

Title of Report: Good Relations Strategy and Plan 2018-2021	Officer Presenting: Director of Health & Community Author: Head of Community Development and Leisure
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 To provide clarification for Members regarding the level of responses received during the consultation and to explain the rationale for the reference to the report entitled Protestant Migration from the West Bank of Derry/Londonderry 1969-1980, by Dr Ulf Hansson and Dr Helen McLaughlin commissioned by the Pat Finucane Centre.
- 1.2 To seek Members' approval of the Draft Good Relations Strategy and Plan 2018-2021.

2 Background

- 2.1 A further request for clarification was made at the December Committee meeting (HC250/18) on the research documents referenced in the development of the Good Relations Strategy and Plan 2018-21; and the level of response received during the consultation.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The report was informed by publications including those by academics such as Shirlow, Murtagh et al, an Institute for Conflict Research (ICR) report on segregated lives, the INCORE report on the Cost of the Troubles, Bardon on out-migration, and various publications on segregation in housing by CRC and the Universities. It also drew from the peace monitor reports and previous initiatives such as the interesting Exodus project. The full bibliography references are attached at Appendix 1. In addition extensive consultation was undertaken as detailed in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 The McLaughlin and Hansson report published by the Pat Finucane Centre summarised much of the previous work, and although getting comment in the media to the contrary, it concluded that fear/intimidation was one of the major factors in PUL people moving from the city side. However, there are also many other issues, many other legacy and commemorative activities, and other areas for intra- and cross-community dialogue.

- 3.3 Programme DCS7 in the Good Relations Action Plan, “Legacy and Commemoration Dialogues and Acknowledgement” seeks to undertake a programme of dialogue surrounding legacy issues exploring the impact of contentious good relations issues. The mention of the report by Hansson and McLaughlin and the reaction to its publication is mentioned as part of DCS7, in the context of important legacy and anniversary issues. These issues include the 50th anniversary of civil rights marches, communal violence and Bloody Sunday, and the 100th anniversary of partition and the establishment of Northern Ireland. All to be seen in the context of an ‘inclusive and accepting society’.
- 3.4 The Irish language was referenced following consultation input and the report highlights that “there is a need to continue to make Irish language available as a means of cultural expression but to provide opportunity for members of the PUL community to be involved both through geographic location and with sessions in an inter-active and low level nature”. The report suggests that the PUL community should be involved in conversations about cultural expression including, though not exclusively, sessions in language that could include both Irish language and Ulster Scots.
- 3.5 The consistent and strong theme of the report, from its titles to the various parts, is that a sense of belonging is important, and that includes all people from all backgrounds feeling included, feeling listened to, feeling treated fairly and being an equal part of the community and region. It is important that the PUL community are able to ‘tell their story’ and there are a number of areas and initiatives within the report and strategy where that is possible. Apart from the small grants, it should be a strong element of all of the youth initiatives, the safety projects including at interfaces, cultural diversity initiatives including the bonfire programme, and the shared space initiatives. Indeed it is a specific rationale for the dialogue events. Relevant actions can be identified and included within the forthcoming Action Plan 2019-22.
- 3.6 The Good Relations Strategy is collated under principles developed by the Community Relations Council and Heritage Lottery Fund that are recognised as good practice when exploring the past:
- 1) Start from the historical facts;
 - 2) Recognise the implications and consequences of what happened;
 - 3) Understand that different perceptions and interpretations exist; and
 - 4) Show how events and activities can deepen understanding of the period.

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement, and other Implications

- 4.1 A 3-year good relations action plan is to be developed for the 2019-2022 period at the request of the Executive Office.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 That Members note the content of this report in relation to the level of responses received during the consultation and to explain the rationale for the reference to the report entitled Protestant Migration from the West Bank of Derry/Londonderry 1969-1980, by Dr Ulf Hansson and Dr Helen McLaughlin commissioned by the Pat Finucane Centre.
- 5.2 That Members approve the Draft Good Relations Audit, Strategy 2018-21 and Action Plan.

Background Papers

Appendix 1: Bibliography

Appendix 2: Consultation

Mins Refs: HC211/18; HC250/18