

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY, 9th JANUARY, 2012

MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

Members present: Councillor Hendron (Chairman);
Alderman Stoker;
Councillors Attwood, Kyle and Maskey.

External Members: Mr. S. Brennan, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Ms. A. Chada, Minority Ethnic Groups;
Mr. P. Mackel, Belfast and District Trades Council;
Mrs. M. Marken, Roman Catholic Church;
Ms. J. Peden, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust;
Mr. P. Scott, Roman 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;
Miss A. Deighan, Good Relations Officer;
Ms. L. Dolan, Good Relations Officer; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor Reynolds, Mrs. J. Hawthorne and Mr. W. McGivern.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 28th November were taken as read and signed as correct.

Ms. J. Peden

The Chairman welcomed Ms. J. Peden, who had been appointed as the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust representative on the Partnership, to her first meeting.

Future Meeting at Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 7th November, it had agreed that it should investigate the feasibility of holding a future meeting at the offices of the Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group, which would enable the Members to be updated on the good relations work ongoing at this interface. Accordingly, the Good Relations Manager reported that she had made arrangements for the meeting of the Partnership, scheduled for 6th February, to be held at the premises of the organisation. She added that transport to and from the City Hall would be arranged for Members.

Noted.

Presentation on 'Our SPACE' Programme

The Partnership was advised that Mr. Peter Shaw, Director of the Belfast Community Sports Development Network, was in attendance to provide an overview on the work of the Network's 'Our SPACE' programme and he was admitted to the meeting and welcomed by the Chairman.

Mr. Shaw stated that the Belfast Community Sports Development Network had been established in October, 2006 and had worked with a wide range of community regeneration organisations to deliver programmes through the medium of sport. He pointed out that the Network sought to oversee activities which promoted social inclusion and healthy living primarily within areas of social and economic deprivation. He explained that the Network had, from December, 2009 until June, 2011, overseen the delivery of the 'Our SPACE' project, which had been funded by the Council through the Peace III Programme. He stated that the aim of the project had been to promote an anti-sectarian and anti-racist message through the medium of sport and to enable young people to partake in activities which would prove to be beneficial on both a personal and educational basis. Mr. Shaw then provided examples of the types of activities which had been delivered through the project and outlined the main achievements of the initiative. He then paid tribute to the work of a range of bodies, agencies, clubs and volunteers who had assisted in the delivery of the programme and provided statistics on the numbers and geographical spread of participants, together with an overview of the positive impact provided to local communities.

The Chairman thanked Mr. Shaw for his presentation and paid tribute to the Network on the success of the project. Mr. Shaw then answered a range of Members' questions in respect of the future plans for the delivery of the project; the work ongoing to engage further with groups who were considered to be socially marginalised; and the current structure and direction of the organisation. He concluded by pointing out that the Network would be happy to work again in conjunction with the Council in the delivery of further projects of this nature.

After further discussion, the Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

Peace III Implementation Update

The Partnership considered a report which provided an update in respect of the implementation of Phase I of the Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan. The Peace III Programme Manager reported that work was ongoing in the collation of progress reports and monitoring returns for the last quarter of 2011 and that these would be presented for the Partnership's consideration at its meeting in February. He reported further that, subsequent to a number of queries raised by the Special European Union Programmes Body in respect of the Youth Engagement Programme and Tension Monitoring Programme, additional information had been provided to the Body and the Partnership was advised that a decision regarding future funding would be forthcoming. He advised the Partnership that calls for applications to the Strategic Grants Programme, which had opened on 21st October, had closed on 16th December and that an Assessment Panel had been established to review the applications on 17th and 18th January. The Peace

III Programme Manager indicated also that a memorandum had been received from the Special European Union Programmes Body in respect of the criteria for the re-distribution of Phase I 'slippage money' which indicated that submissions in this regard must be submitted to the Body by 20th January. He then outlined a range of forthcoming events and indicated that invites would be forwarded for the attention of Members.

The Good Relation Relations Manager drew the Members' attention to the level of 'ineligible expenditure' as identified through the verification of expenditure for the Programme, which stood at 0.65%. She pointed out that every effort had been made to minimise such ineligible expenditure and stated that the levels achieved represented a very low error rate, which was due to the vigilance and attention to detail by the Peace III team.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided and congratulated the officers for their management and monitoring of expenditure associated with the Programme.

Revised Equality Action Plan

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

"Purpose

Following the public consultation period on the Council's revised draft Equality Scheme, the Partnership is asked to approve the revised Equality Scheme, revised Interim Equality Action Plan and the proposed Council response to the consultation comments.

Background

The Good Relations Partnership will recall that last year they considered reports outlining revised guidance from the Equality Commission on S75 duties and the implications for the Council. The revised guidance required the Council to prepare a revised Equality Scheme, drawn up in accordance with a model template issued by the Equality Commission, and consult with the public. In addition all public authorities are requested to:

- **Introduce revised screening procedures, report quarterly and make all related documents available on the website**
- **Undertake an Audit of Inequalities and**
- **Develop an Equality Action Plan, linked to the corporate planning cycle, to ensure that equality and good relations are incorporated and mainstreamed at a strategic level across the Council's business.**

At its meeting on 10 October 2011, the Good Relations Partnership approved the draft revised Equality Scheme, Audit of Inequalities and Interim Equality Action Plan for consultation; these were approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 21 October 2011 and were then submitted for an eight week period of public consultation from 21 October – 16 December 2011.

Consultation Process

The Council's Equality Consultation List (known as the AA list) was updated in September 2011. All consultees received an electronic copy of the revised Equality Scheme, the Audit of Inequalities and the Interim Equality Action Plan, a consultation response form and an opportunity to update their details on the Council's consultation list.

In addition, the documents were presented to consultees at the Council's own Consultation Forum on 10 November 2011, at a NI regional equality consultation event at Lagan Valley Island Civic Centre on 16 November 2011 held in partnership with the Local Government Staff Commission, and to the Equality Coalition on Wednesday 14 December 2011.

The closing date for the consultation process was 16 December 2011. The Council received only 5 formal written responses, from the Equality Commission, Disability Action, the Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ), the Rainbow Project and Employers for Disability NI. All consultees' responses are recorded, considered and responded to.

Comments received

- The Equality Commission made no reference to the draft Equality Scheme. It commended the draft Audit of Inequalities, stating that the Council had taken a "positive approach". It also made some general comments about the draft Action Plan in relation to monitoring, layout, outcomes, promoting participation in public life and employment inequalities.
- The response from Disability Action commented on the draft Equality Scheme in detail, particularly the two chapters relating to consulting and ensuring access to information. They also commented on the Audit of Inequalities and the proposed Interim Action Plan.
- The CAJ response was a generic one submitted to all City, Borough and District Councils and to the Local Government Staff Commission.

- The Rainbow Project's comments related to making greater use of LGBT data and research information and the promotion of greater awareness of LGBT issues within the workforce.
- The Employers for Disability NI (EFDNI) response related to wider distribution of information regarding job opportunities.

These comments have been taken into account and relevant amendments made where possible; the proposed Council response to each comment is attached.

Amendments required

As a result, some textual amendments have been made to Chapters 3 and 6 of the Equality Scheme.

No amendments to the Audit of Inequalities will be required prior to formal submission since no specific comments on this were received during consultation.

Equality Action Plan

The Equality Action Plan will require minor amendments before submission to the Equality Commission, following comments made during public consultation. These amendments have been included in the revised Interim Equality Action Plan and have been agreed with the appropriate Departmental staff. The amendments are:

- To remove the reference to the Young People's Strategy
- To develop and consult on the Integrated Cultural Strategy
- To develop and implement the Older People's Action Plan.

These amendments are in response to the comments made by the Equality Commission, which drew attention to the need for clarity on the current state of development of various strategies; in particular, to the fact that references had been made to strategies and action plans which are not yet completed and still in development. The Partnership should note that any public document should refer only to policies/strategies which have been equality screened and made available on our website.

The Interim Equality Action Plan will run until March 2012 and the Equality and Diversity Officer will work with staff across the Council to develop a more comprehensive Equality Action Plan which will run in conjunction with the corporate planning cycle for 2012/13. Any outstanding consultation issues will be addressed at this stage.

The Partnership will be aware that although socio-economic status is not one of the nine official equality categories under Section 75, it is an important consideration for us in broader terms. The Council is concerned about addressing poverty and general inequality within the City and is currently developing an anti-poverty strategy and economic stimulus package. It is likely that an action relating to this strategy will be included within the full Equality Action Plan planned for 2012/13.

Key issues

Timescale

Since the Council has been formally notified that it must submit its revised Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission for approval by 1 February 2012, final documents must be approved during the January 2012 Committee cycle.

Training

The Equality and Diversity Officer is currently delivering a series of workshops, on a Departmental basis, for staff involved in developing policies, focusing on the revised equality screening process. These workshops will be tailored towards the differing needs of staff, help raise the profile of the revised equality process, build capacity and ensure a more consistent approach to the policy development process within the Council.

Resource Implications

Minimal – to be met from the Good Relations Unit's revenue budget.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

Positive implications in equality-proofing and good relations-proofing Council policies and services.

Recommendations

The Good Relations Partnership is requested to note this report and approve the:

- revised Equality Scheme
- revised Interim Equality Action Plan
- proposed responses to consultation comments

The Good Relations Manager outlined the principal aspects of the report and, after discussion the Partnership adopted the recommendation and endorsed the contents of the Council's Revised Equality Scheme. It was noted that copies of the documents referred to within the recommendation were available on the modern.gov site.

Presentation – Migrants and Minority Ethnic Project

The Partnership was advised that Ms. L. Dolan, Migrant and Minority Ethnic Project Officer, was in attendance to update the Members in respect of the Migrants and Minority Ethnic Project.

Ms. Dolan outlined the background to the development of the project and explained that its primary aim was to encourage integration between new and existing residents of the City and she outlined how the Council had provided civic leadership in addressing the issue of migration and the emergence of new minority communities. The Partnership was informed that the project, which was funded through the Peace III Programme, had been established to address the significant increase in the number, background and diversity of migrants who had moved to Belfast since 2004. Ms. Dolan explained that the project sought to improve awareness of migrant issues and to promote interagency co-operation to enable enhanced support for, and the integration of, new communities within Belfast. She then outlined the role of the Belfast Migrants' Forum and provided an overview of the future training programmes and initiatives which would be provided through the Belfast Integration and Inclusion Programme which, she indicated, would create additional opportunities for new communities to participate more effectively in a full range of activities.

The Partnership was then updated on the plans which had been formulated to deliver additional training to migrant workers in respect of their employment rights which would be achieved through the holding of advice clinics and the provision of support and representation for affected individuals. She concluded by outlining the challenges which existed, particularly to the Roma and Bulgarian communities, together with an overview of the practical steps which had been taken to enhance relationships, especially within South Belfast.

Ms. Dolan then answered a range of questions in relation to the provision of English lessons to migrants as well as the projected timescale for the specialised transitional arrangements which had been established for the integration of the Roma community in Belfast.

The Partnership congratulated Ms. Dolan on the progress achieved by the project and noted the information which had been provided.

St. Patrick's Day 2012 - Small Grants Scheme

The Partnership considered the undernoted report and, after discussion, agreed unanimously that Grant Aid be awarded, under the delegated authority of the Chief Executive, to the organisations as set out within the recommendations:

“Relevant Background Information

The Partnership will recall that at its meeting on 15th August 2008, it recommended that the Council support community and voluntary groups wishing to organise small-scale events to mark St. Patrick's Day through the Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund. The total budget was not to exceed £32,000 and the upper limit for each application was to be £1,000. All applications would be assessed against pre-agreed criteria.

This decision was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee and was adopted by Council at its meeting in October 2008.

For the 2012 round, applications and guidelines were drawn up and letters were distributed to previous applicants as well as Councillors informing groups of the existence of the fund. Notifications were also forwarded to the Community Relations Council e-bulletin and the NI Council for Voluntary Action Grant Tracker website. The information was also made available on the Belfast City Council website.

Key Issues

The St. Patrick's Day fund has again proved extremely popular. At the closing date of 12 noon on Friday 25th November 2011, 127 applications for grant-aid had been received, with a total amount requested of £103,368 which greatly exceeds the £32,000 available. Compared to last year an additional 33 applications were received. A full list of the organisations who applied is attached.

There was a good geographical spread with applications received from all over the city, as indicated in the following table:

BT1	1	0.75%
BT2	3	2%
BT3	1	0.75
BT4	19	15%
BT5	8	6.5%
BT6	6	5%
BT7	8	6.5%
BT8	2	1%
BT10	1	0.75%
BT11	10	8%
BT12	19	15%
BT13	16	12%
BT14	12	10%
BT15	17	14%
BT17	1	0.75%
BT36	3	2%

Activities proposed are wide-ranging and for all ages and include educational visits, workshops, educational displays and cultural events.

A scoring matrix was devised to assess applications against the criteria, a copy of which is attached as appendix 2. Following assessment, it is proposed that successful applications receive funding proportionate to the score obtained, as follows:

Marks	Max Award £	Number of Groups	Total Allocation £
0-10 marks	Up to £0	3	0
10-20 marks	Up to £200	13	1850
20-30 marks	Up to £300	18	4300
30-40 marks	Up to £400	43	13600
40-50 marks	Up to £500	33	13850
50-60 marks	Up to £600	11	5800
60-70 marks	Up to £700	3	1950
70-80 marks	Up to £800	1	700
80-90 marks	Up to £900	2	1700
Total			44,050

Although the total allocation of £44,050 exceeds the approved figure of £32,000, the Partnership will be aware that grant-aid is paid on receipted expenditure only and experience indicates that it is likely that some groups will not spend their full allocation. In 2010, for example, the total sum approved was £39,666 but the actual figure paid out was £24,654.80. Last year the total sum approved was £33,374 and the actual figure paid out was £18,801. It is envisaged that this will be the same in 2012.

Resource Implications

Financial

Provision for this expenditure has been made in the Unit's budget, 75% of which can be recouped from OFM/DFM through the District Council's Good Relations Programme.

Equality and Good Relations Considerations

The St. Patrick's Day grant scheme aims to fund small-scale local community events or activities to enable communities celebrate St. Patrick's Day at a local level. The fund forms part of the Council's aim to promote and support cultural diversity within the City. The geographical spread of applicants demonstrates that this fund was accessed by a wide range of community and voluntary groups from across the City. Equality and Good Relations considerations are therefore central to the provision of funding in this way.

Recommendations

The Good Relations Partnership recommends that the following projects fulfil the St. Patrick's Day Small Grants criteria and that grant-aid is awarded, up to these amounts, to the groups listed below:

- a. Up to £900
2526 South Belfast Area Youth Project
- b. Up to £800
2512 East Belfast Mission
- c. Up to £700
2501 Ballymacarrett Arts and Cultural Society
- d. Up to £650
2441 Culturlann McAdam O Fiaich
2507 Sandy Row Residents Association
2530 St. James Community Forum
- e. Up to £550
2446 Ardmonagh Family Centre
2463 John Vianney Senior Citizens Club
2465 Beyond Skin
2486 St. Oliver Plunkett Parish
2496 Divis Youth Project
2497 Crosswires
- f. Up to £500
2435 Crusaders Youth Football Club
2438 Concerned Residents of Upper Ardoyne
2440 Annadale & Haywood Residents Association
2495 Falls Youth Providers
2524 Feile an Phobail
- g. Up to £450
2413 Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group
2416 Whitecity Over 50s Group
2443 Society of St. Vincent de Paul
2448 Spectrum Centre
2453 Oliver Plunkett Lunch Club
2467 Glen Community Centre Tuesday Group
2473 Sandy Row Cultural Society
2481 Belfast Orangefest
2509 Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre
2517 Markets Community Centre
2519 ArtsEkta
2523 MARA (Connswater Community & Leisure)
2528 Greater Village Reperation Trust

h. Up to £400

- 2412 Whitecity Community Development Association
- 2418 Bridge Community Association
- 2419 Conway Senior Citizens Group
- 2420 Short Strand Community Centre
- 2431 Star Neighbourhood Centre
- 2447 Ballysillan Community Forum
- 2451 Walkway Community Association
- 2452 Carrick Hill Residents Association
- 2458 Docksiders Senior Mens Group
- 2461 Sailortown Cultural & Historical Society
- 2475 166 Sydenham Cross Community Support Centre
- 2480 Clonard Senior Citizens Group
- 2482 East Belfast Historical & Cultural Society
- 2484 Willowfield Parish Community Association
- 2485 Inner East Youth Project
- 2490 Royal Irish Rangers Old Comrades Association
- 2500 Ballymac Friendship Centre
- 2513 Lower Oldpark Community Association
- 2515 Ullans Academy
- 2516 Ballymacarrett Community & Cultural Engagement Project
- 2529 Blackie River Community Group

i. Up to £350

- 2410 Newhill Youth & Community Centre
- 2411 Wishing Well Family Centre
- 2417 Harbour Lights Senior Women
- 2421 West Belfast 50+ Forum
- 2423 Greater Shankill Senior Citizens Forum
- 2428 St. Peter's Senior Citizens Group
- 2429 Men United
- 2442 Lower Shankill Group Welfare
- 2444 Indian Senior Citizens 50+ Club
- 2455 Joanmount Open Door Ltd
- 2468 174 Older Peoples Group
- 2470 St. Kevins
- 2479 Middle Andersonstown Festival Group
- 2498 Volunteer Now
- 2503 Sirocco Youth Football Club
- 2506 St. Patrick's Young Men FC
- 2511 Argyle Senior Citizens Group
- 2521 Clarendon Development Association
- 2532 KOG Community Action Group
- 2537 EXIT

i. Up to £300

- 2422 Island Resource Centre
- 2439 Highfield fifty Plus Group
- 2445 Trinity New Lodge Senior Citizens Association
- 2449 St. Patrick's Church Ballymacarrett
- 2456 Brookvale Senior Citizens Association
- 2459 Cullingtree Senior Group
- 2460 Sailortown Mothers & Toddlers
- 2462 Sailortown Arts & Crafts
- 2464 Woodvale/Cambrai Youth & Community Group
- 2472 Newtownards Road Women's Group Ltd
- 2492 Manor Street/Cliftonville Community Centre
- 2504 East Belfast Titanic Festival
- 2533 Greater Shankill Fathers Forum
- 2534 Woodvale Young at Heart 50+ Group
- 2535 Denmark Street Community Centre
- 2536 Sydenham Mothers & Toddlers
- 2538 Orangefield Community Association
- 2539 Sydenham Community Development Agency
- 2540 Sydenham United Football Club
- 2541 Automatic School of Dance
- 2542 Connswater Womens Group
- 2543 Mount Community Association

j. Up to £250

- 2430 Horn Drive Senior Citizens
- 2433 Glen Colin Residents Association
- 2454 Clara Park Tenants & Residents Association
- 2457 Midland Senior Citizens Club
- 2466 Silver Threads
- 2469 Time 4 u
- 2474 Quality User Group Seniors
- 2487 Belles of Belmont Ladies Club
- 2494 South Belfast Malecare
- 2499 Sydenham Court
- 2514 Mornington Community Project
- 2518 Silver Threads (North Belfast)
- 2525 Lagan Valley Heritage & Cultural Society
- 2531 St. John Vianney Youth Centre

k. Up to £200

- 2527 Ligoniel Improvement Association
- 2436 Mountpottinger Presbyterian Senior Citizens
- 2478 Beech Hall Members Advisory Committee
- 2520 Strand Presbyterian Church
- 2522 Belfast Sparta Football Club

I. Up to £150

- 2415 Hannahstown Community Association**
- 2432 Royal Scottish Country Dance Society**
- 2437 Friends of Chestnut Grove**
- 2477 Disabled Drivers Association**
- 2483 Belfast Central Mission**
- 2489 Salisbury Special Olympics Club**
- 2493 Corpus Christi Services**

m. Up to £100

- 2434 Avoniel Over 50s**
- 2476 Fairhill Community Association**
- 2488 Whiterock Senior Citizens Club**
- 2508 Ardavon Park Senior Citizens**
- 2510 Young at Heart Seniors Group**

The following applications were rejected as they did not meet the criteria of the St. Patrick's Day Small Grants Scheme:

- 2491 Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association**
- 2502 No Limat Community Interest Company**
- 2505 Greater Shankill Community Council."**

Irish Language Event – City Hall

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 28th November, it had noted that a report which provided an update in respect of the hosting of an Irish language event would be submitted for the Partnership's consideration at its meeting in January. Accordingly, the Good Relations Manager outlined the principal aspects of a report which provided an overview of an event which was scheduled to take place in the City Hall on the evening of Tuesday, 31st January. She advised the Partnership that the event had been organised in line with the Council's objective of making the City Hall a building which was inclusive of all cultures and indicated that the associated programme had been formulated in conjunction with a range of Irish language bodies across the City. The event would be hosted by Lynette Fay from Radio Ulster and it was anticipated that the proceedings would be broadcast as part of that station's Irish language output. She pointed out that the total cost of the event would be £6,000, 75% of which would be recouped from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, with the remaining amount being met from within the Unit's budget.

The Partnership approved the hosting of the event and noted that invites would be forwarded to each Member of the Partnership.

Proposed Centenary Event – Request for Assistance

The Good Relations Manager reported that a request for financial assistance had been received from the Reverend Wilfred Orr, Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church, to enable the staging of a play which would portray prominent characters and reflect historical opinions prevalent at the time of the signing of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant in September, 1912. The play, which had been written by Philip Orr and Alan McGuckian, would provide an overview of unionist and nationalist perceptions to the enactment of the Third Home Rule Bill and explore attitudes to the signing of the Covenant.

It was reported that two performances of the play would be staged at Aquinas Grammar School on Wednesday, 14th March. It was intended that the afternoon performance would be aimed at students from local schools including Wellington College, Aquinas Grammar, St Malachy's College and Our Lady and St. Patrick's of Knock, while the evening show would be performed to an audience drawn from across all communities. Each performance would be followed by a discussion session which would be facilitated by the co-authors. Accordingly, given the Council's involvement in supporting local community initiatives to mark the Decade of Centenaries, the Good Relations Manager recommended that the Partnership approve funding in the sum of £1,000 towards the hosting of the play, 75% of which would be recouped from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister.

After discussion, during which it was agreed that officers would explore the feasibility of staging the play in the City Hall as part of the Council's programme of events associated with the Decade of Centenaries, the Partnership adopted the recommendation.

Good Relations Unit – Staff Development Event

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Partnership that the scope and extent of the work of the Unit had increased greatly over the past number of years. She indicated that it was considered essential that all staff within the Unit were provided with an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the latest developments in the area of good relations. Accordingly, she sought the Partnership's support to hold, during the spring of 2012, a staff development event which would enable work to be carried out on the Unit's business plan; to focus on the concept of information sharing; to enhance methods of good practice; to enable project development; and to improve staff communication and motivation. She indicated that the proposed event would take place at the Corrymeela Centre which was renowned for its focus on improving relationships and community development work. She indicated that the total cost of the event, which would be attended by all 16 Unit staff members, would be in the region of £1,000, 75% of which would be recouped from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, with the remaining amount being met from within the Unit's training budget.

The Partnership agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources, at its meeting on 20th January, be recommended to approve the holding of the staff development event as outlined by the Good Relations Manager.