

## **SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP**

**Monday 13th January, 2025**

### **MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP HELD REMOTELY AND IN THE CONOR ROOM**

Members present: Councillor Duffy (Chairperson); and  
Councillors Abernethy and I. McLaughlin.

External Members: Ms. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;  
Mr. L. Euler, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust;  
Mr. M. Briggs, Community and Voluntary Sector;  
Mr. L. Gunn, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;  
Ms. J. Irwin, Community Relations Council;  
Mr. M. McBride, Education Authority;  
Father M. Magill, Faith Representative;  
Ms. T. Mimna, The Executive Office;  
Mr. W. Naeem, Interfaith Forum; and  
Ms. A. M. White, British Red Cross.

In attendance: Mr. G. McCartney, Good Relations Manager;  
Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE Programme Manager;  
Ms. L. Dolan, Acting Senior Good Relations Officer; and  
Mr. B. Flynn, Committee Services Officer.

#### **Apology**

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Copeland and Independent Members Mr. J. Donnelly and Mr. M. McBride. Apologies were reported also on behalf of Mr. J. Girvan and Mr. D. Robinson.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 9th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 13th December.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

In respect of item 6, 'PEACEPLUS - BCC Local Action Plan Update' declarations of interest were reported by the Chairperson (Councillor J. Duffy) and Independent Members Ms. B. Arthurs, Mr. M. Briggs and Mr. W. Naeem, in that they worked for organisations which were in receipt of funding under the terms of the fund. The Members retired from the meeting whilst the matter was under discussion.

#### **Good Relations Action Plan - Quarter 3 Update**

The Partnership considered the following report:

- “1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**
- 1.1 To update the Shared City Partnership on the delivery of the Council’s Good Relations Action Plan during Quarter 3 which covers the period October – December 2024.**
- 2.0 Recommendation**
- 2.1 That Members recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report, including the reallocation of £7,500 from BCC9 into BCC7 to support the Christmas Interface Events as well as the allocation of the additional funding from TEO.**
- 3.0 Main Report**
- 3.1 Members will be aware that the Council receives 75% of funding from The Executive Office (TEO) for the delivery of its annual Good Relations Action Plan. The original total value of the Action Plan is £493,079.59. Within this the 75% contribution from TEO consists of £369,809.69 with the remaining 25%, or £123,269.90 being contributed by the Council. Of this overall total, £365,000 was allocated towards programmes.**
- 3.2 In December, TEO offered the Council an additional resource of £38,170, at 100%. While this was less than was initially suggested, Officers have allocated all of this additional resource to programme costs as follows:**
- 1. The costs for the new Good Relations Audit, Strategy and a 3-year Action Plan to cover 2026 – 2029, to be included into BCC9, enabling a reallocation from BCC9 into the Christmas Interface Events programme.**
  - 2. Support for the East Meets West Community Centre Programme for activity in the New Year, to be included in BCC9.**
  - 3. Resources to offset the costs for the 2024 Beacons Programme in BCC3**
- 3.3 The new Action Plan total for programme costs is therefore £403,170 and the additional resource will be allocated in Q4 and reported on then, once a confirmation letter of offer has been received by the Council. It should also be noted that the Council contributes more to Good Relations work than merely its 25% match funding to the Action Plan, contributing a total of £413,320.10.**
- 3.4 Delivery of the Action Plan continued during quarter 3. In Q1, £181,714.48 was allocated. In Q2, a further £109,420 has been allocated. During Q3, £58,473 was further allocated, giving a total allocation thus far of £349,607.48.**

**3.5 Members should also note that the Action Plan does not include the £128,700 allocated to the Council for work on refugee integration, or the Asylum Dispersal allocations totalling £406,228, all from TEO. These funds are in addition to the Action Plan.**

**3.6 The following is a summary progress update on activity and allocations during Q3:**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Project Summary</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Progress in Quarter 3</b>	<b>Total allocated</b>
BCC1	Good Relations Small Grants Programme.	<b>£155,000</b>	43 projects awarded funding for Good Relations projects.	<b>£0 (all allocated)</b>
BCC2	St Patrick's Day Civic Events programme	<b>£20,000</b>	Programme workshops underway	<b>£20,000</b>
BCC3	Positive Cultural Expression Programme	<b>£20,000 (Plus an additional £13,170)</b>	Beacon Programme delivered. 16 Beacons deployed on 11 July.	<b>£0 (all allocated)</b>
BCC4	Civic Engagement and Learning Programme	<b>£20,000</b>	2 projects allocated support: - EID celebrations - Visit My Mosque prog	<b>£3,000 £850</b>
BCC5	Minority Ethnic Equality and Inclusion Programme	<b>£60,000</b>	December meeting of migrant forum took place. DiverseCity Event	<b>£300 £3,000</b>
BCC6	Embedding Good Relations Programme	<b>£0</b>	This programme didn't proceed as a result of budget shortfall	<b>£0</b>
BCC7	Interface Engagement & tackling sectarianism and racism	<b>£60,000</b>	6 Christmas Interface Events supported	<b>£8,823</b>
BCC8	Shared Education Schools Programme	<b>£20,000</b>	Programme agreed and being delivered in Q3 and Q4.	<b>£20,000</b>
BCC 9	Strategic Connections and Support Programme	<b>£10,000 (Plus an additional £25,000)</b>	Reallocation of £7,500 towards Christmas Interface programme events East Meets West Community Centre Programme	<b>£2,500</b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£365,000</b>		<b>£58,473</b>

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

**All costs within the District Council's Good Relations Action Plan are covered within existing agreed budgets.**

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

**All activity within the District Council's Good Relations Action Plan seek to improve Good Relations between people from different political, religious, and racial backgrounds."**

The Good Relations Manager outlined the principal aspects of the report and, after discussion, the Partnership adopted the recommendation as contained in section 2.1.

**Peace IV - Secretariat Update**

The PEACE Programme Manager reminded Members that a sum of £1,425,854 remained outstanding in respect of projects which had been supported under PEACE IV. She advised that officers continued to liaise with the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) regarding the verification of outstanding claims, which, it was reported, would be reimbursed once an Article 27 Audit of the Shared Space & Services Period 31 Claim had been completed by the Audit Authority. The PEACE Programme Manager added that all information requested relating to the audit had been forwarded and that the Audit Authority had acknowledged the receipt of the information.

Noted.

(Councillor I. McLaughlin in the Chair).

**PEACEPLUS - BCC Local Action Plan Update**

The Partnership considered the following report:

**"1.0 Purpose of Report**

**The purpose of this report is to provide Shared City Partnership members with an update on the mobilisation of PEACEPLUS 1.1. Co-designed Belfast Local Community Peace Action Plan (LCAP).**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**Members note the contents of the report and recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.**

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 Mobilisation**

**Mobilisation of the revenue projects within the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan is continuing with progress and key actions outlined below.**

### **3.2 SEUPB Approval / Letter of Offer (LoO)**

Members are referred to the PEACEPLUS Belfast Local Community Action Plan Letter of Offer (Appendix I) which was received on 19 December 2024. Officers are currently reviewing the Letter of Offer and Conditions of funding to progress the approval process.

### **3.3 Members are requested to note key points from the LoO, as follows:**

- no changes to the Project submitted were required by the Steering Committee.
- Data Sharing Agreements (DSA) are currently being reviewed and amended in collaboration with SEUPB and IGU. The DSA and adherence to the publicity and marketing materials, including the privacy notices, will form part of the contractual requirements with appointed delivery partners.
- Project Lifetime is for 48 months starting on 1 January 2024 (“Project Lifetime”). The Project end date is 31st December 2027. It is likely that an extension to June 2028 will be necessary and can be requested following acceptance and submission of the LoO.
- The pre-commencement condition regarding a state aid assessment has been completed and returned to SEUPB.
- Project implementation conditions are progressing, with minor amends and points of clarity for JeMS work plans project identified and ready to agree with SEUPB.
- Officers are currently reviewing SEUPB’s Verification/Controller tender documentation and drafting council requirements to enable a suitable Financial Controller to be appointed in line with SEUPB requirements and as soon as possible.
- Community background has been assigned to each tender based on target groups. This will enable the community background to be achieved
- Reporting from delivery partners will be monthly / quarterly to enable progress against results to be monitored against outputs and results targets

### **3.4 A report to Council’s Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 13th December 2024, outlined that the LCAP LoO will be accepted in € / Euros. Given that the LoO is issued in Euro/€ exchange rate fluctuations will be monitored in collaboration with Council’s Finance Department.**

### **3.5 Members are requested to note and agree acceptance of the Letter of Offer, subject to internal council checks to ensure that legal implications are considered.**

### **3.6 Pre Market Engagement and Procurement**

As previously reported all pre-market engagement sessions for revenue projects have now been completed with all tender exercises open.

Tender evaluations are progressing for the Youth Empowerment, Community Empowerment and Language Up, with contract awards imminent. Evaluations have commenced for the Sports, Health & Wellbeing, Interfaith and Belief projects.

Implementation of projects is subject to the market response to the tender calls and bidders' responses meeting the tender requirements. On completion of the tender evaluation phase members are requested to note the following:

#### **TPC3 Youth Empowerment**

SEUPB advice regarding further clarification on the Lot 4 submissions is currently being progressed. A further tender call may be necessary, and if so, will be issued early 2025. The project should remain achievable within the approval timeframe.

#### **CCD5 Multiculturalism to Interculturalism**

A nil response to the Lot 1 of the tender call. Feedback is currently being sought, and subject to feedback a possible rescope of the project may be necessary.

Bids received for Lot 2 do not meet the requirements. Feedback is being progressed and again subject to feedback, a rescope may be necessary.

Members are requested to note that the Programme Board has agreed to delegate authority to the Good Relations Manager and Peace Programmes Manager to progress project rescopes, where necessary.

The project elements should remain achievable within the approval timeframe and a further report on any required project amends will be presented to members.

### **3.6 Mobilisation of Community Regeneration and Transformation Theme**

As previously reported, planning for the mobilisation of projects within the Community Regeneration and Transformation (CRT) theme is underway with an indicative timeframe for the mobilisation of animation activities developed.

### **3.7 Critical to the mobilisation of the CRT infrastructure and works elements is the allocation by SEUPB of a representative from**

Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD), who will provide advice on the procurement for all capital works. As the LoO progressing for approval, it is envisaged that SEUPB will appoint the representative soon.

A further report on the mobilisation timeframe and animation strategy will be presented to members at a future meeting.

### **3.8 PEACEPLUS 1.4 Project - Waterworks / Alexandra Park**

Members may be aware that the Council was also successful in securing €13.5m for the Reconnected Belfast Waterworks / Alexandra Park Project. The project will be implemented by Council's Property and Projects department.

Collaboration of this project with the 1.1 LCAP is required given the strong alignment on Council approaches, processes and procedures as well as to communicate the lessons learnt from PEACE IV. To aid this collaboration the Programme Manager will oversee the staff responsible for the implementation of the animation aspect of the 1.4 project to ensure complementarity, and avoid any duplication, across the two projects. Internal discussions on the governance for the two projects is being considered.

### **3.9 Staff Recruitment**

Appointment of three Project Support Officers is progressing and once appointed, only one post remains to be recruited.

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

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS LCAP will be eligible from this date and will be claimed retrospectively from SEUPB.

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

Plan has been submitted for equality and good relations screening as well as rural needs assessment.”

During discussion, several Members expressed disappointment in that, in respect of the tender exercises for Lot 1 and Lot 2 of the 'Multiculturalism to Interculturalism' project, no suitable tenders had been received to oversee its delivery. It was pointed out that, within the context of the disturbances which had occurred across the city during the summer of 2024, it was important that the work associated with this project was delivered in a timely fashion.

In response, the Good Relations Manager indicated that, subject to receipt of feedback in respect of the tendering exercises, it was anticipated that a rescope of the

terms of the project would be undertaken with a view to the overseeing a further tendering exercise. Accordingly, he added that the Programme Board had agreed to delegate authority to the Good Relations Manager and the Peace Programme Manager to progress such a rescope as deemed appropriate in order to procure a suitable partner to oversee the projects.

After discussion, the Partnership adopted the recommendation as set out within 2.0 of the report.

### **Update from Partnership Members**

Mr. Gunn outlined the steps which had been undertaken during the recent cold weather to support homeless persons by providing sheltered accommodation for short-term use. Mr Gunn undertook to provide further information to the Partnership in this regard for information purposes.

### **Any Other Business**

Father M. Magill reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 7th October, it had agreed to undertake a walking tour of the Forth Meadow Greenway on a date to be determined. Accordingly he suggested that the tour be held on either Thursday, 27th March, at 13.30, or Wednesday, 30th April, at 13.30.

The Committee Services Officer undertook to circulate the dates to Members with a view to identifying a preferred date. It was noted that transport would be provided to and from the starting and ending points of the tour.

Chairperson