



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Reopening of call for Peace III Priority 2.1 Capital bids for Shared Space
Date:	22 October 2010
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Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is to update Members on the reopening of the Peace III Priority 2.1 '*Creating Shared Public Spaces*' call for capital projects.

Relevant Background Information

Last month's Strategic P&R Committee was informed that SEUPB intended to reopen the call for bids under Priority 2.1 '*Creating Shared Public Spaces*' of the Peace III programme. Members are asked to note that SEUPB formally reopened this call on 1st October with a closing date for applications on **MONDAY, 17TH JANUARY 2011**.

Under this priority SEUPB is seeking strategic physical project submissions that can be easily recognised as a Peace III project after the programme completes in 2015. The central issue that projects need to demonstrate is their ability to deliver peace and reconciliation outcomes and to be iconic, transformational projects that would provide a lasting legacy to the PEACE III programme. All monies under this call have to be committed by December 2013 and spent by 2015 so the timescales are extremely tight for capital projects.

Members agreed last month that it was important that the learning from the previous rounds of Peace III applications is taken on board if any new projects are submitted under this reopened call. The application process is an onerous one and the Council weakens its chances of success with the submission of multiple bids. It was therefore agreed that the Council should only submit 1 or 2 very well defined projects under this call in order to maximise its chances of getting a successful application under this call.

Members were also reminded that previous Council led submissions have failed on their capacity to be iconic, transformational and have had an insufficient focus on peace and reconciliation. Therefore it is vital that any projects which are submitted under this call need to -

- clearly demonstrate their peace and reconciliation outcomes
- be iconic and transformational
- provide a lasting legacy to the Peace programme in Northern Ireland,
- clearly identify the need for the project and be fully worked up and costed

Members also agreed to the establishment of a short term Member Group to develop an influencing strategy and make use of the existing Member experience with SEUPB.

Members will recall that the Council submitted 4 applications under the last call for this Priority in

November 2009. Of these 3 were rejected by SEUPB – the Sports Village at the North Foreshore, the North Belfast Cultural Corridor and the Gasworks Bridge while the Girdwood Community Hub application was deferred pending further information. Members are asked to note that work on the Girdwood Hub submission is continuing.

Key Issues – Reopening of the call

Update on Projects

Following the SP&R Committee meetings in August and September and the Party Group briefings on the new Corporate Plan in early September, Members have identified a number of projects that could potentially be submitted under this call. These are detailed below along with some points for Members to note and recommendations in relation to each project.

1. *Sports Village at the North Foreshore* – the development of a cross community facility aimed at promoting good relations via sport, recreational training and education on the North Foreshore site. The Council would lead and develop this bid with the support of Crusaders/Newington Football Clubs. As Members are aware the original Sports Village bid got through to second phase but was rejected on grounds of limited peace inputs and gaps in the business plan. These areas would have to be reworked in any new submission

Recommendation – That officers work up this proposal in greater detail and continue to progress discussions with Crusaders/Newington Football Clubs

2. *'Belfast Story' at Belfast Central Library* – Members will recall that the Strategic P&R Committee at its meeting in June 2010 considered the decisions made by the Libraries NI Board in terms of library closures and agreed that the Council should continue discussions with Libraries NI in relation to potential future collaboration opportunities. Members were informed at the SP&R Committee meeting in September that initial discussions had been held with Libraries NI staff re the opportunity of a potential space to host the 'Belfast Story' in the Belfast Central Library. Members are also aware that Library is being considered as a potential option for the future location of the Welcome Centre. An Outline Business Case for the Central Library is currently being prepared by Libraries NI and this is due to be finalised by the end of December. Members are asked to note that there could potentially be a number of issues with the proposal in that the delivery of the Belfast Story within the Library will be contingent on Libraries NI receiving funding go-ahead for the overall project and that this might be deemed as a high risk by SEUPB. Members are asked to consider that the central premise of Priority 2.1 is to deliver major, iconic, transformational capital projects and that this project may not be deemed to fit with the aspirations of this programme.

Recommendation – That officers do further work on this proposal to assess its suitability and viability in relation to aims and objectives of the Priority 2.1 programme in light of the issues raised above and continue to progress discussions with Libraries NI re this project with an update to be taken to Members next month.

3. *Ulster Sports Museum* – As Members are aware the Ulster Sports Museum Association (USMA) has been working for a number of years towards establishing a permanent museum by 2012 to celebrate Ulster's greatest sports men and women building on the success of the temporary exhibition which was launched in the City Hall in Dec 2009. The Association had previously considered a building in College Square North however for a variety of reasons, including cost, the USMA, was unable to proceed with that proposal. Earlier this year the USMA advertised to identify potential partners interested in hosting the museum. They interviewed a number of applicants and have narrowed it down to three potential locations – Belfast (former Bank of Ireland building at the corner of North Street and Royal Avenue), Bangor and Newtownabbey. Consultants have been appointed to assess the feasibility of each location. Council officers have met recently with the USMA to discuss their proposals and the USMA have highlighted that there are strong arguments for locating the sports museum in Belfast City Centre. It has been stressed to the USMA that the Council could not, given the current economic situation, contribute directly to the financing of this project. The USMA is therefore looking at exploring other funding avenues. Further consideration would need to be given to the location of this project, potential links with the 'Belfast Story'/Central

Library project etc. Members are asked to note that an update paper on this project was taken to the Parks & Leisure Committee on 14 October.

Recommendation – That officers do further work on this proposal to assess its suitability and viability in relation to the aims of the Priority 2.1 programme and progress discussions with the USMA

4. *North Belfast Cultural Corridor* – As Members are aware the Cultural Corridor was knocked out by SEUPB in the last call at the first stage – i.e. it did not meet the thresholds for progressing to economic appraisal. SEUPB had advised that they felt the Corridor project was much more of an environmental and tourism project and that it was weak in demonstrating peace and reconciliation outcomes and their feedback was that the Corridor project would be unlikely to meet the aims of the Priority 2.1 programme. However provision for parts of this project have now been made under the Council's recent submission to Peace III Priority 1.1 'Building Positive Relations at a Local Level' and will be taken forward through this and potentially renewing the routes options.

Recommendation – SEUPB have already advised that it is unlikely that this project will meet the aims of the Priority 2.1 programme and as provision for elements of this projects have been made under Priority 1.1 it is recommended that this project is not resubmitted under Priority 2.1

5. *Gasworks Bridge* – Members are aware that like the Cultural Corridor project above the Gasworks Bridge also did not meet the threshold scores for progressing to economic appraisal stage in the last round and was knocked out by SEUPB in the initial stage. Subsequent discussions with SEUPB indicated that this project fell down on its demonstration of peace and reconciliation outcomes and its ability to provide a lasting legacy to the peace programme. It was also considered weak in terms of its ability to act as a catalyst and be transformational. Concerns were also raised over the value for money and the need for the project. SEUPB drew comparisons with the Peace Bridge in Derry which had successfully received funding under an earlier call for this priority highlighting that this was seen as a project which had an impact on the whole city whereas it was considered that the impact of the Gasworks proposal would be much more localised and therefore less iconic and transformational. Members are asked to note that the Council has been contacted by Sustrans in relation to the Connect2 project which could be an alternative avenue of funding for the development of this project.

Recommendation – that this project is not resubmitted following the feedback from SEUPB. Members are asked however to agree that officers explore the potential for the development of this project under the Connect 2 project in conjunction with Sustrans

6. *North Foreshore Bridge* – As Members are aware the North Foreshore Bridge was submitted under one of the previous calls to Priority 2.1 in 2007 and was narrowly rejected at economic appraisal stage. Members are however asked to note SEUPB's feedback in relation to the Gasworks Bridge in relation to this proposal and the need for the project to demonstrate its impact at a city level.

Recommendation – that no further action is taken in relation to this project under Priority 2.1 in light of the feedback from SEUPB on the Gasworks Bridge project and that this project has previously been rejected

7. *HMS Caroline* – Members will be aware that there have been ongoing discussions re the future of the HMS Caroline over the past few years and that this project was previously rejected by the Strategic P&R Committee as potential project under the last round of funding. Members are asked to note that the SS Nomadic restoration project received £2.27million of funding under a previous call under this priority and feedback from previous discussions with SEUPB on other projects would indicate that they are reluctant to fund 2 or more projects of a similar nature.

Recommendation – no further action at present – it is unlikely that SEUPB will fund two similar applications under this funding programme

8. *Black Mountain Shared Space Project* – Officers from the Council met recently with representatives from the Black Mountain Shared Spaces project which is an innovative

project being developed on a cross-community and cross-sectoral basis. The Black Mountain Shared Spaces Project has recently written to the Council asking that the Council be the lead statutory partner in this project. The Black Mountain has, over recent years, become the focus of anti-social behaviour mainly, but not exclusively, on the part of young people from both sides of the community. The Black Mountain Shared Spaces project proposes a number of elements including education, employment and youth provision, building good relations and development of a social economy project of benefit to the area, Belfast and beyond. Members are asked to note however that this project is still in the developmental stage and it is unlikely that it will meet the tight timeframe for submission under this call of funding. Officers from the Council will continue to work closely with reps from this Group on bringing this project forward and advising on other potential funding streams.

Recommendation – not recommended for submission under this call – the Black Mountain Shared Spaces project is still in the very early developmental stages and is therefore unlikely to be developed sufficiently in time to meet the tight timescales under this call. Following the recent request by the BSSP the Council will be the lead statutory partner in this project.

9. *Interface areas* – Officers from the Good Relations Unit have held some initial discussions with both the Belfast Interface Trust and the Belfast Interface Project who have produced some ideas for interface areas in Belfast. Work on this is continuing under Priority 1.1 and the Council is actively working with all partners/ relevant stakeholders on this area to progress this

Recommendation – not recommended for submission under this call as work is continuing, in conjunction with partners and other stakeholders, under Priority 1.1.

A summary of the projects and recommendations for these is contained below for the convenience of Members. Members are asked to consider these recommendations and are further asked if there are any other projects they wish to be considered at this stage. Members are asked however to bear in mind the tight timescales for the submission of projects and the fact that Members had previously agreed that the Council should only submit a maximum of 1 or 2 clearly defined bids under this call.

Project	Recommendation
Sports Village at North Foreshore	Further detail to be worked up
Belfast Story at Central Library	Further detail to be explored to assess the suitability and viability of this project as well as ongoing discussions with Libraries NI with an update to be taken to Committee in November
Ulster Sports Museum	Further detail to be explored to assess the suitability and viability of this project as well as ongoing discussions with USMA with an update to be taken to Committee in November
North Belfast Cultural Corridor	No further action – SEUPB feedback was that this project did not fulfil the aims of Priority 2.1. Elements being progressed under Priority 1.1.
Gasworks Bridge	No further action – SEUPB feedback was that this project did not fulfil the aims of Priority 2.1. Officers to explore the potential for progressing this project under the Connect2 programme
North Foreshore Bridge	No further action – this project has previously been rejected and it is therefore unlikely to be successful. Officers to explore the potential for progressing this project under the Connect2 programme
HMS Caroline	No further action – unlikely that SEUPB will fund two similar projects under this funding programme

Black Mountain Shared Spaces Project	No further action – this project is still in the early stages of development and so will not meet the tight timeframe for the submission of applications. The Council is now taking a lead in this project and officers from the Council will continue to work with representatives from the project on bringing this proposal forward and potentially securing other avenues of funding
Interface Areas	No further action – being progressed by the Council in conjunction with the Belfast Interface Trust and the Belfast Interface Project under Priority 1.1.

Resource Implications
<p><u>Financial</u> None at present.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Additional officer time will be required to progress work on applications that the Council wishes to proceed with.</p>

Recommendations
<p>The Committee is asked to note the information in this report and to –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. note that SEUPB have formally reopened the Priority 2.1 call with the deadline for submission of applications being MONDAY 17 JANUARY 2011 2. consider the recommendations in relation to the projects listed above and agree that further investigation be undertaken in relation to the Sports Village, the Ulster Sports Museum and the Belfast Story at Central Library and that no further action is progressed in relation to the other projects

Abbreviations
SEUPB – Special European Union Programmes Body

Documents Attached
None.