

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

MONDAY 7TH DECEMBER, 2020

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Kyle (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Magennis, Lyons and
O'Hara.

External Members: Mrs. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mrs. O. Barron, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust;
Mrs. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
Ms. J. Irwin, Community Relations Council;
Mr. M. McBride, Education Authority;
Mr. I. McLaughlin, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Father. E. O'Neill, Faith Sector; and
Ms. Ann Marie White, British Red Cross.

In attendance: Mr. S. Lavery, Interim Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;
Ms. D. McKinney, Programme Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Councillor Kelly and Mr. J. Currie, Mr. J. Donnelly, Miss. G. Duggan, Mr. S. Hamilton,
Mr. M. McGinley and Mr. P. Mackel.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 9th November were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

Mrs. B. Arthurs declared an interest in item 3 (d), namely, Peace IV Updates and (4) Update on Revised Good Relations Plan 20/21 and 21/22 in that she is an employee of the Forward South Partnership, which acts as the delivery agent for one of the Peace IV projects and she left the meeting whilst both agenda items were being considered.

Election of Deputy Chairperson

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor O'Hara to his first meeting and on behalf of the Partnership asked that its thanks be conveyed to Councillor Smyth for his contribution over the last year.

The Chairperson advised that the position of Deputy Chairperson needed to be considered by the Partnership and he sought nominations.

It was proposed by Alderman Rodgers, seconded by Councillor Magennis and agreed that Councillor O'Hara would be the Deputy Chairperson for the Shared City Partnership for the year until May 2021.

Presentation

Forth Meadow Community Greenway Dialogue & Engagement 2020

The Partnership was reminded that, at its last meeting, it had agreed to receive a presentation from the consultants in regard to the ongoing work in respect of the Forth Meadow Community Dialogue and Engagement, accordingly Ms. M. Dellenbaugh-Losse and Mr. I. Graham were welcomed to the meeting.

Ms. Dellenbaugh-Losse commended by providing an overview of the work undertaken in the last six months. She advised that they had reached out to over 350 individuals remotely, including community groups and local organisations in West Belfast. The work included three online workshops and direct discussions with more than twenty stakeholders, an online survey with over 251 responses and an interactive webinar and a presentation including a live survey.

She detailed that a number of challenges had been encountered throughout the project, given that West Belfast had a complex and broad stakeholder landscape, with many of the existing organisations being primarily single-identity. Whilst there was a large geographical scope with the greenway (12 kilometres), there was very much a local focus and this in itself brought tensions. She continued that there was a clear message from the consultation that the management of the use of the greenway should go beyond organisations and community groups to include residents and youths. In terms of looking for good practice, it was felt that these should include both an urban context and also spaces with cross-community challenges. She advised that the draft consultation report, included examples from the United States as many of the greenways in America go through heavily urbanised areas which are characterised by racial and socio economic tensions.

In terms of the stakeholders consulted, she reported that they had engaged with representatives from the Girdwood Community Hub and Connswater Community Greenway, with each having various aspects which could be drawn on for the Forth Meadow Community Greenway as well as incorporating good practices from America, Germany and the United Kingdom.

Mr. Graham then provided the Members with an overview of the responses received from the individuals who had been consulted. He reported that there was broad support from stakeholders who could see the potential for positive change that the greenway might bring. He detailed the many challenges that the proposal faced, outlining that concern was raised in regard to safety, specifically increased antisocial behaviour through opening up the areas. There was also concern raised in respect of conflict around interfaces and people were keen that the work looked at all communities with the goal of creating a space that was accessible, safe and welcoming.

In terms of establishing governance for the proposal, the presenter acknowledged that the proposal faced ongoing challenges but with individuals and communities working together it was possible and people were willing to support it. He stressed that through the consultation the one thing that became apparent was that residents and people using the greenway wished to have an input into its development and how it was managed going forward and they were keen that the voice of young people was also taken into account. He referred to a range of different governance options and that, as a starting option, some form of oversight committee

could be considered. This would look at the greenway as a whole, incorporating key stakeholders but also look at it from a strategic level as to how it would be used. It would also link in with local user groups to bring in a local perspective. It was suggested that this could possibly take the form of North, Central and South sub-groups that would feed into the oversight committee. The logistics of such an approach, including resource challenges would need to be worked out.

Ms. Dellenbaugh-Losse then referred to the need to try and progress the stakeholder liaison during construction, for example stakeholder workshops to try and embed the idea of shared spaces in this area and she took the Members through a proposed approach for the next three Quarters of 2021.

She concluded by detailing the following four take home messages:

- Programming should be used to create new perceptions, then management structures could be built off of this foundation;
- inclusive co-creation would increase civic pride, feelings of ownership and good relations. This would help form a good basis for faster transfer to community ownership;
- good examples existed locally and abroad but specific adaptation was needed. The organisation should be built to suit the local situation; and
- the Greenway was unique and had enormous potential.

During discussion the presenters confirmed that the Belfast Agenda document had been considered throughout the consultation.

Following a number of questions the Chairperson thanked the representatives for the update provided and they left the meeting.

Peace IV Updates

Update on Peace IV Secretariat

The PEACE IV Programme Manager provided the Members with an update in respect of the Secretariat activity associated with the implementation of the Peace IV Local Action Plan.

The officer reported that the ongoing government restrictions continued to impact the delivery of the programme. Delivery partners were making every effort to continue to engage with participant groups and where possible activity had been adapted to an online platform or would be rearranged.

She updated that:

- Project Modification - requests that had previously been approved by the Partnership were now with the SEUPB for approval; SEUPB new guidance that project amendments were temporary interventions and that delivery contracts should not be amended required further clarity from SEUPB.
- St Comgalls - the public procurement exercise to appoint a suitable contractor for the delivery of the project had commenced on 20th November and submissions from contractors were due by the 11th December. The budget reallocation within the BPR theme had been approved by the SEUPB;

- Programme Workplan - a virtual 10x9 event on the theme of Peace had taken place on 25th November, with input from storytellers across the city, over 70 people had attended; and
- Verification and Audit – the approach and timeframe for the internal audit had been agreed with preliminary information submitted to AGRS.

The Partnership were informed also that the Period 24 claim had been submitted to the SEUPB by the November deadline, with a value of £705,467 across all themes.

Noted.

Update on Peace IV CYP Theme

The Partnership considered the following report which provided information on the Children and Young People's theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress report in respect of the Children and Young People's (CYP) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

Delivery of CYP projects is ongoing where possible, although government restrictions introduced in October / November have impacted the condensed programmes and residential activity scheduled during this period. Information is available in the agenda pack which outlines project progress to date and an overview of the delivery status against the key project elements is also available.

3.1 Project Updates

CYP 1 – Tech Connects

(6-16 yr olds) GIGA Training (Afterschools & Digital Arts Academies / Tech Camps) 28 participants are actively participating in the project. Digital poverty (access to equipment / internet) and restrictions on face to face are impacting the achievement of targets as 80 children & young people had initially registered interest. The delivery partner can provide access to I pads & laptops for participants for use during physical delivery sessions.

(17-24 yr olds) Belfast Metropolitan College (Digital Insights Programme)

The first cohort of participants completed a 2 day session on 5-6 November 2020. Recruitment of the second cohort is ongoing with delivery sessions scheduled for 16-17 December 2020. The project is targeting a hard to reach age group via remote delivery which requires participants to have internet access and a suitable device.

It is likely that both delivery partners may need an extended timeframe for delivery should government restrictions continue to impact the achievement of targets.

3.2 CYP 2 - Playing our Part in the City

Active Communities Network continues to liaise with community partners / groups to recruit participants. The condensed activity camp scheduled for Halloween was postponed due to Government Restrictions and is currently being rescheduled for February 21. The delivery partner has advised that the project will be delivered within allocated budget with no additional funding required.

3.3 CYP3 – On the Right Track – Sports and Personal Change elements

The Project Officer continues to liaise with sports clubs and participants. The provision of equipment for clubs whose participation was impacted by COVID 19 is being explored to ensure equal treatment of all participating clubs. In order to deliver programmes safely, participating clubs have enquired of the option to purchase PPE to assure participants/ parents that the clubs are equipped to deliver the programme with the necessary safety requirements.

Personal Change

The delivery partner, Extern is actively recruiting for next intake of participants. The nature of the project enables ongoing delivery of the project.

3.4 CYP 4 – Cooperation Ireland (Young Advocates)

To date 53 from a target of 80 participants have completed this project to date. The young advocates have completed OCN Level 1 in Peer Mentoring, OCN Level 1 in Prejudice and Discrimination, OCN Level 1 in Diversity in Society, Child Safeguarding through Keeping Safe and British Red Cross First Aid Course.

As previously reported, the delivery partner has requested a pause in delivery, which SEUPB has now approved. The TPM will liaise with Co-Operation Ireland to agree the remobilisation of the programme.

3.5 CYP 5 – NIHE Local Area Network Partner Delivery

NIHE is progressing remaining procurement to provide options for content delivery. Due to delays caused by COVID 19, NIHE have experienced lack of venue hire & decreased contact with potential participants.

As an alternative to face to face delivery NIHE has submitted a request for online delivery of a cultural event. This pilot online activity will provide 48 participants from two network with remote engagement packs to enable them to explore other cultures way of celebrating occasions such as Christmas and New Year. A request for an extension to June 2022 is being progressed.”

The Partnership agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to note the information contained within the report.

Update on Peace IV SSS Theme

The Programme Manager provided an update on the progress made to date in respect of the SSS theme, within the Peace IV Local Action Plan.

She referred to a number of capital projects which were being undertaken as part of the initiative, including:

- **Springfield Dam** - the contractor was finalising works at the site, with a handover to the Council scheduled for early December. She referred to the options which were being considered under the Contractor’s Social Clause in regard to the reallocation of £6,000, with the potential to provide support to local schools for biodiversity activity at Springfield Dam. She reported that due to the current restrictions, a low key opening of the site was scheduled to be held in mid-December. Cross community site visits with local community representatives were to be scheduled to coincide with the opening; and
- **Peace IV Network Scheme (Capital Works)** – the contractor for the remaining scheme was being finalised with CPD and approvals would be sought from SEUPB. It was anticipated that the contractors would be on site (at Section 1 – Glencairn) in January 2021.

In regard to programming, the Partnership was informed that MDL had presented its report on usage and management to the Shared City Partnership Members. The next step was to consider the recommendations and to develop an Action Plan for implementation. The Members were advised that the MDL recommendations and next steps would also be reported to the West Area Working Group. The officer reiterated that ongoing dialogue and engagement was critical to the success of the project to guarantee alignment with capital works. To ensure a co-ordinated approach of involvement with key stakeholders, she advised that an Engagement Plan was currently being developed and she drew the Members’ attention to the document which had been attached to the agenda. She reported that this plan would be updated to reflect the recommendations of the MDL report.

In regard to the other Programmes:

- **Shared History, Heritage and Identity Content / Narratives for Shared Space** - project initiation discussions with Mediation NI and the Osborne Partnership to develop the narratives for 17 interpretative panels and a publication had taken place. Due to current government restrictions, the delivery partner was currently focusing on research and community engagement with delivery in a community setting planned for January 2021;
- **Shared Space Volunteer Training** - Mobilisation of the project was progressing with the project initiation meeting with Sustrans having taken place on 18th November 2020. A site visit with Sustrans, their community partners Intercomm and Community representatives was planned during December. The current focus of Sustrans was community engagement with delivery of the activity scheduled for early January 2021. The procurement approach for the volunteer training of Shared Space Ambassadors, Heritage and Nature Guides was under consideration;
- **Springfield Dam activities** – It was noted that both volunteer programmes would help to animate the Springfield Dam site. She advised that Council led outreach activity involving the Council's Parks and Community Services department was currently being finalised. Subject to government restrictions, further animation activities were also being explored.

The Partnership were provided with a breakdown of the costs associated with the projects and were informed that the Peace IV costs were recoverable, subject to eligibility from SEUPB. The Period 24 claim of £467K had been submitted to SEUPB for verification. Details of the Department for Infrastructure contribution to the project was being progressed and confirmation of Department for Communities input was being prioritised.

Noted.

(At this stage in proceedings Mrs, B. Arthurs left and did not return to the meeting.)

Update on Peace IV BPR Theme

The Partnership considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress report in respect of the Building Positive Relations (BPR) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

The Shared City Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report, and approve the recommendations as follows:

BPR3

- (i) that additional time for the NICVA researcher is permitted under the current contract
- (ii) where Yr 1 area clusters indicate low/no engagement, the resource allocation for a cluster project (£4k) is realigned into the Yr 2 Cluster area to maximise benefit from project development on an area basis

BPR4

- (i) Realign Year 3 targets into year 4 targets.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Delivery of project activity is continuing where possible, although government restrictions introduced in mid-October 20 impacted the delivery of condensed programmes and residential activity that was scheduled for October / November. Information is available in the agenda pack which provides detail on project progress as at October 20. An overview of delivery status against the 5 key project elements is also available.

3.1 BPR1 – Cross Community Area Networks

The project team is continuing to engage participant groups across the majority of the CCAN areas, although further exploratory discussions are required and are underway in East Belfast. With all approvals in place, the tender for the Good Relations programme is to be advertised w/c 23rd November with a view to commence early 2021. The development of a tender for the Place Visioning programme is progressing.

3.2 BPR2 – Creative Communities Project

Artist in residency aspects is to commence imminently in 5 cluster areas. Facilitative sessions with the Inner East- East Belfast Women's groups to develop a project idea has commenced. Exploratory discussions continue with the LGBTQ+ and Malone Integrated College thematic clusters.

3.3 BPR3 – Transform for Change Project

Year 1 cohorts and deliverables were completed October 20 (5.5 months behind schedule). 13 TLP courses delivered across 11 Clusters with 128 participants verified to date from a target of 169. Year 2 has commenced with combined clusters at an area level due to low uptake. All delivery is now online with blended learning approach – 20 hours training and 10 hours self-directed learning.

NICVA has requested approval to cover additional costs (approx. £4,500) for the provision of unforeseen services in moving to an

electronic M&E system due to Covid 19. The Programme Board has recommended that additional time for the NICVA researcher will be permitted under the current contract, however the time charged to the project should reflect the actual time spent on PEACE IV activity and evidenced appropriately and in the event where there are no participants starting / ending in any given month then no input from the researcher should be incurred/charged.

Project workshops for Yr1 clusters are ongoing however engagement is challenging due to Covid-19. Despite extensive efforts to re-engage participants in some Cluster areas there has been no/low interest to pursuing local project development. To maximise benefit to the cluster area, the Programme Board is recommending to the SCP that where area clusters indicate low/no engagement, the project resource allocation (£4K) should be combined into the Yr2 Cluster for a larger project.

The PEACE IV team has requested support from NSM/NIMS for Area Teams to assist in the delivery and progression of project development workshops and ideas, which will strength area working.

3.4 BPR4 – Belfast and the World (BATW)

Following internal promotion, Corrymeela is currently recruiting for new project coordinator to lead the project

Year 2 (2019) participant group of 24 is due to complete December. Year 3 cohorts (Shankill Women's Centre Health and Wellbeing group completed with 23 participants and Ballynafeigh Community Development Association with 14 participant is also due to complete in December 20. A further year 3 cohort is currently being recruited via an open call however despite numerous efforts, participant numbers remain low and therefore it is recommended that the SCP agree to moving this target into year 4 targets.

Study visit to remain on hold due to COVID 19 restrictions and is anticipated that two EU study trips will be held in 2021.

3.5 BPR5 – Supporting Connected Communities - LINC'S Projects

The delivery partner continues to engage regularly with the 34 core participants currently active and 64 newly recruited participants. The impacts of Covid -19 and digital poverty continues to affect group sessions.

BPR5 – Traveller element of Supporting Connected Communities

Following a public recruitment exercise for a Traveller Support Officer to lead the project, no appointment has been made. A second public recruitment exercise will be advertised on 26 November with the project expected to commence early 2021.

BPR5 – Roma elements of Supporting Connected Communities

The contract for delivery of this project has been awarded to Forward South Partnership project initiation to commence late November 2020. .

3.6 Financial and Resource Implications

All BPR project delivery partners undertaking delivery modification exercise which will determine the level and impact of COVID 19 crisis.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The draft plan has been equality screened and discussed at the Equality Consultative Forum on 13 May 2015.”

The Partnership recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee adopt the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Update on Revised Good Relations Plan 20/21 and 21/22

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Council received a Letter of Offer from The Executive Office (TEO) towards the 20/21 District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP) based on the action plan submitted to TEO in February 2020.

1.2 Subsequently, a draft Revised Good Relations Action Plan for 2020/21 was approved by the Council in August 2020 and was noted by the Partnership at its October meeting.

1.3 It was understood by Council and TEO that given the current environment, this would likely be the first of a series of revisions to the Belfast City Council Good Relations Action Plan in line with the direction of travel agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19 June 2020 and approved at Full Council on 1 July 2020. Further revisions to the plan will take in to account emerging community need as part of overall community recovery across Belfast and will be brought forward in due course in that context.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1

- Members are requested to note the Revised Action Plan 20/21 which was submitted to The Executive Office summarising the subsequent changes that have been approved after the previous submission

- **Members are asked to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that:**

The contribution to the Clean Green Inclusive and Safe Initiative from the Good Relations Action budget is increased to £7550 so that the project can progress in year.

Forward South is offered additional support of up to £7k for the Roma helpline until 31 March 2021 to allow a continuation of service and ensure a smooth transition to the Peace IV project.

- **Members are asked to note that 5k has been awarded to The Hubb under delegated authority, as previously agreed, as part of the North Belfast Diversionary Project.**
- **Members are asked to note the opening of the 2 funding programmes under the Council's Community Recovery Support Grants Scheme and to forward the information to their contacts as widely as possible**
- **Members are asked to review the current Revised Action Plan 21/22 summary and suggest potential projects which could be included in a further iteration.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Current Position

3.1 Council submits an annual Good Relations Action Plan for consideration by TEO in February of each year; TEO then issues a Letter of Offer based on identified need in each Council area and the level of resource available. A Letter of Offer was received for approximately £570,000 on 15th June 2020. This will provide a total allocation of approximately £740,000 for the action plan which required amendment to reflect the level of resource available.

3.2 It was understood by Council and TEO that given the current environment, this would likely be the first of a series of revisions to the Belfast City Council Good Relations Action Plan in line with the direction of travel agreed by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19 June 2020 and approved at Full Council on 1 July 2020. Further revisions to the plan will take in to account emerging community need as part of overall community recovery across Belfast and will be brought forward in due course in that context.

3.3 To this end, Officers have been reviewing the Plan regularly given the dynamic environment and have brought forward proposals to Members at previous meetings for approval to ensure its objectives can be met and outcomes achieved.

3.4 A copy of the most recent revised Action Plan which incorporates the changes agreed previously by the Partnership

and the associated reprofiling of expenditure is available for information within the agenda pack.

- 3.5 Now, Members are asked to consider the following 2 requests for additional support for 2 proposals which have already been incorporated in the current Plan.
- 3.6 Firstly, at the last meeting, Members had agreed to keep the Clean Green Inclusive and Safe Initiative in the budget, to a maximum of 5k. Since then, Officers have been liaising with the BIDS in terms of their ability to contribute towards this contract and have been advised that currently they are not in a position to do so due to impact of the pandemic. As the PCSP has contributed an amount of £15k and the total contract comes to £22,550, Members are asked to approve that the Partnership increase their contribution to £7550 to make up the shortfall so that the project can progress in year.
- 3.7 Secondly, Members will recall that they received a presentation from Forward South regarding the Roma Helpline Project in November. Funding of up to £12,000 had been awarded to the group to provide the service to this vulnerable community until 31st December, 2020, with the option to extend to March 2021 pending evaluation and funding being available.
- 3.8 Members will be aware that Forward South have recently been awarded the contract to deliver the Peace IV Roma Hub project. It was hoped that the project would have been mobilised by December but Officers have been advised that it is unlikely that recruitment for staff will be in place for until the end of February. In the absence of this service, the Roma community will be left without any provision during a critical period and could mean that the Roma community could potentially resort to paying for advice.
- 3.9 The work has been supported by a number of statutory partners who have expressed concern that momentum within the community could be lost. While not in a position to continue their funding, the Trust has also advised that the helpline is still very busy and that the project has successfully moved to a face-to-face clinic once a week which is oversubscribed.
- 3.10 Since the project began it has dealt with 985 individual enquiries and in November alone, 92 new callers and 248 returning callers have received support.
- 3.111 Given the above scenario, and the evidence presented regarding the effective reach of the project, Officers would recommend that the project is offered additional support of up to £7k until 31 March 2021 to allow a continuation of service and ensure a smooth transition to the Peace IV project.
- 3.12 This would also assist with the production of an end of year evaluation and the development of a Roma Small Worlds virtual

project which could be used repeatedly to tell the story of the Roma community and raise awareness of other cultures and experiences in Belfast.

- 3.13 Members will also recall that at the last meeting, it was agreed that a budget of 10k would be set aside for diversionary work with young people in North Belfast who were at risk of being involved in anti-social behaviour, which would impact on good relations in the area.
- 3.14 Members are asked to note that 5k has been awarded to the Hubb under delegated authority, as previously agreed, to deliver an arts based project for young people which will explore racism, understanding, similarities and differences as well as explore the different cultures and religions within the Commonwealth which have shaped our history.

Community Recovery Support Grants

- 3.5 The Partnership had previously endorsed the Council's approach to Community Provision Recovery and agreed that the budgets for Tranche 2 Good Relations Small Grants Scheme and St Patrick's Day be allocated to ongoing community provision recovery funding programme.
- 3.16 Members should have received an email regarding the opening of 2 funding programmes to help constituted groups deliver programmes and project activity focused on COVID response in their local areas:

COVID-19 Community Recovery Support Fund Micro-grant – up to £1,500

Micro-Grants applications open on Wednesday 25th November and close on Friday 11th December.

COVID-19 Community Recovery Support Fund Medium Grant – up to £5,000

Medium-Grants applications open on Wednesday 25th November and close on Friday 18th December.

- 3.7 Funding applications must be for work associated with the following priority areas:
- Children and young people
 - Civic pride
 - Preventing isolation
 - Emotional wellbeing
 - Antisocial behaviour
 - Health and wellbeing of staff or volunteers
 - Unexpected premises and PPE costs.

Information on assistance with these areas can be found on our *Coronavirus Belfast Community Support* section on the Council's website:

<https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/Community/Health-and-wellbeing/COVID-19-Belfast-Community-Support>

- 3.18 Members are asked to note the above information and to share it with their contacts as widely as possible.

Good Relations Action Plan 21/22

- 3.19 Members will also be aware that the current funding for the DCGRP was allocated as part of a 3 year cycle beginning in 19/20. As requested by TEO, at the commencement of this cycle, a full Plan for 19/20 along with summary plans for 20/21 and 21/22 were submitted to TEO and approved. This funding is subject to a positive end year project evaluation, budget availability and that the Council match funds the Programme.
- 3.20 Earlier in the year, TEO had requested that Council review its Year 3 Action Plan Summaries for 21/22 in light of the changes that have been made to the Revised Year 2 Action Plan 20/21.
- 3.21 A revised action plan summary was submitted by the deadline, and approved by the Partnership. It took into account that current guidelines and restrictions may still be in place and therefore, may be subject to change. A copy of the Revised Action Plan 21/22 summary is available.
- 3.22 Members are advised that TEO have customarily requested that full Action Plans for the next financial year are submitted by the end of February.
- 3.23 Officers would intend to bring a further draft revised Plan for 21/22 to the Partnership for approval in January. However, in advance of the next meeting, Officers would ask Members if they have any comments or proposals which should be included taking into account the context of the Council's social and economic recovery framework and the Belfast Agenda.
- 3.25 In addition, Action Plans are to be based on an audit of good relations issues and need within the Council area. Members will recall that the most recent audit of good relations needs was complete at the end of 2019.
- 3.25 Action Plans must also be aligned with the Government strategy Together; Building a United Community, under the 4 key priority areas of:
- Children and Young People
 - Our Shared Community
 - Our Safe Community

- **Our Cultural Expression**

Financial & Resource Implications

All projects for 20/21 can be funded through existing budgets

The 21/22 Action Plan will be 75% funded by TEO with the remaining 25% included in the Council's 21/22 estimates setting exercise. TEO have not confirmed the budget allocation for 21/22 but the Plan will be based on the award granted in 20/21.

Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs assessment

Screening and a rural needs assessment has taken place for the Good Relations Strategy. The councils' District Council Good Relations Action Plan is one element of this strategy."

Several Members commended the many voluntary groups and organisations who had come together to provide support to vulnerable citizens and communities during the pandemic and asked if these examples could be incorporated as a learning exercise as part of the GR strategic research project being undertaken by Blue Zebra.

The Good Relations Manager confirmed that, as agreed at the last meeting, the consultants, Blue Zebra, would be looking at positive examples and case studies. She advised that further revisions to the plan would take into account emerging community need as part of overall community recovery across Belfast and this would be submitted in due course.

A further Member outlined how effective and useful the Roma helpline had been in promoting the many and varied public health messages and in helping to tackle health inequalities during the pandemic.

The Good Relations Manager asked the Members to review the current Revised Action Plan 2021/2022 summary and encouraged them to suggest potential projects which could be considered for inclusion at a later stage.

The Partnership recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee adopt the recommendations as outlined in the report.

Reprofiling Request from Duncairn Community Partnership

The Partnership considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a re-profiling request from Duncairn Community Partnership for its consideration.

2.0 Recommendations

The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that they :

- (i) note the contents of the report
- (ii) approve the re-profiling request as detailed below.

3.0 Main report – Project Details

- 3.1 Duncairn Community Partnership (DCP) was awarded funding up to a maximum of £15,000 from the 2020/21 DCGRP for the delivery of a cohesive design scheme for security gates/barriers in Duncairn Gardens.**

Members and community partners have advised that this work be postponed with a view to re-engaging in the new financial year (and once current Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted to allow for local consultation).

The group has asked to re-profile their programme funding allocation to upgrade their current technology capability to accommodate the on-line delivery of good relations programmes targeting young people and new communities.

Background

- 3.2 Since 2012 Duncairn Community Partnership based in Intercomm has been actively engaging with residents, community groups and clergy from our communities to bring about a number of physical changes to the peace barriers in the lower North Belfast area of the New Lodge, Tigers Bay, Mountcollyer and Newington/Parkside. Working in partnership with the community, statutory/government agencies and the PSNI, DCP has had a number of successful achievements and accomplishments with the support of residents from these areas including.**

- **The successful opening and ongoing monitoring of a peace gate in Alexander Park erected after the ceasefires**
- **The successful development of Delaware Shared Housing Complex (*located on former Limestone Road Interface site*) and provision of good relations and community development support.**
- **Provision of ongoing support to the CitySide Retail Park Shared Space Initiative (formerly York Gate) to liaise with DCP, PSNI and local communities**
- **The removal of a security barrier at Newington Street.**
- **The removal of a security fence at Hillman Street/North City Business Centre**
- **Successful reimagining of barriers at Lepper Street and Syringa Street**
- **Removal of metal grills from residents' windows on properties along Duncairn Gardens**
- **Opening of 6 pedestrian gates along Duncairn Gardens**
- **The removal and transformation of the dilapidated interface fence at Hillman Court with a replacement wall and smaller fence**

- The replacement and transformation of security gates adjacent to Star Neighbourhood Centre and Hillman Court leading from Duncairn Gardens to Upper Meadow Street.
- The ongoing removal and replacement of a security fence in front of dwellings on North Queen Street near the junction of Duncairn Gardens
- Ongoing Community consultation and consent to extend the opening hours of Duncairn Gardens at PUL & CNR security gates
- Ongoing positive engagement with youth organisations including EA, Holy Family Youth Centre, Mountcollyer Youth Centre, Limestone Utd and the Star Neighbourhood project to engage with young people involved in interface anti-social behaviour
- Community consultation and consent from over 1600 residents to organise an annual programme of events and activities to consult on peace barriers

3.3 In September 2020 and as a direct result of the pandemic, DCP began utilising its website, Facebook and Twitter to deliver numerous online activities and events in order to consult and keep residents from across our communities updated and informed in relation to our peace barriers removal work. This has proven to be extraordinarily successful with upwards of 9000 hits being recorded on Facebook, Twitter and the Website.

3.4 As a result of these highly successful online programmes and activities a weakness in community IT capability has been identified and the group are now hoping to strengthen and develop the capacity of DCP to become not only an effective online communicator but a valuable community resource with of a state of the art IT facility that can be easily accessible and utilised on a cross community basis by all community and youth groups in the Duncairn and Castle areas. Cross Community Groups and youth groups will have access to professional presentation equipment, website building software, internet access, email, zoom to conduct and hold meetings, and social media to promote their cross-community work.

3.5 The IT suite will also become a valued training suite to host presentations, workshops, online meetings (zoom), discussions, debates and desktop publishing DCP's partner group, Intercomm, are fortunate enough to have secured pod cast equipment and the group hope to secure video equipment in order that potential users of the facility can develop promotional podcasts and videos recording and detailing their cross-community projects. DCP reliance on zoom and other online equipment/software has been critical since the onset of the pandemic. The group have received approaches from other local community groups in the Duncairn area seeking access to the current limited IT facilities. They believe it will be appealing to funders that community groups will be able to produce podcasts and videos as a means of promoting and reporting progress on projects.

- 3.6 This proposal will provide a valuable community resource whereby residents and young people from the Duncairn and Castle areas will embrace technology as a means of raising their community groups to the forefront of cross community communication, consultation and decision making.

Key Outcomes

3.7 Our Children and Young People

- The new equipment can be used to help increased awareness for young people on the negative impact that paramilitary influence has on individuals and their communities. This can be achieved through film, interactive distance learning and participation. Intergenerational community relations can be improved by increasing positive peer influence that will help address low educational attainment through distance learning mentoring and examples of good practice.

Our Shared Community

- The room when set up and equipped can be used to bring people together from other parts of the world to share their experiences of peace building, reconciliation and sharing good practice. Some good examples of this would be possible learning from South Africa and the new emerging communities from former Eastern bloc countries. Linking with Universities across the globe.

Our Safe Community

- Reduction of the negative impact of external influences through the use of media to help increase understanding of ethnic cultures Build people's confidence to address local silent racism. Cultural identity is celebrated in a safe and inclusive manner and is seen as a celebration not something to fear. Interaction with people from different cultures in a safe and respectful manner to build confidence.

Our Cultural Expression

- Increased understanding of the diversity of cultures in local areas. Cultural expression and identity is celebrated respectfully Increase in community engagement at cultural events Increased local awareness of other cultures. This can be achieved through the use of group zoom, MS Teams etc. webinars and distance learning in a safe space. Programmes to be developed to look at our main cultural expression and other cultures from people who are newly arrived.

3.8 Financial & Resource Implications

All costs can be covered through the District Council Good Relations Action Plan. The original proposal is written into the 2020/21 District Council Good Relations Action Plan as funded by TEO.

3.9 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The aim of the proposal is to work with local residents across identified interface sites to develop and promote on-line youth programming and engagement on local interface working.”

The Partnership noted the huge volume of community work undertaken by the Duncairn Community Partnership and other community organisations during the pandemic.

Members discussed the valuable role that community organisations had played during the pandemic and agreed to invite representatives from the International Fund for Ireland to a future meeting to hear more about the work on interfaces within the community.

The Partnership recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agree the re-profiling request from Duncairn Community Partnership as detailed in the report.

EU Settlement Scheme

The Partnership was reminded that the EU Settlement Scheme had been introduced by the Home Office in June 2018.

The Good Relations Manager referred to the scheme and specifically drew the Members' attention to the following extract from the scheme:

'If you're an EU, EEA or Swiss citizen, you and your family can apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue living in the UK after 30 June 2021. You can also apply if you're the family member of an eligible person of Northern Ireland.... If your application is successful, you'll get either settled or pre-settled status.'

She advised that the Scheme enabled the above groups to obtain the immigration status they needed to continue to live, work and study in the UK beyond 30th June 2021. In order to apply applicants were required to complete a short 3-step online application form by 30th June 2021.

The Good Relations Manager advised that, from August 2018 to June 2020, Home Office data indicated that 11,740 applications, from the Belfast City Council area, had been made to the EU Settlement Scheme. Although, there was not exact data for the number of people living in Belfast that would be eligible to apply, anecdotal evidence suggested that there was still many who had not applied to the scheme. From August 2018 to June 2020, 56,550 applications had been made to the EU settlement scheme, from applicants in Northern Ireland, the largest number of these (16,890) were from Polish applicants, followed by (8,700) Lithuanian.

Advice NI and a consortium made from the Law Centre and Stronger Together Network had obtained funding from the Home Office to provide information and support to applicants.

The Partnership was advised that information on the projects and the support being providing was available via the following websites:

<https://www.adviceni.net/eu-settlement-scheme>

<https://www.strongertogetherni.org/immigration/eu-settlement-scheme-support-project/>

She reported that, commencing 1st January 2021, free movement would end and the UK would introduce a points-based immigration system. The new system would treat EU and non-EU citizens the same. Under the points-based immigration system, anyone coming to the UK for work must meet a specific set of requirements for which they would score points. At this stage Visas would be awarded to those who had gained enough points.

Since the enlargement of the EU in 2004, many EU nationals had come to Belfast and many had made it their home.

The Good Relations Manager proposed that the Council, in line with its good relations commitments to promote a shared and inclusive City, might wish to send out a message of support to EU nationals living in the City, acknowledging their contribution to Belfast and making it clear that the Council wished them to stay as well as encouraging them to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Several of the Members reiterated the valuable contribution that EU citizens make to Northern Ireland's society, in both the workplace and day to day lives, and recognized the impact of the current circumstances and the uncertainty around Brexit on their lives.

She continued that she had received correspondence from Mr. P. Mackel who unfortunately had been unable to attend today's meeting. He had requested that the Partnership would consider extending the recommendation outlined, to also call on all employers and civic society organisations across the greater Belfast area to issue a similar statement, acknowledging the contributions of EU citizens to Belfast by also stipulating that they should stay and encouraging them to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.

The Members of the Partnership unanimously agreed with these sentiments and recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the Council:

- be authorised to engage in social media and other relevant communication mediums to provide a message of support to EU nationals living in the City by acknowledging their contribution to Belfast, stipulating that the Council wishes them to stay and encouraging them to apply to the EU settlement scheme; and
- call on all employers and civic society organisations across the greater Belfast area to issue the same statement.

Date of next Meeting

The Partnership agreed that its next meeting would be held on Monday, 11th January at 1:30 p.m.

Chairperson