

CONFIRMED

MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED & NINETY FIFTH MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY, 25th
JANUARY 2018 AT 1PM IN SEAMUS HEANEY HOME PLACE,
BELLAGHY

2935/18 Present: Mr Peter Osborne (Chair), Ms Libby Keys (Board Member), Mr Rory Campbell (Board Member), Mr Don MacKay (Board Member), Noel McKenna (Board Member)

In attendance: Jacqueline Irwin (CEO), Gerard McKeown (DFAP), Paul Jordan (Director of Funding), Gemma Attwood (Policy)

2936/18 Apologies: Delia Close (Board Member), Kasia Garbal (Board Member), Rev Norman Hamilton (Board Member), Sheila McClelland (Board Member)

2937/18 Observers:

Jamie Warnock (TEO)

2938/18 Introductions & Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked Ms C Linney for coming and preparing a presentation on Good Relations in Mid Ulster District Council for the Board.

2939/18 Ms Claire Linney, Mid Ulster District Council

Ms C Linney, Head of Community Development, Mid Ulster District Council, presented an update on her Department's work to the Board, and thanked CRC for the opportunity to present.

Good Relations budget for the year 2017/2018 consisted of £420,000 (75% coming from TEO and 25% from the Council). £230,000 was spent directly on projects and £280,000 on staff and admin.

Ms C Linney highlighted that the Council's Good Relations budget is not a grant scheme, the Council are actively involved in every project that is funded.

She explained that the Mid Ulster Council fund a number of projects which were established to promote the 4 T:BUC themes as follows:

- Our children and young people
- Our safe community
- Our shared community and
- Our cultural experience

Ms C Linney then spoke to each of these themes, highlighting a number of projects funded under each category:

- Children and Young People
 - Cross Community Schools Project, pupils from different communities engaging in activities together.
 - Beyond Skin – Racism and Diversity project
- Safe Community
 - Poverty Programme – link between poverty and single community areas
 - Policing and Community Safety Partnerships work in schools
- Shared Community
 - Community Programme to open up shared spaces e.g New Enterprise Ctr, GAA Clubs, Community Halls.
- Cultural Expression
 - Music in Schools – pipe band music in Catholic Maintained Schools, Irish music in Controlled Schools, followed by a joint concert.

Ms C Linney emphasised that any projects funded are required to prove 'Good Relations' outcomes as their aim.

CRC Council Members asked Ms C Linney what issues and difficulties Good Relations Dept faced in Mid Ulster.

Ms C Linney stated that they have occasionally faced some resistance to their work in schools, albeit not from pupils.

The Good Relations Department have great links with Community Safety and arts as they are under the same directorate in the Council. However, links with others areas such as Parks and Leisure are not as strong. Sometimes other Council directorates may request funding for projects with no 'Good Relations' component.

Mr N McKenna asked if and how the Council can evaluate the Good Relations Work, to which Ms C Linney explained that all projects are evaluated through Outcome Based Modelling and appropriate baselining, each project has to meet TBUC outcomes.

Ms J Irwin thanked Ms C Linney for her comprehensive presentation. Ms J Irwin commented that Mid Ulster's experience of young people in schools being happy to engage in cross-community projects, but facing resistance from others, is not uncommon. She suggested speaking to Community Relations in Schools who use a 'whole school' approach, involving pupils, teachers, governors, clergy, and the greater community.

Ms L Keys thanked Ms C Linney for her presentation, stating that the work Ms Linney and her colleagues do is not easy. She informed the Board that Ms C Linney previously worked for Rural Community Network, and has great experience in 'Good Relations' work. She said that she had been a joy to work with and this can be very helpful when dealing with contentious issues.

On behalf of the CRC the Chair expressed his thanks to Ms C Linney, on behalf of CRC and the Board, for speaking on the work of Mid Ulster Good Relations.

2940/18 Standards Check

- 2(a) *Standard checks:
Members should declare any conflict of interests in any discussions where decisions were required.*
- 2(b) *Members need to register any offers of gifts or hospitality since the last Council meeting.*

2941/18 Minutes

CRC/195/01/18/01

Members approved the Board minutes of 12th December 2017

2942/18 Matters Arising

a) David Stevens Memorial Lecture

Ms J Irwin suggested that the Board set a notional date or week to hold the 2018 David Stevens Memorial Lecture. Members agreed that this event should take place during the final week of March or the first week of April.

b) CR Award

Ms J Irwin informed the Board that the CR Award nomination process is due to close on the 31st January.

Chair encouraged Board Members to submit nominations, regardless of whether they had been unsuccessful in the past. Details on submission processes are available on the website.

The award panel will comprise of Ms D Close, Mr N Hamilton, and Ms L Keys.

Mr D MacKay raised his concern about nominating someone for the award, and the nominee not being contacted to inform them that the nomination was unsuccessful. Ms J Irwin stated that CRC cannot always assume that the nominee is aware of their nomination but in future will enquire from the nominator, whether the nominee has been notified of their nomination, and if so, both parties will be contacted.

2943/18 Correspondence

Chair notified the Board that CRC had received correspondence from the Union which will be addressed under Item 14: CEO Report.

Chair informed the Board that CRC had received correspondence from an MLA, with an anonymised allegation from a constituent, regarding one of CRC's funded groups.

Ms J Irwin stated that a similar letter was received in 2017 and investigated at the time. This allegation will be presented to CRC's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

2944/18 Chairs Business

The Chair informed the Board of a number of meetings he has attend in December 2017 and January 2018:

- Attended CRC staff meeting
- Attended Breakfast Prayer Four Corners Festival Launch
- Chair and Ms J Irwin attended a meeting with Kevin Conmy – Irish Secretariat
- Chair, Ms J Irwin, and a number of board members attended meetings with US Consul Dan Lawton
- Chair released a New Year Statement on behalf of CRC, which gained considerable media attention.

Future meetings:

- Holocaust Memorial Service
- Screening of Film on Nuremberg
- Launch of View Digital Magazine Collaboration with CRC
- Interfaith Forum facilitating conversation between Rabbi David Singer and Sheikh Anwar Mady
- One Small Step event 2nd Feb
- 18th Feb 'Visit your local Mosque' 3-4pm NI Islamic Family Centre, Ruby Road & Belfast Islamic Centre, Wellington Park
- Chinese New Year Celebrations
- Core Funding Committee Meeting 21st Feb
- Peace Monitoring Report Advisory Meeting
- Launch of Pat Finucane Report

2945/18 North Belfast Programme Transfer

CRC/195/01/18/04

Mr P Jordan presented to the Board a paper on the progress of the North Belfast Programme transfer from TEO to CRC. Staff have been working with TEO colleagues to complete the handover of full responsibility for the delivery and management of the North Belfast Strategic Good Relations Programme 2018/19. Mr P Jordan informed the Board that CRC will oversee all functions of running the scheme including; the assessment of applications; issuing of contracts; verification and vouching; and project evaluations.

The Memorandum of Understanding for 2018/2019 has been drafted and sent to TEO for approval. As this is a Ministerial initiative, overall decisions about the purpose and introduction of the scheme will remain with TEO.

Mr P Jordan stated that he hoped to improve the North Belfast Scheme projects joined up working, as suggested in John Dunlop's evaluation.

Ms J Irwin said that she had spoken with Mr Dunlop at the Four Corners Festival Launch and he would be happy to come and speak to North Belfast groups.

2946/18 Policy and Outreach CRC/195/01/18/12

Ms G Attwood brought to the Board a response to the NI Affairs Committee Inquiry into 'Devolution and Democracy'. This paper was circulated on Tuesday 23rd January for board members comment.

Ms G Attwood explained that the response includes comments from the Good Relations sector. The response focuses on; context for the executive; the impact on critical issues and on reconciliation; the impact on services, business and communities; and the impact on budgeting.

Ms G Attwood communicated the content of each of these section responses, thanked those who provided feedback, and stated that she would circulate any further drafts for comment.

A discussion followed regarding what evidence CRC could present. Members were in favour of including anecdotal evidence suggesting the impact political instability has had on policing, paramilitaries, and policy decisions. However Ms G Attwood explained that CRC's response should be provable statements, which can be backed up by evidence. Mr J Warnock reiterated this point, with his experience of providing evidence to a Committee, he would be cautious of using anecdotal or experiential statements as evidence.

ACTION: Any further comments be forwarded to Ms Attwood by Monday 29th Jan.

2947/18

Executive Office Board Review

CRC/195/01/18/02

Following the previous Board, and Audit and Risk Committee meetings, CRC sought legal advice on a paper setting out options for filling board positions in the absence of Ministers.

Ms J Irwin and Mr G McKeown presented this privileged legal advice to the Board and a discussion followed.

Mr R Campbell had seen this legal advice at the Audit and Risk Committee, and sought clarification on a number of issues regarding conflicts of interest. Mr R Campbell confirmed that he had received a response to his queries. On the basis of the legal advice, he was comforted that there was less of a risk arising from potential conflicts of interest.

However, he informed the meeting that he would expect that if TEO comes to the point of considering appointing civil servants to CRC's board, it might want to carry out a quick assessment of whether any particular risk arose in relation to a potential candidate on a case by case basis. Any negative issues arising from such an assessment would then be balanced against the merits/risks of allowing the Board to make its own appointments. By comparing these two options, Mr R Campbell felt that the governance process would have sufficient integrity.

Mr J Warnock stated that CRC and TEO have discussed the option of equalising quorate to 5 board members by changing CRC articles.

Ms J Irwin stated that the legal advisor had previously suggested CRC might generally tidy up the articles, beyond the points required in the governance review, and this process could include setting one quorate rather than the confusing position in the current articles.

2948/18

Voluntary Exit Scheme

The Board noted that they are concerned about the length of time this issue has been ongoing. They asked that a paper be presented to the next Board Meeting with background information on this issue, and how and when it may be resolved.

Action: Mr G McKeown to present a paper to the Board on background to the delaying in the Pay Remit, and a projected timeline for resolving this issue.

c) Health and Safety

Mr G McKeown advised the Board that there were no Incidents to report

d) Sickness and Absence Report

CRC/195/01/18/06

The Board noted the Sickness and Absence report. Mr G McKeown highlighted that the short term sickness leave has reduced.

Ms J Irwin noted that while there were some long term sick absences, a large number of staff have an excellent attendance record.

e) Staffing

i) Staffing Review

Mr G McKeown stated that TEO had carried out a review two years ago of the CEO, Deputy CEO, and Directors posts. A staffing review of other posts will now need to be completed to underpin any business case for further access to the Transformation Fund.

Action: Mr G McKeown to compile a business case and paper for a future Board Meeting on this staffing review.

ii) New Post

TEO have approved the business case for the creation of a 'Director of Community Engagement' post, and a job description is being compiled.

Action: Send round draft of Job Description to be circulated to the Board for comment

2951/18

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

CRC/195/01/18/07

Mr R Campbell presented to the Board an update on the latest meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee:

- There has been little progress on the un-vouched 5% of a Core Funded Group which has gone into liquidation. A loss request has been sent to TEO and is awaiting approval.
- There was a discussion on the Risk Register, and it was agreed that there was no reason to reduce 'political' and 'budget' risks down from Red.

- ASM have completed 2 Audit Reports; North Belfast Grants Admin & Distribution; and review of HR. Both of which have been deemed satisfactory.
- CRC has been reviewing and implementing processes ahead of GDPR legislation. The Chair of ARAC is satisfied with CRC's progress on this. Mr R Campbell suggested CRC request ICO to review GDPR compliance before the new legislation is in place.
- The Minutes of the previous Audit and Risk Committee minutes have been circulated to Board members.
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ACTION: To invite ICO to review GDPR compliance

2952/18

CEO's Report

CRC/195/01/18/08

The Board noted Ms J Irwin's CEO Report and during the meeting she drew attention to the following sections:

- The next TBUC Engagement Forum will take place on the 13th March.
- CEO and Chair met with Kevin Conmy, Irish Secretariat
- CEO, Chair and Board Members met with Dan Lawton, US Consul to NI. He suggested a roundtable he might host in the future, which CRC might be interested in attending.
- The scoping study on Bonfires has not progressed since the last Board Meeting.
- Ms J Irwin stated that she had attended a Public Theology seminar led by Dr Johnston McMaster, and thought he would make a great speaker at the David Stevens Memorial Lecture. The Board agreed.

ACTION: CEO to ask Dr Johnston McMaster to speak at David Stevens Memorial Lecture

Ms J Irwin presented to the Board; a piece of correspondence she had receive from Ms T Trainor, Unite the Union; the CEO's response; and Ms T Trainor's reply.

A discussion followed and the Board agreed that the CEO, Chair, Director of DFAP, and Chair of ARAC should, again, request a meeting with Ms T Trainor.

ACTION: CEO to respond to Ms T Trainor requesting a meeting.

2953/18

Sector Reports

The following reports were noted for member's information

- a) Communications report **CRC/195/01/18/09**
- b) Funding and Development report **CRC/195/01/18/10**

2954/18

AOB

- a) It was brought to the Chair's attention that Thursday's are no longer suitable to all Board members for future meetings

ACTION: Ms H George to carry out poll of availability for April's board meeting

- b) The Chair issued a reminder to Board Members of the Core Funding Board meeting on the 21st February, 9:30am Ante Room, Equality House

2955/18 Proposed Dates of Next Meeting

Core funding Board Meeting 21st February 9:20am – Ante Room, Equality House

Thurs 8th March 1pm Ante Room, Equality House

A schedule of future committee dates will then be prepared.