

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Monday 10th February, 2025

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

Members present: Councillor I. McLaughlin (Deputy Chairperson); and
Alderman Copeland and Councillor Abernethy.

External Members: Mr. L. Euler, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust;
Mr. M. Briggs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mr. L. Gunn, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
Ms. T. Mimna, The Executive Office;
Mr. W. Naeem, Interfaith Forum; and

In attendance: Mr. G. McCartney, Good Relations Manager;
Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE Programme Manager;
Mr. D. Robinson, Acting Senior Good Relations Officer;
Ms. M. Watson-Holmes, Good Relations Officer; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of the Chairperson (Councillor Duffy) and Independent Members Mr. J. Donnelly, Ms. Irwin and Ms. A.M. White.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th January 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 27th January.

Presentation - British Red Cross

It was noted that the scheduled presentation from representatives of the British Red Cross would be delivered at a later date.

Declarations of Interest

In respect of the item 'PEACEPLUS - BCC Local Action Plan Update', declarations of interest were reported by Independent Members Mr. M. Briggs and Mr. W. Naeem, in that they worked for organisations which were submitting bids to deliver projects under the Action Plan. The Members retired from the meeting whilst the matter was under discussion.

Update on Community Recovery Fund

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 Following a meeting of the Strategy Policy and Resources (SP&R) committee on the 22nd November 2024, members requested Officers to consider the Area Based Facet of the Community Recovery Fund (CRF) Action Plan, which the Deputy Prime Minister is making available to support communities impacted by the public disorder that took place between July and August 2024, including Belfast. In England this will be issued under section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003, and in Northern Ireland funds will be released to the Department of Finance, to support those communities most affected.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 To update members of the Shared City Partnership on amendments to the Community Recovery Action Plan agreed at S P & R on 27th January 2025.

3.0 Main Report

3.11 The CRF is allocative and offers a flat rate of £600,000 to Belfast City Council, to be committed and commenced before the end of the Financial Year 2024-25.

Expenditure is eligible under this scheme if it is in response to the violent disorder that took place between July and August 2024 and is on, or in connection with:

- a. Immediate action to safeguard life or property.
- b. To prevent suffering or severe inconvenience.
- c. To reduce the risk of further disorder in the future.
- d. To rebuild social trust and promote cohesion between communities.

3.2 The Fund has deliberately sought to provide local areas with flexibility to design a package that responds to their circumstances. Previous reports have detailed examples of projects which are designed to support Community and Voluntary Activity.

3.3 Officers considered members feedback in relation to the original area-based approach and a number of amendments to the Community Recovery Action Plan have been agreed which will assist bolstering support directly to Communities within Belfast City. The Changes can be summarised as follows: -

1. CRF002 – Integration and Inclusion has been realigned to £35,000.

2. CRF003 - Community Centre Programme (Reaching Out) has been realigned to £30,000.
3. CRF008 – Community Resource Integration and Inclusion has been increased from £180,000 to £330,000.

This will still leave sufficient budget to develop and target cultural competence and capacity within communities, as there will be opportunity to couple this with Council's Good Relations Action Plan 25/26. However, it also means more investment can be provided directly into Communities in Belfast to improve Integration and Orientation.

3.4 CRF008 will be divided into two parts: -

1. Targeted Intervention £160,000 – Proposals will be sought and developed for 4 areas in Belfast which have been directly impacted by Racist Attacks, Officers will work with Community Organisations in the following 4 locations, and ensure Community Led proposals to increase Integration and Inclusion of the Migrant population are developed and progressed: -

- a. Sandy Row/Donnegal Road
- b. Woodvale
- c. Connswater
- d. Greater Falls

2. The remaining £170,000 under this theme; Council will support Projects led by Constituted Community Organisations in Belfast City up to a value of £20,000, through an open call, that support a proactive approach to integration and inclusion of the Migrant population in Belfast City.

3.5 Council will invite projects that specifically address some or all the following:

- Proposals that are innovative and do not duplicate the work of other services.
- Proposals that engage host communities and people from the migrant community.
- Proposals that foster contact and connections with host communities to improve the welcome that people from the migrant community.
- Proposals that encourage and support groups to involve migrant population to get involved in the life of their communities through participation in local activities, networks, sports and organisations.

- Proposals that are delivered in areas where, to date, there has been limited infrastructure / funding for interventions supporting the inclusion of people from the migrant community.
- Proposals that provide orientation and advocacy support

It should be noted that this fund does not support one - off events / festivals, and the said criteria applies to both parts of CRF008

3.6 The outcomes from the above programme should provide the following: -

- Community Projects which provide Increased Integration, Inclusion and Orientation for the Migrant Community in Belfast
- A reduction in Anti-Muslim hate.
- Increased Community Leadership and Competence

3.7 Further to the above it is anticipated that the direct outcomes and data attained from the said projects will inform the core work of Council's Good Relations Action Plan and Strategy.

3.8 The Action Plan attached has been submitted and agreed in principle with the department. Officers have been in discussions with the relevant department in Westminster and providing programmes are committed Council will have the ability to deliver into the Financial Year 25/26. That said, members should note that the Good Relations Manager will have to agree the said changes with the Department of Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

3.9 Following members comments in November at SP&R Officers reviewed the fund criteria above and amended the four main themes of the action plan for delivery as follows: -

- Theme 1 Good Relations Inclusion and Integration
- Theme 2 Wider University and Lower Ormeau
- Theme 3 Community Integration and Inclusion
- Theme 4 Resource Recoupment

Full Detail of the Community Recovery Action Plan can be seen in Appendix 1

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

All the budget detailed within the report is at 100%, the biggest implication is that of resource to design, implement, manage and monitor the programmes, however Council will be able to recoup this under Theme 4.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

All the above aligns with Council's Good Relations Strategic Framework, which seeks 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 the Partnership noted the amendments which had made to the Community Recovery Action Plan by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 27th January.

Peace IV - Secretariat Update

The PEACE Programme Manager reported that officers continued to liaise with SEUPB regarding the verification and reimbursement of Period 36 claims. She explained that the expenditure total stood £12.9m, with claims of approximately £11.5m reimbursed to date. In addition, it was reported that responses to queries relating to Period 30/34 claims had submitted to the SEUPB for final verification.

Noted.

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 are requested to note the contents of the report and agree

- to delegate authority to the PEACE Programme Manager and Lead Officer to approve administrative changes to projects, as part of the change control process**
- the PEACEPLUS Programme risk register as detailed in Appendix II**

and also recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report and agree recommendations above.

3.0 Main report

3.1 SEUPB Approval / Letter of Offer (LoO)

The Letter of Offer has now been accepted by Council and returned to SEUPB. Acceptance of the LoO enables mobilisation of project to progress to contract award.

Members should note that reimbursement of funding will be received into the Council's Euro Bank Account, which should assist in mitigating exchange rate fluctuations.

3.2 Mobilisation

Mobilisation of projects within the Thriving and Peaceful Communities and Celebrating Culture and Diversity themes is progressing and key actions outlined below.

The final stages of procurement, including the standstill period, has progressed for the following projects, with formal contract awards to progress in the next 2-3 week.

- TPC3 - Youth Empowerment (Lots 1-3),
- TPC1 – Community Empowerment
- TPC4 – Sport for Peace
- CCD5 – Multiculturalism to Interculturalism (Lots 3 & 4)
- TPC5 – Employability (Language Up)

Members are requested to note the contract award timeframe, as outlined in Appendix I attached. Members will be advised of the appointed delivery partners once the contract awards have been formalised.

3.3 Tender assessment and clarifications are progressing for the Arts across the Genres, Health & Wellbeing, Interfaith and Belief, Community Connections, and the Ex Politically Motivated Prisoners projects. Evaluation of the LGBTQIA+ tender submissions has also commenced.

A re-tender for Lot 4 Young Adults of the TPC3 Youth Empowerment project opened on 31 January 2025.

Two feedback sessions on the CCD5 Multiculturalism to Interculturalism Lot 1 and 2 tender call has taken place. Further feedback via 1-1 meetings is also progressing. The feedback will assist with a project rescope, if required.

3.4 Community Regeneration and Transformation

A workshop to develop and agree a timeline for the capital works and alignment with the animation activity took place on 28 January 2025.

As previously reported, SEUPB is to appoint a representative from Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD), which is critical to the mobilisation of the construction works.

A request has been submitted to SEUPB to confirm the representative, to enable the timeline to be finalised.

Members should note that delays with the issue of the LoO and appointment of the CPD representative, may impact the construction timeframe, and as such an extension request to the LoO may be required.

3.5 Change Control Process

Planning for the implementation of projects is progressing, with a change control process developed to assist in managing necessary changes to projects to ensure the delivery of targets and results.

All change requests will require a robust rationale and, subject to the level of change, will be reported and approved through the governance structure, including the SCP and/or SEUPB in line with programme regulations.

The Programme Board has considered and approved the change control process and recommends that the SCP delegate authority to the PEACE Programme Manager and Lead Officer to agree administrative changes to projects, such as the staffing. This approach should help streamline the change control approval process.

Members should note that change control process may need to be applied to the rescope relating to CCD5 as referenced in 3.3 above.

3.6 Risk Management

A risk management approach has been developed, with advice from Audit, Governance & Risk Services. Members are requested to note that risks are attributed to five risk categories as outlined in the Programme Risk Register in Appendix II.

Risks will be monitored monthly through the PEACEPLUS team, with the Programme Risk Register reported quarterly to the Programme Board and SCP.

The Programme Board has considered and agreed the Risk Register, and has recommended that the SCP consider and agree the Programme Risk Register.

3.7 Staff Recruitment

The three PEACEPLUS Support Officers, Una Tohill, Dominic Montague and Alistair Menary are now in post and will be working closely with the Project Managers to progress implementation, the next steps for the CRT projects as well as the establishment of the next Governance tier, the Thematic Steering Groups. One post for the Data / Claims Support remains to be recruited.

3.8 PEACEPLUS 1.4 Project - Waterworks / Alexandra Park

As members are aware the Council is also delivering the PEACEPLUS Reconnected Belfast project, which is regenerating the Waterworks and Alexandra Park.

Members may be interested in attending Design Information Sessions which are taking place on:

Thursday 27th February at 4-8pm BCC Cleansing Building, Alexandra Park

Saturday 1 March 10am-12noon – Gate Lodge Building, Waterworks

Saturday 1 March 12:30 – 2:30pm - BCC Cleansing Building, Alexandra Park

3.9 Financial and Resource Implications

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS LCAP will be eligible from 1 January 2024 and will be claimed retrospectively from SEUPB.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

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

The PEACE Programme Manager reminded Members that, at its meeting on 13th January, disappointment had been expressed 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. It was reported that, subsequent to the meeting, two supplier feedback sessions had taken place, as well as one-to-one sessions. The Members were advised that a re-tendering exercise regarding ‘Lot 2’ was progressing, with a view to its completion by the end of February, with some minor amendments having been added to the text.

Further feedback was being progressed for 'Lot 1' and it was anticipated that a retendering exercise would be undertaken, subject to feedback.

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

Update from Partnership Members

There were no updates in this regard.

Any Other Business

The Partnership agreed that its proposed walking tour along the Forth Meadow Greenway would take place on Thursday, 27th March, commencing at 13.30.

Chairperson