

## **GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**

**FRIDAY, 12th MARCH, 2010**

### **MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**

Members present: Councillor Hendron (Chairman); and  
Councillors McCarthy and Stoker.

External Members: Ms. M. Marken, Catholic Church;  
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church;  
Rev. J. Rea, Methodist Church;  
Ms. S. Bhat, Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum;  
Ms. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;  
Ms. M. deSilva, Voluntary/Community Sector; and  
Mr. L. Reynolds, Voluntary/Community Sector.

In attendance: Mr. I. May, Peace III Programme Manager;  
Mr. D. Robinson, Good Relations Officer; and  
Mr. N. Malcolm, Committee Administrator.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Kyle and C. Maskey, Messrs. R. Galway, P. Mackel, P. Bunting and S. Brennan and Ms. A. Chada.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 12th February were taken as read and signed as correct.

#### **Presentation – DisabledGo**

(Ms. M. Hand, Equality and Diversity Officer, attended in connection with this item.)

The Equality and Diversity Officer informed the Partnership that in 2007 the Council had awarded DisabledGo a three year contract to provide a website which contained accessibility information regarding Council properties and other buildings in Belfast. She explained that the contract was due for renewal and Ms. Kimberley Dixon from DisabledGo was in attendance to provide information regarding the work which the Company had undertaken.

Ms. Dixon was welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman. She explained that DisabledGo provided online access information regarding buildings and venues in different towns and cities across the United Kingdom and Ireland in order to provide disabled people, their friends, family, colleagues and carers with the confidence to go out knowing how to get into buildings so that they could enjoy themselves and contribute to their community. She explained that consultation was at the heart of the

Company's processes and, in the previous year, it had consulted with over 850 organisations and disabled people. DisabledGo's representatives had visited all the towns and cities covered in the website and had examined many different kinds of venues and buildings so that it could provide detailed access information. She advised the Partnership that the DisabledGo Guide for Belfast covered 750 venues across the City and was reviewed annually. In each of the previous three years twenty-five new venues had been added to the Guide. She explained that the cost of maintaining the DisabledGo Belfast Guide would be £5,500 plus Value Added Tax per year and that this amount included all the expenses which would be involved in representatives from the Company visiting Belfast to update the guide and maintaining the website.

At the conclusion of the presentation, Ms. Dixon answered various questions which were put to her by the Members, following which she retired from the meeting.

The Forum noted the information which Ms. Dixon had provided and noted also that a report on funding for the DisabledGo Belfast Guide would be considered at its April meeting.

#### **Presentation – Falls Community Council**

The Partnership was advised that Mr. Donal McKinney from Falls Community Council was in attendance to address the Members regarding the Peace III Interface Network Project in which it was the lead organisation. The Peace III Programme Manager explained that the consortium being led by Falls Community Council, entitled the Belfast Interface Trust, was undertaking work within the Transforming Contested Space element of the Belfast Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan.

Mr. McKinney informed the Partnership that thirteen organisations were participating in the project which was using the grassroots approach and involved the communities and local activists who lived and worked at interface areas. Technical assistance was being provided through Community Places and the Participation and Practice of Rights Project to assist in the development of the model framework and training materials. He explained that the project was working in the mid-Shankill and Clonard areas of West Belfast, the Short Strand and Lower Newtownards, Lower Castlereagh, Lower Woodstock and Lower Ravenhill areas of East Belfast and that areas within North Belfast would be finalised shortly.

He outlined the work which had been undertaken to date and the outcomes of the project which would result in:

- (i) three defined and resourced pieces of work areas on the interfaces which would serve as a models of good practice;
- (ii) the creation of a legacy which would focus on the removal of, and reduction in, physical barriers in the areas;
- (iii) local action plans for each area; and
- (iv) the publication of a model framework.

During discussion in the matter, a Member enquired why South Belfast, which had a number of significant interface areas, had not been included in the programme being delivered by the Belfast Interface Trust.

In reply, Mr. McKinney indicated that the tender which had been issued by the Council had requested that the successful organisation develop at least two local networks, although in their submission, Falls Community Council had proposed work in three areas. In answer to further questions, he informed the Partnership that Statutory Agencies were involved in the work of the project and that key project outputs would include locally agreed action plans, a model framework and training materials to ensure good practice could be easily shared.

The Chairman thanked Mr. McKinney for his presentation and the latter then retired from the meeting.

Several Members expressed concern that they had not been advised when the tender had been awarded to Falls Community Council that its work would not be Citywide. A Member pointed out that organisations in South Belfast had written to the Falls Community Council seeking advice on the work it was undertaking at interface areas but that, to date, no reply had been received. It was pointed out that there were interfaces throughout Belfast and that for one area to be excluded from the work being undertaken by the project was neither fair or correct.

The Peace III Programme Manager indicated that he would enquire from the Falls Community Council why the correspondence from organisations in South Belfast had not been responded to. He pointed out that the tender which had been received from the Falls Community Council had been the best one which had been received. He pointed out further that funding was still available within the Transforming Contested Space theme of the Plan to ensure that gaps identified could be addressed and that the South Belfast area would be included in any proposals to deliver further programmes under that measure.

The Partnership agreed to note the information which had been provided by Mr. McKinney regarding the Belfast Interface Trust project and the comments thereon of the Peace III Programme Manager.

### **Peace III – Implementation Update**

The Peace III Programme Manager submitted a report which provided an update in respect of the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan. The report outlined the progress which had been achieved to date on the themes and actions within the Plan, together with a summary of expenditure under each of the four themes of the Plan along with the summary of actual and planned activity from February till April.

He advised the Partnership that staff from the Special European Union Programmes Body had completed recently an audit inspection, the key findings of which had indicated that the Council had established adequate control systems and that the project was being delivered in compliance with the various regulations, legislation and guidelines. He pointed out that the Northern Ireland Audit Office would be undertaking an audit of the Council's Good Relations work in the near future.

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The Peace III Programme Manager informed the Members that two networking events for projects under the themes of the Plan would be held on 14th and 20th April. The purpose of those meetings would be to facilitate networking between lead organisations, to gather ideas on capturing information on project outcomes and to give groups and organisations a chance to provide feedback on general issues relating to the implementation of the Belfast Peace Plan. He pointed out that the Members of the Partnership would be invited to participate in both networking events.

The Partnership noted the information provided.

**Peace III – Progress Report to the  
Special European Union Programmes Body**

The Peace III Programme Manager informed the Partnership that he had been requested by the Special European Union Programmes Body to complete on a quarterly basis a progress report. This report would provide an update against the Programme indicators which had been developed as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Belfast Peace Plan and which had been incorporated into the Aid For Peace report which had been prepared for the Northern Ireland Statistical Research Agency and Programmes Body. He pointed out that a copy of the report had been circulated with the papers for the meeting and that the Partnership would have an opportunity to re-examine the indicators and make any necessary amendments as the current phase of the Plan continued. He informed the Members that there had been a delay in the organising of the Attitudinal Survey at the regional Programme level due to consultations regarding issues and definitions taking longer than had been anticipated.

The Partnership noted the contents of the progress report to the Special European Union Programmes Body and the information provided thereon by the Peace III Programme Manager.

**Peace III – Report on Review Session  
held on 25th February**

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

**“Purpose of paper**

**To update the Partnership on the recent review session held on 25th February 2010 to consider uncommitted funding relating to key actions within the Peace Plan. .**

**Key Issues**

**Background**

**The Partnership will recall that it approved a review session to look at the issue of commitment of funding under the current phase of the Plan. The review was held on 25th February 2010 at Clifton House, Clifton Street, Belfast.**

The session examined the issue of uncommitted funding for phase one of the PEACE III Programme, specifically the following actions.

Shared City Space	£40k Safe Accessible City Centre Conference £30k Mobility Research
Transforming Contested Space	£111k Intercommunity Dialogue toward removal of interfaces £90k Youth Intervention Work
Shared Cultural Space	£245K Interfaith Work £70K Cultural Diversity in Sport work

The options for addressing and delivering projects remain as:

- (i) a small grants programme (potentially up to £100,000)
- (ii) partner delivery (by an organisation represented on the Good Relations Partnership)
- (iii) public procurement

#### Key Issues

Under the N+2 rule there is the risk of decommitment of the Belfast PEACE III allocation if satisfactory progress is not made towards achievement of expenditure targets within the timeframe.

It was noted that resource and capacity issues would not be allowed to be a barrier to committing, ensuring expenditure and meeting all agreed outputs, therefore all delivery mechanisms for completion of Phase One of the Plan should be considered.

It was agreed that there was a need to have firm proposals approved by June 2010 to allow at least 12 months for implementation. It was further noted that there is a need to revisit programme related communications on a regular basis.

#### 1. Theme One- Shared City Space

##### Safe Accessible City Centre (£40k)

It was agreed that there was a need to widen the network of participants involved in issues regarding the increased accessibility of City Centre spaces. In particular, it was agreed it would be beneficial to increase involvement of the private sector and to look at developing dialogue between City Centre users i.e. businesses, individuals, voluntary groups.

**Action Requested:** Peace III Programme Manager to call a meeting of private sector members and organisational representatives with commercial links within the Partnership to develop a proposal specification.

**Mobility Research (£30K)**

It was noted that Translink had been having discussions with regard to some research into patterns of mobility and that there may be links in any undertaking to both the Safe Accessible City centre work and DRD Get Home Safe initiative. It was agreed that delivery by a partner or through public procurement was the most suitable method to advance this element of the plan.

**Action Requested:** Peace III Programme Manager to set up initial meeting to coordinate this action with input from Translink.

**2. Theme Two: Transforming Contested Space**

**Removal of Physical Barriers (£111k)**

It was noted that Deloitte's were due to deliver an Interface Audit report, which would identify current levels and types of activities in interface areas. It was agreed that this report could assist in formulating proposals. It was also noted that the CRC lead an Interface Working Group.

It was agreed that the best delivery mechanism for any development under this aspect of the plan was through partner delivery or public procurement.

**Action Requested:** A future presentation to the Good Relations Partnership on the outcome of the Interface Audit

Peace III Programme Manager to coordinate a meeting of Partnership members with the CRC. The meeting to be on the basis of consulting CRC as lead members of the Interface Working Group and not as Technical Support organisation for PEACE III.

**Youth Intervention Programme (£90K)**

Consideration was given to a proposal for an Alternatives model focused around South Belfast to be developed jointly with the Community Safety Partnership.

**Action requested:** Further consultation led by Good Relations staff with Partnership members and the Community Safety Partnership to develop a proposal for future consideration by the Good Relations Partnership

### **3. Theme Three Shared Cultural Space**

#### **Cultural Diversity in Sport Initiatives (£70K)**

It was noted that there were a number of initiatives through out the city that involved using sport as a mechanism for tackling sectarianism and racism. Some consideration was given to idea of using some of the sport funding to tie in with Youth Intervention work and inviting other stakeholders to contribute to developing project ideas e.g. schools, University of Ulster, youth workers and voluntary groups working with young people.

**Action Requested:** Further consultation with Council Staff and Partnership members to develop a proposal for future consideration by the Good Relations Partnership

#### **Interfaith Work (£245k)**

It was noted that there had been many meetings and discussions with individual church representatives, the inter faith forum and other organisations involved in inter church work. The outcomes of these meetings suggested that there was a lack of capacity within existing structures to engage and deliver within the parameters of PEACE III funding and Peace and Reconciliation Plan.

It was noted that if the Partnership were to use either a partner or public procurement as the delivery mechanism there could be significant delays in identification of an appropriate lead partner. It was also noted that as coordinating bodies had been reluctant to consider delivering a project of such scope it may be better to consider a specific grants programme to deliver this aspect of the plan.

It was also agreed that the grants programme should consider broadening the scope of the call for projects to reflect interfaith and intercultural aspects of the city and not be confined to inter church projects.

**Action Requested:** Peace III Programme Manager to coordinate the development of a specific grants programme with a detailed proposal to a future meeting of the Good Relations Partnership.

### Phase Two of the Belfast Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan

The session also considered planning for phase two of local authority led action plans of the PEACE Programme. While the assessment framework and guidance note are still in preparation and yet to be issued to Councils the following observations were made in the session.

- It is assumed that the guidelines for developing a plan will follow the 7 step planning process utilised for Phase One and that there will no major changes in the priorities and methods of delivery of the programme.
- It was noted that consultation would be required on any proposed plan and that good practice suggests that there should be a minimum 12 week consultation period for any proposed Phase Two Plan and that the Equality Commission indicates that consultation should not take place in the months of July and August.
- During discussion it was noted that it would be beneficial to try and engage the Belfast Partnership Boards in Phase Two of PEACE III either through approaches on individual basis or through the Belfast Area Partnership Boards.
- It was suggested that the Partnership should consider the membership of the Partnership with a view to broadening its composition for instance, to invite representatives from health, education services and organisations to reflect needs and aspirations of key demographic groups i.e. elderly etc.
- It was agreed that, where possible, Phase Two should be able to build on the work of Phase One, the example given being that of current training programmes for community-based mediators having been trained, how can they then apply that training in the community?
- It was agreed that for Phase Two it would be useful if consideration were given to having more definitive outputs/outcomes and the emphasis should be on making an impact that is widely more recognised, understood and experienced by the citizens of Belfast.

#### Resource Implications

##### Financial Implications

Risk of decommitment of the PEACE III allocation if satisfactory progress not made towards achievement of N+2 targets.

##### HR Implications

None.

### **Recommendations**

**The Partnership is requested to approve the following actions:**

**That the Peace III Programme Manager call a meeting of private sector members and organisational representatives with commercial links within the Partnership to develop a proposal specification relating to a Safe Accessible City Centre**

**That the Peace III Programme Manager call an initial meeting to coordinate this action with input from Translink.**

**That the Partnership receive a presentation from Deloitte Consultants on the Interface Audit and that following that the Peace III Programme Manager coordinate a meeting of Partnership members with the CRC. The meeting to be on the basis of consulting CRC as lead members of the Interface Working Group and not as Technical Support organisation for PEACE III.**

**That further consultation is undertaken to develop proposals for future consideration by the Good Relations Partnership relating to youth intervention work and cultural diversity in sport programmes**

**That the Peace III Programme Manager coordinate the development of a specific grants programme relating to Interfaith, interchurch and intercultural work with a detailed proposal to be brought to a future meeting of the Good Relations Partnership.**

### **Decision Tracking**

**The Peace III Programme Manager will be tasked with actions arising from this report and will provide an update on progress at the next Partnership Meeting.**

### **Key to Abbreviations**

**SEUPB – Special European Union Programmes Body”**

During discussion in the matter, the Members indicated that the review session had been useful but expressed concern that a large amount of funding still remained uncommitted for interfaith work. The Members made various suggestions in this matter, following which the Peace III Programme Manager indicated that he would be submitting to a future meeting a report proposing how that money could be spent.

The Partnership adopted the recommendations contained within the foregoing report.

**Items to be Discussed at Future Meetings**

The Chairman indicated that, in addition to its normal business, she was keen for the Partnership to also engage in discussions around wider Good Relations issues which were of concern to Members or organisations represented on the Partnership.

During discussion, the Partnership agreed that it needed to be informed about such issues and a number of topics were suggested. It was suggested also that the themes which had been developed under the Belfast Peace Plan should be re-examined to ensure that they were still relevant and that the uncommitted funds should be examined to ascertain if they could be used to deal with those issues.

Following further discussion, the Partnership agreed that the Chairman would discuss the matter with the Good Relations Manager, with a report thereon being submitted to a future meeting of the Partnership.

**Belfast Health Development Unit**

The Partnership was advised that it had been invited to the launch of the new Belfast Health Development Unit on 23rd March. The aim of this organisation was to work together to reduce inequality and improve health and wellbeing within Belfast.

Noted.

**Re-imaging Communities Exhibition**

The Partnership noted that an exhibition regarding the work of the Re-imaging Communities Project was being held currently in the East Entrance of the City Hall.

**Mr. Lee Reynolds**

The Chairman informed the Partnership that this would be the last meeting at which Mr. Reynolds would be in attendance as he had submitted a letter of resignation following his appointment to a new position within a political party, which prevented him from remaining on the Partnership as a representative of the voluntary and community sector. She thanked Mr. Reynolds for his contribution to the work of the Partnership and wished him well for the future.

Mr. Reynolds thanked the Chairman for her kind remarks.

Chairman