



## Belfast City Council

**Report to:** Parks and Leisure Committee

**Subject:** **Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan Projects**

**Date:** 15 October 2009

**Reporting Officer:** Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure

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### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Parks and Leisure Departmental projects which are being funded by the Peace III programme through Belfast City Council's Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan.

### **Relevant Background Information**

In 2008, Belfast City Council was awarded £6.3 million under Peace III Theme 1.1 *Building Positive Relations at the Local Level* to deliver its Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan 2007-2010. The Plan allocates funding for projects which will achieve a range of themed indicative actions. These projects are run by the Council itself or by community/voluntary sector delivery partners (either through commissioned calls or small grant awards). Overall responsibility for the plan rests with the Good Relations Partnership, a working group of the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

### **Key Issues**

The following two indicative actions from the Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan relate to the Parks & Leisure Department:

*Action 3.3 Cultural Diversity in Sport* - under this action £180,000 has been allocated for a community/voluntary sector partner to deliver a programme of activities aimed particularly at young people. In summary, these will include the following:

- A multi-sports inter-leisure facility community programme;
- A cross-city, cross border multi-sports event; and
- A diversionary sports programme incorporating anti-sectarianism and anti-racism training.

Expressions of interest were invited in January 2009, followed by a call for final project proposals in June. A panel including Parks and Leisure and Good Relations Officers has been established to assess project proposals and to provide a steering group for the final project. Currently, the tendering process is underway with the aim of engaging a partner to deliver a project running from October 2009 to December 2010.

*Action 1.5 Programming Open Spaces* - under this action £100,000 has been allocated for Council-led delivery of a programme of events/initiatives in Council open spaces which promote sharing and interaction, and a related cross-border seminar. Following a series of meetings of an officer level cross-departmental working group set up to identify potential projects, a proposal was approved by the Good Relations Partnership for a project based on the development of community gardens, to run from June 2009 to December 2010. In summary, the 'Growing Together' project includes the following elements:

- Development of community gardens in contested locations as multi-community shared spaces;
- A series of 'Growing Together' events at Parks across the City (Musgrave, Glenbank, Orangefield and Falls) aimed at allowing groups from different communities to learn about and share experience of growing food and other produce;
- Production of a learning resource to support the use of community growing spaces in community development;
- A celebratory event to mark the completion of the project at Ormeau Park; and
- A seminar on the value of community gardens as shared space.

Work is underway on the project; key activities to date include the following:

- Establishment of a project steering group;
- Planning for a seminar to take place on 21 October 2009; and
- Identification of three community garden sites (at Glenbank, Suffolk [adjacent to the Community Centre] and Lenadoon [at Glen Road Community Centre]) and preparation of site plans.

The physical garden development is expected to commence in January 2010, with the 'Growing Together' events taking place during spring/summer 2010, and the celebratory event taking place in September 2010.

## **Resource Implications**

### Financial

The Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan will provide 100% funding for both projects. With respect to the Programming Open Spaces project, because members of the local community will have responsibility for tending the gardens, only limited resources are expected to be required for maintenance. At this stage it is expected that these will be covered through existing area maintenance budgets.

### Human Resources

Both projects will require the time of existing officers at steering group level. In addition, the Programming Open Spaces project will also utilise the technical

and operational expertise of existing officers and staff during development of the gardens and delivery of associated project tasks, as well as during ongoing maintenance of the gardens.

Asset and Other Implications

The Programming Open Spaces project will provide additional resources for community use within existing Council assets. The project will be subject to the Gates Review process.

**Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this update report.

**Decision Tracking**

No tracking required at present.

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