

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

FRIDAY, 15th JANUARY, 2010

MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

- Members present: Councillor Hendron (Chairman); and
Councillors C. Maskey and Stoker.
- External Members: Mr. R. Galway, Bombardier Aerospace/
Confederation of British Industries;
Ms. M. Marken, Catholic Church;
Mr. L. Reynolds, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church; and
Ms. M. de Silva, Voluntary/Community Sector.
- In attendance: Mrs. H. Francey, Good Relations Manager;
Mr. I. May, Peace III Programme Manager; and
Mr. N. Malcolm, Committee Administrator.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Kyle, McCarthy and McCausland and Messrs. P. Mackel and P. Bunting, Ms. S. Bhat and Ms. J. Hawthorne.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 4th December were taken as read and signed as correct.

Variation of Minutes

The Good Relations Manager advised the Partnership that it would be necessary to vary the minutes of its meeting of 13th November under the heading "Procurement". She explained that the minute indicated that, at its meeting on 12th June, it had approved the invitation of tenders relating to key actions within the Peace and Reconciliation Plan, including those relating to Action 4.1 "Citizenship Education Programme" when it should have read "Voluntary and Community Sector Training Programme", as had been indicated in the report. She apologised for the error and requested that the minute be varied accordingly.

The Partnership agreed that the minute of 13th November be varied as outlined above.

Peace III Childcare Costs

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 13th November, the Peace III Programme Manager had undertaken to investigate the current provision for childcare within existing projects. Subsequently, at its meeting on 4th December, he had advised that the Special European Union Programmes Body had issued a clarification note which stated that, whilst childcare costs were eligible in circumstances where the provision of such childcare was essential to the implementation of any project, only invoices from registered childminders would be approved. Accordingly, the Partnership had requested that a letter be issued to the Programmes Body expressing concern that the need to employ registered childminders only might have a detrimental impact on some projects, given the lack of registered childminders in certain areas of the City. The Good Relations Manager informed the Members that a letter had been received recently from the Programmes Body indicating that the issue which had been raised by the Partnership was under review and that a decision in that regard would be issued shortly.

Noted.

Presentation by GEMS and the Institute for Conflict Research

The Partnership was advised that Ms. Susan Russam, representing GEMS, and Dr. Neil Jarman of the Institute for Conflict Research, were in attendance to address the Members regarding the Belfast Citizenship Education Programme which had received Peace III funding.

Ms. Russam indicated that GEMS was working with the Institute for Conflict Research and five other organisations throughout the City which had worked with GEMS over a period of many years to ensure that the Citizenship Education Programme was made available to as wide a cross-section of people as possible. To this end, the organisation was utilising existing client databases, community and wider stakeholder networks, intensive local advertising and awareness raising. The Programme would involve one-to-one mentoring for each participant to assist them to deal with confidence and motivation issues and to support them to deal with issues and challenges which they might experience in relation to the Programme's curriculum. It would cover also the day-to-day issues and challenges which might, without support, result in them dropping out of the Programme.

She informed the Partnership that the Programme had been developed, and would be delivered, by TIDES Training Consultancy in such a manner to ensure that participants were supported to achieve two accredited citizenship qualifications and derive maximum benefit in terms of their own personal development and capacity to develop their new learning through active participation. She explained that there were two aspects to the course:

- (i) understanding the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, which aimed to enable participants to demonstrate an understanding of human rights, the law in a specific situation and in society, the democratic and electoral process and rights and responsibilities in society; and
- (ii) good relations and civic leadership, which aimed to enable participants to understand the influence of identity, the importance of cultural diversity and tacit cultures and current legislation on equality.

Ms. Russam indicated that a pilot scheme had been undertaken by ten participants during November to enable GEMS and the Institute to review the effectiveness of the Programme and to make any necessary adjustments. The feedback from this pilot had been positive.

Dr. Jarman informed the Members that it was intended that 220 persons would participate in the Programme before the end of the year. He accepted that this might be difficult but was convinced that with the enthusiastic support of the organisations involved this target could be met. He reported that integrated research and evaluation exercises would be undertaken as part of the Programme, which would include the production of an evaluation report in order to assist the Peace III Team to monitor, evaluate and disseminate the results of the Programme. To this end, a three stage survey of all trainees would be undertaken at key stages to assess their awareness of, and attitudes towards, the key issues which would be addressed in the Programme. In addition, comparative analysis pre and post course would be undertaken in order to ascertain its impact, as would focus groups involving participants, trainers and mentors.

Ms. Russam and Dr. Jarman then answered various questions from the Members and retired from the meeting.

Peace III – Implementation Update

The Partnership considered a report detailing the progress which had been achieved to date in respect of the implementation of the Belfast Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan. The report highlighted the work which had been carried out under the various Peace Plan themes and actions, including Shared City Space, Transforming Contested Space, Shared Cultural Space and Shared Organisational Space.

The Peace III Programme Manager informed the Partnership of a number of programme issues, indicated that guidance for the 2011-2013 period had not yet been issued and that the work being undertaken within Belfast would be audited by the Special European Unit Programmes Body in February. In addition, he informed the Members that an event regarding the Belfast Peace III Programme would be held on 20th May in order to showcase the various projects and activities and he requested that Members provide him with their views on how the event should be organised. In addition, he recommended that the Partnership receive at its February meeting presentations from Deloitte regarding the Interface Audit which that company had undertaken and from the Migrant Workers' Forum on its project and at the March meeting presentations from Falls Community Council on its Interface Networks Project and from the Workers Educational Association on its Divercity Programme.

**Good Relations Partnership,
Friday, 15th January, 2010**

The Peace III Programme Manager requested the Partnership to note the award of a contract to GEMS Northern Ireland for the development and delivery of a training programme to support the integration of new communities in Belfast as part of the Migrant Workers Project.

He requested also permission to undertake a pre-conduct check on Concilium, following a written request for assignment of their letter of offer from Mount Vernon Community Development Forum for Project Ref. 1206.

After discussion, the Partnership adopted the recommendation regarding the presentations and pre-contract check and noted the information which had been provided.

Greater Village Community Relations Working Group

Councillor Stoker informed the Partnership that, earlier in the day, the Community Relations Strategy for the period 2010-2013 had been launched by the Greater Village Community Relations Working Group, the contents of which had involved considerable participation by local residents. He circulated copies of the Strategy for the Members' information.

Noted.

European Coalition of Cities Against Racism

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that Belfast had been accepted as a member of the European Coalition of Cities Against Racism, which involved 97 municipalities in 20 European countries.

Noted.

Good Relations Unit Briefing

The Partnership noted that a briefing on the broader work of the Good Relations Unit would be undertaken in February.

February Meeting

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that photographs which would be used for publicity purposes would be taken at its February meeting.

Noted.

Re-imaging Communities Programme

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that an exhibition regarding the Re-imaging Communities Programme, which had been operated in association with the Arts Council for Northern Ireland, would be held in the East Entrance of the City Hall during March. She believed that it would be appropriate to provide hospitality at the launch of the exhibition and requested authority so to do.

After discussion, the Partnership requested that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agree to the incurring of expenditure in order to provide hospitality at the launch of the Re-imaging Communities Programme exhibition to be held in the City Hall in March.

Chairman