

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

TUESDAY, 8TH MAY, 2012

MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

- Members present: Alderman Stoker; and
Councillors Attwood, Kyle and Reynolds.
- External Members: Mr. S. Brennan, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Ms. A. Chada, Minority Ethnic Groups;
Archdeacon B. Dodds, Church of Ireland;
Mr. R. Galway, Confederation of British
Industry/ Shorts Bombardier;
Mr. P. Mackel, Belfast and District Trades Council;
Mr. B. McGivern, Belfast City Centre Management;
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church;
Ms. M. de Silva, Voluntary/Community Sector; and
Mr. U. Tok, Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum.
- Also attended: Ms. D. O'Loan, Community Relations Council/Pobal.
- In attendance: Mrs. H. Francey, Good Relations Manager;
Mr. I. May, Peace III Programme Manager;
Mr. D. Robinson, Senior Good Relations Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Chairman (Councillor Hendron), Ms. O. Barron. Mrs. M. Marken and Mr. M. O'Donnell.

Chairing of Meeting

In the absence of the Chairman, the Partnership agreed that Councillor Kyle take the Chair.

(Councillor Kyle in the Chair.)

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 3rd April were taken as read and signed as correct.

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Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were reported:

- (i) In respect of Item 4, viz., Peace III Implementation Update, Alderman Stoker indicated that he was on the board of Blythefield Primary School, had undertaken work on behalf of the South West Action Team and been a former member of the South Belfast Round Table, all of which had links to Phase II projects, and took no part in the discussion;
- (ii) Regarding Item 5, viz., Peace III – Strategic Grants Programme:
 - Councillor Reynolds indicated that he had, in the past, undertaken work on behalf of the Small Steps organisation, which had submitted an application for funding under the Programme, and left the room whilst the matter was under consideration;
 - Ms A. Chada explained that her organisation, namely, Intercomm, was a project partner in the Fellowship of Messines Association and the Public Achievement organisation, which had each submitted an application for funding under the Programme, and left the room whilst the matter was under consideration;
 - Ms. M. de Silva stated that her organisation, namely, Women into Politics, was a project partner of the Training for Women Network, which had submitted an application for funding under the Programme, and left the room whilst the matter was under consideration; and
 - Mr. P. Mackel indicated that he served on the management committee of the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre, which was a project partner of the Fellowship of Messines Association, which had submitted an application for funding under the Programme, and took no part in the discussion.

Election of Deputy Chairman

Having been advised that the position of Deputy Chairman had been vacant since the resignation from the Partnership in March of Councillor Maskey, the Members agreed that Councillor Kyle be elected to fulfil that role.

Councillor Kyle thanked the Members for his election.

(Councillor Kyle in the Chair.)

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Youth Engagement Project

The Partnership was advised that Ms. L. Monaghan, Youth Engagement Project Manager, was in attendance in order to provide an update on the initiative and she was welcomed to the meeting.

The Project Manager informed the Members that the Youth Engagement Project had been developed by a number of statutory agencies, such as the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, the Belfast Education and Library Board, the Youth Justice Agency and the Council, to ensure a more efficient and effective way of addressing the problems faced by disengaged youth in interface areas. She explained that the Project would be delivered in four interface areas across the City, namely, Ardoyne/Woodvale, Blackmountain, Inner East and M1/Westlink and that voluntary and community sector organisations would, via a procurement process, be tasked with addressing gaps in statutory service provision for young people and their families through the development of specific packages of support and intervention.

She reviewed the progress which had been made to date, including the establishment of an operational tier to oversee the Project, the appointment of a Project Officer and of a consultant to undertake extensive mapping work in each of the four interface areas, the results from which would inform the decision-making process. She informed the Members that the aforementioned procurement process was underway currently and that successful organisations would be awarded up to £25,000 to deliver the Youth Engagement Project to between 25 and 50 young people in each area. Tenders would be publicly advertised through an open-call process and applications from consortia/partnerships would be encouraged. The Project Manager added that an information sharing protocol had been developed for use by participants, a series of information sessions had been delivered and an information page was being developed currently on the Council's website. It was envisaged that the Project would be launched officially either in late June or during July.

The Project Manager concluded by pointing out that the Youth Engagement Project would enable forward planning to take place to ensure that diversionary activities could be delivered at key times of the year in interface areas, with those activities being used to engage disaffected youth and thereby begin the process of referral to higher end intervention and family counselling and support services.

She then answered a number of questions which were put to her by the Members and retired from the meeting.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

PEACE III - Implementation Update

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“Purpose of report

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To update the Partnership on implementation of the Belfast PEACE III Plan.

Progress on Phase II projects

A summary of each of the approved Phase II projects has been circulated to Members. This includes key activities and expenditure as at 31/03/2012 along with a commentary on progress, financial update on the last quarter and details of key project stakeholders engaged to date.

Financial Monitoring

Budget monitoring at project level will continue on a monthly basis to ensure expenditure targets are met with regular updates brought to the Partnership on expenditure levels and forecasts. Project delivery plans are scrutinised against expenditure projections provided by projects and as requested by Members at the last Partnership meeting the update on projects now incorporates a traffic light system which will flag significant project issues as follows:

Green	On schedule and within budget
Amber	Either up to 1 month behind schedule and/or up to 20% over budget
Red	Either more than a month behind schedule and /or more than 20% over budget
Grey	No status has been provided

A summary of the key issues relating to the last quarter performance as outlined is detailed below:

For the Growing Respect project, expenditure was not as forecast but this was mainly due to late receipt of invoices and no significant project underspend is anticipated.

The Promoting the Positive Expression of Cultural Heritage Programme is led by the Good Relations Unit. It is a continuation of the Bonfire Management Programme in Phase 1. Groundwork was appointed as managing agent for the programme in March. Expenditure profiling is now based upon anticipated achievement of key contract milestones.

The Youth Engagement and Tension Monitoring Programmes are both led by the Community Safety Unit. The approval of the preferred option following Economic Appraisal was granted by Special European Union Programmes Body on 24th February, 2012. Anticipated expenditure levels have not been achieved due to this delay. Recruitment and procurement exercises relating to both

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projects are now underway along with preparation of revised project plans and budget re-profiling.

The City of Festivals programme is being implemented through projects identified following an competitive tendering exercise and though partner delivery co-ordinated by the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit. The Creative Legacies Programme also led by the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit will be identifying approximately 10 delivery partners following a procurement exercise to be conducted in May 2012. There has been a delay in these projects beginning full implementation resulting from agreement of preferred delivery option and consideration of a change request to the project staffing budget. A full time co-ordinator for both these projects is now in post.

The Migrant and Minority Ethnic Programme is led by the Good Relations Unit. Procurement of delivery bodies for key elements in the programme was completed in March. Expenditure profiling is now based upon anticipated achievement of key contract milestones.

Regular updates on progress will be brought to the Partnership and a session to review progress in depth has been provisionally scheduled for 10th September, 2012. Details of venue and an agenda for this session will be circulated in advance.

Events

Belfast City Council's Good Relations Manager presented at an event on 26th April attended by representatives of all of the PEACE III Partnerships organised by the Community Relations Council and POBAL on the theme of a Decade of Commemorations.

The Programme will participate at a cross border networking event focussing on young people to be held in Monaghan on 9th May 12. This event has been organised by the Monaghan PEACE III Partnership and it is anticipated that this will assist in the development of significant cross border links at project level.

There will be a consultation exercise on the proposed new Interfaces Programme within the Plan to be held at 6.00pm on 22nd May in the Reception Hall, City Hall.

Audit

The NI Audit Office completed an inspection of the Programme on 26th April.

Resource Implications

Financial Implications

None at present

HR Implications

None at present

Equality Implications

None at present

Recommendation

The Partnership is requested to note the information provided relating to implementation of the Belfast PEACE III Plan.”

After discussion, the Partnership adopted the recommendation.

PEACE III - Strategic Grants Programme

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“Purpose of report

To update the Partnership on the assessment of applications received under the open call for the Strategic Grants Programme.

Background

There was an open call for applications to the Strategic Grants Programme within the Belfast PEACE III Plan which opened on 21st October and closed on 16th December, 2011. The purpose of the open call was to identify project ideas which:

- demonstrate a meaningful focus on peace and reconciliation;
- demonstrate active partnership in development and delivery of the activity;
- demonstrate robust financial and administration systems;
- complement existing and/ or planned activity in the city with particular reference to partner led projects within the Phase II Plan;
- will take place between 1st April 2012 and 30th September 2013 with activity beginning no later than 30th September 2012.
- Have a robust methodology for monitoring and evaluation of activity in line with the PEACE III Aid for Peace Framework.

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The Strategic Grants Programme is aimed at properly constituted organisations with sound management and good governance arrangements with a track record of successful delivery who can demonstrate the management and administrative capacity to deliver large scale projects involving multiple stakeholders. Projects identified in this call will be expected to work closely with other projects supported under the Belfast PEACE III Plan.

The fund for the Strategic Grants Programme is approximately £1million with projects expected to demonstrate significant peace and reconciliation outcomes commensurate with budgets of between £75,000 and £125,000.

Pre- Contract Check Stage

The Good Relations Partnership considered the applications received and overview of the assessment process at its March meeting. The Partnership approved commencement of pre-contract checks on those applications scoring above the quality threshold prioritised by score and availability of funding. Site visits were conducted according to rank order for each of the project applications assessed which scored over the quality threshold. These pre-contract checks included a site visit to meet with management and project staff of the applicant organization and included issues such governance, details of partners and partnership agreement, details of relevant policies and procedures – e.g. recruitment, equal opportunities, employment terms and conditions etc and the proposed project budget.

Debrief

All unsuccessful applicant organisations were invited to avail of a debrief meeting on their application. To date 16 project applicants have received debriefs. In addition, those applicants who scored above the threshold but have not been prioritized due to limited funding being available were also invited to discuss their application. All have been signposted to other sources of support and assistance and given details of the SEUPB approved review procedure.

Recommendations

The Partnership is now requested to approve the issue of Letters of Offer for the following projects where all outstanding issues have been addressed. Individual reports on each proposed project have been prepared and have been circulated to Members.

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Ref.	Lead Organisation	Project Title
35695	Ashton Community Trust	REAL Project
35652	Belfast Interface Project	Inner East Outer West
35884	Fellowship of Messines	Citizens for Peace
35901	Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG)	Botanic Shaftesbury Ballynafeigh (BSB) Cohesion Network
35871	Mediation Northern Ireland	Belfast Interface Mediation Delivery Programme
35841	PeacePlayers International	Belfast Interface Olympics
35709	Public Achievement	WIMPS Belfast
35886	Small Steps	Walk of Faith II
35904	Training for Women Network	Visions of Peacebuilding

The total value of recommended funding to these projects is approximately £990,780. The total number of participants is estimated at over 5,500 over half of whom will be under 25 years of age. As previously agreed by the Partnership the projects have been assessed as meeting the criteria of the PEACE III Programme through clearly addressing the target groups and target areas of the Programme and demonstrating a meaningful focus on peace and reconciliation. They will also contribute to the aims of the Belfast PEACE III plan through contributing towards shared organisational space with a significant partnership element to each of these projects and also assist in the building of shared cultural space and transforming contested space in the city. There is also significant cross border potential within these projects.

100% of expenditure on these projects will be vouched to ensure eligibility and compliance with the regulations governing the PEACE III Programme. All applicants will receive training on the compliance requirements of the Programme and will provide quarterly progress reports and expenditure forecasts which will be reported back to the Partnership. It is also recommended that the Partnership receives presentations from the individual projects once they proceed to implementation.

It is further proposed to bring a recommendation on two further project applications to the Strategic Grants Programme to the next meeting of the Partnership.

Resource Implications

Financial Implications

The total value of recommended funding to these projects is approximately £990,780.

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Eligible project costs will be 100% recouped from the PEACE III Programme.

HR Implications

None at present

Equality Implications

None at present.

Recommendation

The Partnership is requested to approve issue of Letters of Offer under the PEACE III Strategic Grants Programme to the following:

Ref.	Applicant Organisation	Project Title
35695	Ashton Community Trust	REAL Project
35652	Belfast Interface Project	Inner East Outer West
35884	Fellowship of Messines	Citizens for Peace
35901	Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG)	Botanic Shaftesbury Ballynaveigh (BSB) Cohesion Network
35871	Mediation Northern Ireland	Belfast Interface Mediation Delivery Programme
35841	PeacePlayers International	Belfast Interface Olympics
35709	Public Achievement	WIMPS Belfast
35886	Small Steps	Walk of Faith II
35904	Training for Women Network	Visions of Peacebuilding”

During discussion, the PEACE III Programme Manager stressed that applications had been subjected to robust scrutiny throughout the application process and that that would continue throughout the delivery of the projects to ensure that they complied fully with the relevant criteria and legislation. He added that all supported projects were included in the monitoring and evaluation framework and that a programme level evaluation was underway to ensure that performance was managed and that the results, outcomes and impacts of the funding were captured adequately.

The Partnership approved the issuing of Letters of Offer under the PEACE III Strategic Grants Programme to the nine applicant organisations, as set out within the foregoing report.

Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that the first call for the applicants to the Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund for the 2012/2013 financial year had opened on 5th March. She reported that thirty-nine applications had been received by the closing date and that those had been assessed in accordance with the pre-agreed scoring matrix. As a result, thirty-four applications had been recommended for funding, four had been unsuccessful and one had been withdrawn.

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She explained that one of the unsuccessful applications had been refused funding on the grounds that it had been completed by a consultancy firm, rather than by the applicant. She pointed out that officers within the Good Relations Unit possessed the skills and experience required to assist in the completion of applications and that organisations requesting funding should consult them in relation to their application.

After discussion, the Partnership agreed unanimously that grant-aid be awarded under the delegated authority of the Chief Executive to the following organisations and agreed also that, in future, no applications would be considered which had been completed by consultants:

Ref No	Organisation	Recommended Amount, up to £
250/3688	An Droichead	3,000
596/2667	Barnardo's Tuar Ceatha – Black, Minority Ethnic and Refugee Service	1,000
491/2671	Community Dialogue	5,000
706/2599	Green Shoot Productions	3,000
345/2700	South Belfast Roundtable	5,000
878/2663	Tiger's Bay Men's Group	5,000
319/2697	Short Strand Community Forum Women's Group	944
932/2695	St. James Forum	500
854/2675	Terry Enright Foundation	2,490
1210/2672	Ulster Bank Festival at Queens	3,000
1030/2669	Ballymurphy Research Group	3,000
1208/2665	Centre for Health & Wellbeing	960
1069/2086	Culture Night Belfast	350
1215/2692	South Belfast Alternatives	3,000
707/2670	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association	1,000
1209/2668	Balmoral Filipino Community Association	600
323/2693	Greater Village Regeneration Trust	2,072
1035/2679	Love Music Hate Racism NI	1,000
430/2690	Markets Development Association	3,550
1213/2683	Romanian Roma Community Association Centre NI	315
1216/2694	Bryson Lagan Sports	1,000
1217/2698	Short Strand Community Forum	9,200
1174/2674	Glentoran Partnership	540
1218/2701	Soroptimists International of GB & I, NI Region	600
495/2696	East Belfast Partnership	5,000
1175/2687	LORAG	7,580
811/2673	Polish Saturday School	1,000
1219/2702	The Young Ambassadors Group	725
595/2685	ACSONI	1,623
1198/2691	Polish Mission Church	2,000
472/2677	Polish Association NI	3,000
569/2659	ArtsEkta Ltd	4,620
1211/2681	Bloomfield Football Club	400
1212/2682	Queen's Basketball Club	235
TOTAL		82,304

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Chairman