

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY, 9th FEBRUARY, 2015

MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP

Members present: Councillor Hendron (Chairman); and
Councillors Attwood and Mac Giolla Mhín.

External Members: Mr. S. Brennan, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Ms. A. Chada, Voluntary/Community Sector;
Mr. K. Gibson, Church of Ireland;
Mrs. M. Marken, Catholic Church;
Mr. B. McGivern, Belfast City Centre Management;
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church; and
Mr. U. Tok, Northern Ireland Inter-Faith Forum.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Toland, Lead Operations Officer/Head of
Environmental Health;
Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. L. Francey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor Reynolds, Ms. O. Barron, Mrs. J. Hawthorne, Dr. C. Hughes and Mr. P. Mackel.

Minutes

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

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Traveller Voices for Change - Presentation

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th January, it had agreed to receive from the Traveller and Gypsy Network N.I. a presentation in relation to the Traveller Voices for Change report. Accordingly, Mr. M. Donahue, on behalf of the Network, was welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.

Mr. Donahue informed the Partnership that a report entitled "Traveller Voices for Change" had been based on the results of a mapping exercise which had taken place in April and May 2014. The views of Irish Travellers living in Northern Ireland had been sought on the extent of their integration into society and of the difficulties that they faced. The questions within the survey were based on employment, education, social inclusion and active citizenship issues. He highlighted that the most important 'priorities for change' among the respondents were:

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- improved access to education and better educational outcomes;
- a higher standard of accommodation and improved conditions on sites;
- an end to racism and discrimination; and
- better access to employment opportunities, particularly for young people.

During discussion, he explained that one of the key difficulties faced by the travelling community in Northern Ireland was the level of intolerance that they faced in leisure centres and bars. He stated that this was largely due to the fact that young travellers go out in large groups and that, often, large groups could be seen as intimidating to non-travellers working in these environments. A Member suggested that the Partnership should hear from the travelling community on an annual basis, as often problems like this were only brought to the attention of the Council when it was too late. A further Member pointed out that he was aware of workshops which had taken place in local schools across West Belfast in order to explain and dispel myths on the travelling community's culture and that they had been very successful in tackling intolerance.

The Partnership thanked Mr. Donahue for his presentation and he left the meeting.

Noted.

Interfaces Celebration Event

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Members that the Council had been responsible for the delivery of a PEACE III-funded programme addressing interface regeneration and that it had been completed on 31st October, 2014. Approximately £250,455 had been spent on delivering a mix of environmental schemes and artworks to nine interface sites across Belfast.

At its meeting in January, the Partnership had been informed that a celebration event would be held to acknowledge the work of the statutory and community partners in driving interface regeneration. The event would take place on Monday, 23rd March, 2015, and a budget of up to £1,000 would be required to deliver the event. The invitation list would include representation from the six IFI-PeaceWalls Programme-funded groups, representatives from the Department of Justice, the NI Housing Executive, the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and community representatives who had participated in the delivery of the Interfaces Programme. The Lord Mayor, Chief Executive and Members would also be invited to attend.

The Partnership granted approval for the request for up to £1,000 to deliver the event and noted that it would be organised and delivered by Good Relations staff and hosted by Alderman Ekin and Councillor Kyle.

Good Relations Diversity Awareness Event

The Good Relations Manager advised the Partnership that, following a meeting between the Lord Mayor and Ms. A. Chada, from Partnership, the Lord Mayor had asked the Good Relations Unit to organise an event to look at Diversity Awareness. The

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Lord Mayor was keen that staff within the Council should promote cultural inclusion and incorporate diversity into their everyday roles.

As a result of that meeting, an event had been organised for Friday, 13th February, to be led by the Lord Mayor, which would look at Diversity and inclusion in relation to the role of the Council in the City. The event would be open to staff in the Council and would be delivered over lunch time, from 12.30p.m.

Noted.

Good Relations Action Plan 2015/16

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Members that, each year, the Council submitted an annual Action Plan to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) in order to draw down funding for the Good Relations work of the Council. The Action Plan would be 75% funded by OFMdFM, while the remaining 25% would be included in the Council's 2015/16 budget. She explained that correspondence had been received advising that the Action Plan must be submitted by 27th February in order to be scored and assessed. She explained that the Good Relations Unit had updated the audit which had been carried out in January and February 2014, in order to incorporate any issues which had been identified in those areas which would come into the Belfast boundary from April, 2015.

The Partnership agreed to recommend to the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it approves the Good Relations Action Plan 2015/2016 for submission to OFMdFM. The Partnership also noted that the Action Plan submission would be subject to alteration and amendment during the assessing and scoring process which would be undertaken by OFMdFM and that the Partnership would be notified of any changes in the final approved Action Plan at a later date.

Evaluation of Summer Camps/Schools

The Good Relations Manger provided the Partnership with an update on the development of a Summer Camps/Schools pilot programme as laid out in the OFMdFM's "Together: Building a United Community" Strategy. It was initially thought that 100 camps would run across Northern Ireland throughout the summer months of 2015, with a focus on sport and developmental activities.

As considered by the Partnership at its meeting in August, an independent evaluation of a range of projects had been commissioned by the Council on behalf of OFMdFM and had been undertaken by Wallace Consulting. The objective of the work was to map the various approaches to summer schools or camps across the different providers and to inform the design of the programme from 2015. She explained that a draft report of the Summer Camps evaluation had now been received from the consultants and that the most relevant chapters had been circulated to the Partnership to note. She outlined that the report advocated that the camps should:

- involve a wide mix of participants across Northern Ireland;
- target resources where they were most needed;

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- involve both urban and rural areas;
- look at different age groups; and
- give consideration to camps not being free of charge.

The report emphasised that pre and post engagement sessions would be crucial to the success of the camps as they would encourage positive, long-term relationships between the children. It also identified a range of potential delivery mechanisms, one of which was District Councils.

During discussion, some members expressed concern at the short-timescale between planning and delivering these camps. The Good Relations Manager confirmed that she would be meeting with representatives from the OFMdfM on 13th February and that she would report any further update on the timetable for the camps to the Partnership at the next meeting.

The Partnership noted the draft evaluation report of the Summer Camps/Schools Programme and the contents of the chapters as provided. It noted also that the report will be forwarded to OFMdfM for further consideration and action, and that it would be advised of the outcome in due course.

Date of Meeting

The Partnership noted that its next meeting would take place on Monday, 9th March.

Chairman