



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Peace III Priority 2.1 Capital bids for Shared Space
Date:	22 January 2010
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
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Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that the Council agreed at its meeting in November 2009 to submit 4 bids to the call for capital bids under Priority 2.1 'Creating Shared Public Spaces' of the Peace III programme. Under this measure the SEUPB was seeking to support between 4 - 7 large strategic and iconic projects across the eligible Peace III programme area funded at between 1.5-10million Euros each. Their preference was to support five projects around €5 Million per project although additional money may be made available for significant projects. Projects will be funded at 100%. The main aim of this measure is to produce iconic structures that can be easily recognised as a Peace III project long after the programme ends in 2015. A brief description of the four bids that the Council submitted is outlined below.

The 4 bids which the Council submitted as lead partner were:

- *Public Service Centre (Community Hub) at Girdwood* - to develop an integrated public service centre in a shared space with an associated plan of shared space activities at Girdwood
- *Crusaders and Newington Sports Village at the North Foreshore* - to develop a shared community sports complex through a partnership between the Council and Crusaders and Newington Football Clubs, using sports and heritage to promote peace and reconciliation
- *North Belfast Cultural Corridor (Donegall St., Clifton St., Crumlin Rd.)* - this proposal seeks to improve of the physical environment, in order to create an attractive, welcoming and shared public realm in an area uniquely rich in the city's built and cultural heritage
- *Gasworks Bridge* – the development of a pedestrian and cycle bridge to improve connectivity between the city centre, Gasworks Business Park and the Lower Ravenhill and Ormeau Park

These applications were submitted to SEUPB on 13 November 2009 for initial assessment and each bid was scored against the following criteria –

- Capacity to be shared space and to build peace and reconciliation
- Capacity to transform local communities
- Capacity to be iconic and provide a lasting legacy to the Peace III programme
- Sustainable development and other cross-cutting themes including equality
- Capacity to implement and deliverability within SEUPB timescales, including planning permission
- Financial competence and long term sustainability

For a project to be successful it has to score at least 65% or more in relation to the above criteria. Applications greater than £500,000 applications will also be subject to a standard 'Green Book' economic appraisal. Only those projects deemed to score above the quality threshold

(65%) will be forwarded for economic appraisal. There was a significant level of interest in this programme and in total 30 full applications were received by SEUPB under this call.

Key Issues

Members are asked to note that the Council received notification last Friday (15 January) that 2 of its Priority 2.1 capital bids - the Sports Village at North Foreshore and the Girdwood Community Hub have been invited to progress to economic appraisal stage.

The other two bids (Gasworks Bridge and the Cultural Corridor) are still in the preliminary assessment stage and we will hear about them in due course as SEUPB are dealing with a large volume of applications.

SEUPB have appointed consultants to carry out the economic appraisals on their behalf. The appointed consultants for both appraisals are Cogent Management Consultancy. The purpose of the economic appraisal stage is to test further the information in the application forms and the full appraisal will consider:

- the purpose of the project
- whether a need been established
- the specific objectives of the project
- whether measurable targets and quantifiable outputs are provided
- whether alternative options have been considered
- whether the project will provide added value
- whether the project would be scaled down or delayed without grant
- the anticipated benefits of the project and who are the primary beneficiaries.

The next step is that Cogent will be in touch with the Council directly. While no timeframes are given it is anticipated that Cogent will be in touch very shortly. SEUPB have stressed the need to ensure that all queries/ requests for information from the consultants must be dealt with swiftly and that is imperative that we co-operate fully with the consultants.

On completion, the findings of the economic appraisal will inform the overall score applied to the application. A final decision by SEUPB is expected in late Spring 2010. Successful projects will be expected to have completed spend by the end of 2013.

Resource Implications

Financial

None at present

Human Resources

Additional officer time will be required to submit further information during the economic appraisal stage

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the information in this report

Officers to contact for further information:

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Caroline Wilson, Senior Good Relations Officer (Ext. 6037)

Sinead Grimes, Core Improvement Team – Girdwood Public Service Centre (Ext. 6203)

Stephen Smyth, Project Management Unit – Crusaders and Newington Sports Village

Abbreviations

SEUPB – Special European Union Programmes Body