership members

Members of the Partnership may wish to undertake a review of their own programmes and policies in order to assess what more can be done within these settings to tackle sectarianism.

3.17 Following this review of our individual and/or organisational approaches to tackling sectarianism, the Partnership may be better informed to further explore collectively whether the Partnership is doing enough to tackle sectarianism and where appropriate suggest ways in which this could be developed further.

3.18 Officers would suggest that each member may wish to undertake an individual or organisational review and then a focussed meeting could be arranged in May to discuss collectively if there are any gaps and where the partnership can add value to tackling sectarianism.

3.19 Financial and Resource Implications

Any arising costs associated with any activity would be covered within the annual Good Relations Action Plan, 75% of which is recouped by the Executive Office under the District Council's Good Relations Programme.

3.20 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

All activity within the Good Relations Action Plan are aligned with one of the four Good Relations Outcomes, which has been screened for equality, good relations and rural needs, and screened out.”

Several Members welcomed the proposed approach but stated that they would be keen to further consider the views and needs of citizens and to build on any progress that had already been made in these areas.

The TEO representative advised that the TEO was currently undertaking a comprehensive mapping exercise, work was ongoing, but she suggested that representatives be invited to present to the Partnership to share the information it had gathered to date.

The Members agreed that in the first instance this would be a useful approach. Several of the Members reiterated their desire to look at the information held by organisations holistically, stressing the need to join up data, resources and statistics with a view to analysing the information to help come up with future strategies and plans that would give way to constructive progress and that would help to effectively address sectarianism.

The Members of the Partnership agreed to receive a presentation from TEO on its current mapping exercise regarding support for good relations at a future meeting and to hold further discussions on how the Shared City Partnership could progress to develop strategies and plans that could effectively address sectarianism within each of the organisations represented and within wider society as a whole.

Events Update

The Good Relations Manager advised the Members of the following events which they were welcome to attend:

Event: Decade of Centenaries Conference

Date: Wednesday, 23rd March 2022

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Format: Online Webinar

Registration: [here](#)

The Members noted that this was the last event for the Decade of Centenaries and thanked the Good Relations Officer for all the hard work that he had put into organising numerous successful events over the period.

Event: Strategies for addressing Anti-Muslim Hostility

Date: Thursday, 3rd, 10th and 24th March.

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon.

Format: Online Zoom

Registration: goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk

The Members were advised to contact the officer responsible for the event should they require any additional information.

The Good Relations Manager advised that, subsequent to the agenda having been circulated, a request had been made by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust seeking permission to make a presentation to a future meeting of the Partnership on the development of its Good Relations Strategy.

The Partnership agreed to receive a presentation from the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust at a future meeting.

Chairperson