CONFIRMED

**MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED & EIGHTY SECOND MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29TH JUNE 2016 AT10.00AM IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL, EQUALITY HOUSE, 7-9 SHAFTESBURY SQUARE, BELFAST BT2 7DP**

**2733/16 PRESENT:**

Mr P Osborne (Chair), Ms L Keys, Mr R Campbell, Rev Dr N Hamilton, Ms K Garbal, Ms D Close, Mr D Mackay

**2734/16 APOLOGIES:**

Ms S McClelland, Mr N McKenna, Mr G Deane, Ms R McGlone

**2725/16 IN ATTENDANCE:**

Ms J Irwin [CEO], Mr G McKeown [DFAP Director], Ms T Gibson [Admin Officer, DFAP]

**2736/16 OBSERVER:**

None

2737/16 STANDARD CHECKS:

*1****(a)*** The Chair reminded Members of the requirement to declare any

conflicts of interests in any discussions where decisions were

required.

*1****(b)***The Chair advised thatMembers need to register any offers of gifts or hospitality since the last Council meeting.

Mr D Mackay declared that he had attended a Somme Commemoration Dinner hosted by Belfast City Council.

**2738/16 MINUTES:**

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**01** refers]

Minutes dated 25th May 2016 having been circulated were taken as read.

Civic Leadership Award **-** Mr D Mackay asked if the letters had been sent to nominees for the Civic Leadership Award as discussed at the previous Board meeting. The Chair said he had drafted a letter and had sent to Mr R Mullan, Communications Director, to forward to those who knew they were nominated for the award. A letter has since been sent to Rev David Latimer.

Practitioners Award – The CEO asked members to forward any nominations to her in respect of this award.

**2739/16 CORRESPONDENCE:**

* Letters to Junior Ministers

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**02** refers]

The Chair advised that the letter to the Junior Ministers were sent following the last Board meeting. He said he received a response to say that the letter is under consideration.

* Letter from Mark Browne, Accounting Officer, The Executive Office (TEO)

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**03** refers]

The CEO reminded members of the telephone conversation she had had with Dr M Browne during the last Board meeting in relation to the Chair’s letter to Dr M Browne about Board members who were nearing completion of their first term. She said that this letter was the written response in line with what he had indicated in the phone call.

Members noted the reply.

2740/16 MATTERS ARISING:

TEO Reviews:

Following the last Board meeting, the CEO said she had written to Ms G Killen, TEO, on behalf of the Board as requested, regarding the delay in receiving the outcome of the staffing review. She said that whilst she was on annual leave, the Department had requested a meeting to discuss the staffing review. The Department then advised that a meeting would not be necessary and that they would send through the report. CRC has not yet received the report.

The CEO advised that a meeting has since been scheduled for Friday 1st July to discuss the timing of the report.

The CEO said she had also mentioned, in the letter to Ms G Killen, the reduction in CRC’s staffing complement due to current vacancies and a staff member retiring. A discussion followed in relation to Mr R Mullan’s retirement and how the communications role would continue without someone in post. The Chair emphasised the need for CRC to be pro-active on the communications front and not to fall silent and suggested a temporary person take on the communications role. The CEO said that this could be considered in the context of the strategic and business plans due to be considered later in the meeting.

*(Rev Dr N Hamilton joined the meeting at 10.30am)*

**2741/16 CHAIR’S BUSINESS:**

The Chair provided a verbal update on recent meetings/events attended:

* T:BUC Engagement Forum
* Charter Awards
* Glentoran Academy
* CRIS event
* DFA for CRIS
* Launch of John Hewitt Summer School
* Turas Celebration
* Youthlink Certificates

Forthcoming events:

* Somme Events
* Srebrenica Commemoration – 14th July
* Panel Debate – 26th July
* Belfast MELA – 28 August
* CR Board meeting during CR Week - September

Bank Mandate - The Chair asked members to approve the update to the bank mandate to add Mr G McKeown as a signatory on the account.

The Board approved this request.

**2748/16 POLICY PAPERS:**

* Draft Proposal Paper – CRC Position Papers & Consultation Responses

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**13** refers]

The Chair apologised to Ms D McGlade, Policy Director, for not having had time to review this paper at the previous Board meeting in May.

Ms McGlade said the paper had been drafted as a result of a discussion at the Board residential in March, on how to take policy development forward. The paper outlined how the policy team would move from tailored responses to specific consultations to more generic responses. The paper also included a provisional schedule for general responses under the various T:BUC themes. Ms L Keys said she thought the format and content of the paper was very helpful and suggested other groups could use this.

Members discussed forming a panel of 2-3 members to discuss the theme of reconciliation with the view to producing a one page document on what reconciliation means. Mr P Osborne offered to chair the panel and asked for volunteers. A meeting will be convened in July with the aim of reporting back to the Board at the September Board meeting.

* Draft Programme for Government 2016-21 - Consultation

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**14** refers]

Ms D McGlade said the Policy team are currently attending external consultation events and are drafting a response to Programme for Government consultation.

She said CRC had been asked by the Department to submit a response on three of the forty two indicators – increase respect for each other, increase shared space and increase reconciliation, as well as submitting the more detailed formal response.

She asked that if any member had any feedback or comments to direct them to her.

**2742/16 STRATEGIC OVERVIEW:**

CRC Committee Options Paper

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**04** refers]

The Chair presented a paper outlining options available for CRC committees going forward. The majority of members present preferred option B which suggested ceasing all committees apart from the Audit and Risk Committee but with the occasional issue specific strategic meeting.

The CEO said she would check the Articles of Memorandum to see if there was any reason stated as to why this change could not happen, and if not, the changes could take effect from the next round of meetings in September.

Mr D Mackay suggested using small electronic notebooks for future meetings to cut down on the use of paper. He said Age NI used these and it had proved to be very efficient. *(Mr R Campbell declared a conflict of interest as Age NI are one of his clients).*Rev Dr N Hamilton said Belfast MET used something similar and they had a return on their money within a 12 month period. The CEO said she would talk to the DFAP Director about this idea and see if CRC had the financial resources to take forward this option.

A suggestion was made to incorporate the next Board meeting into CR Week which is scheduled for week commencing 19th September 2016. It was agreed that a potential date for the meeting be circulated.

**2743/16 STRATEGIC PLAN:**

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**05** refers]

The CEO said the Strategic Plan had been revised following the Board’s comments at the last meeting in May. She added that the Chair had now written the revised introduction to the Plan which was circulated. She thanked the Board for their input and patience in the drafting of the Plan.

Members approved the Strategic Plan.

**2744/16 OPERATIONAL PLAN:**

Business Plan 2016-17

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**06** refers]

The CEO said the Business Plan had been updated following feedback from TEO and from members at the last meeting of the Board in May. She said that this version of the plan had balanced the actions in each of the work areas – Funding (4), T:BUC Engagement and Delivery (6) and Trusted and Effective Public Service and Good Governance (6) as suggested at the last meeting. She thanked members for their input into the Business Plan.

Members approved the Business Plan.

RES and Cohesion Report [Paper CRC/182/06/16/**07** refers] &

Record of Response to the Cohesion Paper [Paper CRC/182/06/16/**08** refers]

The CEO said Ms D MacBride, Cultural Diversity Director, prepared this report which includes recommendations as to how the work of the Common Platform and work with BME groups could be carried forward. Continued work will link in with the Community Engagement Forum, District Councils, Racial Equality Strategy Sub-Group, NICVA and work in the Policy and Funding Directorates in CRC. She noted that the Business Plan had been drafted to reflect this approach in line with TEO discussions.

Members agreed to these recommendations.

**2745/16 REPORT FROM AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE:**

The Audit Committee Chair, Mr R Campbell provided a verbal update on the recent Committee meeting (16th June 2016 refers).

* Funding Investigations - In respect of the current case Mr R Campbell reported that letters had been sent to other funders, as requested by the Department. SEUPB has responded and CRC is awaiting a response from the other groups concerned.
* Risk Register – Mr R Campbell reported no changes to the overall level of risks on the register. He said Audit and Risk Committee members had discussed risks associated with the administration of the North Belfast Fund. The CEO noted that CRC’s role with regards the administration of the North Belfast Fund is outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding, the final draft of which is due to be considered later in the meeting.
* DFP Audit on Internal Processes – Mr R Campbell said a change to ASM’s contract will be made to align it with the programme of work as outlined in the Audit Strategy.

**2746/16 REPORT FROM FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:**

In the absence of Ms S McClelland, Chair of Finance and General Purpose Committee, Mr Gerard McKeown provided a verbal update on the recent Committee meeting (24th June 2016 refers).

* Annual Report and Accounts - Mr G McKeown said that the Annual Report and Accounts were reviewed by the F&GP Committee at their last meeting. He said there had been some changes to the annual accounts as a result of changes to the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM). He added that NIAO would begin their review of the accounts next week.
* F&D Report – Mr G McKeown said Mr P Jordan, Director of Funding and Development, had provided a report to the F&GP Committee on the current status of the grants. Mr P Jordan had advised the F&GP Committee that there were 65 applications to the CR/CD Grants Scheme. Currently £32,000 was committed to CR/CD grants.
* 16/17 Budget Summary

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**09** refers]

Mr G McKeown said CRC’s budget allocation opened with a 4% cut from the previous year. Operating expenditure allocation has been reduced to allow a lesser cut in grants and programme spending.

A discussion developed in relation to implications for staff as a result of the budget cuts. Members suggested £6000 be transferred from the grants allocation into contingency staffing costs.

It was agreed that this contingency could be revised again in September.

Members approved the 2016/17 Budget subject to the change noted above.

* Administration Staffing Paper

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**10** refers]

Members approved the recommendations outlined in the Administration Staffing Paper which had been agreed at the Finance and General Purposes meeting.

* Disability Action Plan

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**11** refers]

The updated plan includes the performance review and planned actions for 2016-19.

The report was agreed.

*(Rev Dr N Hamilton, Mr D Mackay and Mrs L Keys left the meeting)*

**2747/16 FUNDING PROCESSES 2016-17:**

* North Belfast Funding Scheme Memorandum

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**12** refers]

The Memorandum will be approved by Written Procedure as the meeting was not quorate when this item came up on the agenda.

*(Mr R Campbell left the meeting)*

**2749/16 CEO’S REPORT:**

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**15** refers]

This paper was noted without discussion as the meeting was no longer quorate.

**2750/16 SECTOR REPORTS:**

These papers were noted for member’s information / updates on the main areas of programme work.

* Funding & Development Programme

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**16** refers]

* Policy Programme

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**17** refers]

* Cultural Diversity Programme

[Paper CRC/182/06/16/**18** refers]

**2751/16 AOB:**

None

**2752/16  PROPOSED DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS:**

It was agreed that the meeting would take place in CR/CA week.

Date to be confirmed.

Wednesday 30th November (am) – Equality House