

Good Relations Strategy 2018 – 23 and Action Plan	11th September 2018
To: The Leisure and Development Committee For decision	

Linkage to Council Strategy 2015-2019	
Strategic Theme	Resilient, Healthy and engaged communities
Outcome	Council will work to develop and promote cohesive and stable communities throughout the Borough.
Lead Officer	Head of Service Community and Culture Good Relations Manager
Cost: (If applicable)	£58,637 net cost (plus £175,902 contribution from TEO)

The purpose of this report is to present the Good Relations Strategy 2018 – 23 for approval following an additional 8 week consultation on the draft strategy.

Background & Overview

Under Council's Section 75 (2) duty of the Northern Ireland Act 'to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group', Council may avail of the Executive Office's 'District Councils Good Relations Programme'. The Programme resources local authorities (75% of total costs) to deliver a local Good Relations strategy in each of the 11 district councils.

Draft Strategy Review

The Draft Good Relations Strategy 2018–23 and action plan was presented to Council on 12th June 2018. In accordance with Council's policy development process, an additional eight week consultation period was then completed. The deadline for responses was Friday 24th August.

The strategy was screened in accordance with Council's Equality Scheme. The strategy and action plan aim to promote better relationships between people from different political, religious/faith and ethnic backgrounds. In respect of all of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations or disability equality duties, the strategy was deemed to have no adverse/negative impacts and therefore should be screened out. No responses were received from any Section 75 specific groups. In implementing the strategy and action plan, Council will make where necessary, arrangements and reasonable adjustments to ensure inclusion.

Council received one response to the strategy. The respondent welcomed the strategy as a positive opportunity for those within the Borough to engage in Good Relations, however did provide specific comments / suggestions in relation to the action plan, attached at **Annex A**. The consultation response, alongside input from other practitioners and key stakeholders will be considered for both current and future design and implementation of the action plan.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Council approve the Good Relations Strategy for 2018 – 23 and that the action plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to meet the needs of local communities. Following final approval, the strategy will then be published, implemented and monitored.

Written consultation responses to Good Relations Strategy 2018 – 2023

Consultee	Consultee comments (synopsis thereof)*	Council Response
<p>Ballymoney Community resource Centre</p>	<p>Welcomes the strategy and sees it as a positive opportunity for those within the Borough to engage in GR.</p> <p>Comments are focused mainly on the GR action plan. Mainly that the strategy document at times cites specific projects and community work, however at other junctures approaches/recommendations are vague.</p> <p>The comments suggest that where the strategy mentions there would be input from relevant local organisations, the plan needs to state clearly who this refers to or otherwise maintain a generic referencing throughout.</p> <p>The need for cross community work as highlighted within the strategy needs to be reflected within the delivery of the action plan.</p> <p>Suggestion that the (community) networks can provide examples of Good practice projects.</p>	<p>Accepted – An updated audit of GR activity and provision within the Borough provided a comprehensive needs assessment that presented the basis for the New Good Relations Strategy and identified opportunities to ensure that a strategy was developed on needs based analysis of Good Relations locally.</p> <p>Accepted – Some projects within the action plan are developmental in order to meet the needs of the specific target groups. GR staff currently working with local communities to develop the projects.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted – GR staff aim to ensure that projects are delivered on a cross community basis however there is recognition that some communities are at different stages in terms of Good Relations engagements and therefore this will be taken into consideration when delivering projects.</p> <p>Noted – as part of the 18/19 business plan, Community networks (including BCRC) along with other community and statutory organisations have been invited to participate in an advisory forum that can assist the GR team in ensuring delivery of GR is targeted to meet local changing needs.</p>

ANNEX A

	<p>The need to support existing Good Practice projects being delivered rather than “quick fire responses” to problem areas.</p> <p>Suggestions provided on how Council can work collaboratively or complement existing projects.</p> <p>Suggestions that specific Peace IV programmes need to be mentioned.</p> <p>Networks and other Community Relations Council core funded organisations can work to complement the Council’s GR programme.</p> <p>Comments / remarks on action plan.</p> <p>Additional comments: Important that action plan quantifies results.</p> <p>Change date of action plan to 19-21</p>	<p>Noted – as above</p> <p>Accepted – Council recognises that collaboration is key for the successful delivery of GR programmes. GR staff will ensure that the programme is complimentary to other GR activity being delivered within the Borough and will collaborate with other GR service providers to ensure the best use of resources while also ensuring that there is no duplication of services.</p> <p>Response – Council will continue to work with the participants from ALL Peace IV projects and provide support to all groups and individuals on issues that are identified as needing additional support after the Peace programme is complete.</p> <p>Noted – The audit of GR services that already exist within the Borough was carried out and therefore the GR action plan was developed to ensure that there is no duplication of service provision and to ensure that services and resources are targeted where there is identified gaps in service provision.</p> <p>Action plan is reviewed on an annual basis to meet the changing needs of local communities. Valid comments / suggestions will be taken on board when future planning.</p> <p>TEO require Outcome based accountability and Council must comply with the requirements for TEO funding. Baseline measures and % increase / decrease are the key priority for TEO and Council.</p> <p>Response – The outline action plan within the consultation document forms the foundation of the 5 year plan. Project</p>
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ANNEX A

	Willing to meet to discuss response.	development and implementation has already begun for 2018-19 and is approved by the TEO. The action plan is reviewed on an annual basis and changes to projects are made when necessary to meet the needs within local area. Many of the points highlighted within the response have already been addressed in developing the projects for 2018/19. GR Manager will meet to discuss projects.
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**a copy of the complete consultation response is available on request*