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### **Minutes of the PEACE III Review Panel Meeting**

Wednesday 12 May 2010, 12:00  
Park Inn Hotel, Belfast

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In Attendance:	Pat Colgan	SEUPB (Chair)
	Matt Donnelly	Panel Member
	Peter Archdale	Panel Member
	Niamh Kenny	Independent
	Sarah Reid	SEUPB (Secretariat)
	Christine Markey	SEUPB (Secretariat)

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#### **1. Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **2. Agenda**

The Agenda was agreed.

#### **3. Register of Interests/Conflicts of Interest**

None

#### **4. Review**

**The Review of International School for Peace Studies (ISPS) Studies  
Northern Ireland Regional Programme (Ref 005651)**

*Representatives from ISPS and the Joint Technical Secretariat (JTS) were invited to enter the room.*

In Attendance:	Glen Barr	(ISPS)
	Matt Smyth	(Maydown Ebrington Group)
	Howard Keery	(JTS)
	David Clarke	(JTS)

After introductions, the Chair outlined the procedures to be followed.

The Project promoters were then invited to outline the reasons for their request for a review.

The representatives for ISPS presented their case. The main points included:

- There is 40 years experience of working in the community and the project demonstrates what is needed on the ground.
- The volume of participants is vast.
- The project will help get participants to the point of solving their own problems.
- The organisation has secured a major contract with the North East Cluster group as specialists in international peace studies; this is evidence of the groups capability.
- The participants being targeted were made clear in the application.
- The group does not rely on government grants as stated in the assessment.
- There is complementarity at the local level through specifically dealing with community relations officers.
- In relation to the lack of a cross-border partner, the organisation has many links with groups in the border region but they are a stand alone specialist organisation that has to keep their clients information confidential therefore it would be impossible to have a delivery partner.

*The Chair thanked the Project promoters for outlining their points and invited the JTS to respond.*

Representatives from the JTS made the following points:

- They gave a background of the Strand and the processes to date.
- Projects had to be strategic in focus and implemented on a regional basis.
- Twenty-two applications were received within the call, all applications were initially assessed and allocated an indicative score, if below 58 as this project was, it went directly to Steering Committee.
- The Steering Committee recognised a number of strengths including the fit with the overall objectives of PEACE III; the project would contribute strongly to addressing sectarianism; and the applicant had significant experience in delivering funding.
- The Steering Committee also identified areas to improve including: it failed to demonstrate fit with activity at a local level and it was unclear how it would impact on a regional basis; failed to demonstrate sufficient scope as a project implemented across the entire eligible area; it was largely a continuation of a previous activity; failed to adequately demonstrate the need; it lacked evidence of a cross-border partner; and it did not demonstrate value for money.
- The Steering Committee acknowledged that it may be more suitable under the Local Action Plans.
- The promoter has subsequently successfully gained £¼m from the North East Partnership.

*The Chair thanked the JTS for their comments.*

A Review Panel Member referred to the funding from the North East Cluster and asked why the Steering Committee had said that the local element was weak.

The JTS stated that at the time the project was received the application to the cluster had not been submitted and it was not clear if there were linkages at the local level.

The project promoter highlighted that the application to the cluster was made in January 2010 after this project had been assessed. He highlighted that the group had worked with community relations development officers who are now developing their own bids for funding in relation to peace and reconciliation.

The Chair asked if the group needed a cross-border partner to co-manage the project or just needed to show linkages.

The JTS stated that the project needed to show evidence in the application of a partner that would also be delivering the project. There was a requirement or expectation that there would be a broader partnership than those put forward in the application.

The Project Promoters stated that groups in the Border Region could not deliver this project, the group were in contact and did have partners in the border region and those partners would become more involved in Steering Groups within the project.

A Review Panel Member referred to sustainability and asked what the JTS and Steering Committee understood by the term activity that they had used in their assessment report.

The JTS stated that the activity would be the taking of participants to the Messines, not the long term viability of the organisation. The trips to the Messines would stop as soon as the money stopped and therefore it was not sustainable.

The project promoters stated that they expect more investment in the next 2-3 years which will enable them to continue to run the programme, the project promoters will also continue to look for funding. The project promoters then referred to the groups involved highlighting that they had set up a contract with Fermanagh, Omagh and Ballymoney which identifies the buy in and the need for this project. The project promoters highlighted the progress that they had made over the years.

The Chair highlighted that the project promoters had demonstrated their ability to achieve reconciliation.

A Review Panel Member why they were seeking funding when the demand for their services was so high. They also asked what the specific target for the project was.

The project promoters stated that the target was volume, they wanted to involve as many people as possible and the PEACE III fund is the only fund that enables this. He noted that he would get money in future years to keep the project going. He also noted that there was a major problem in relation to young people not going through reconciliation processes and this project would take them through that.

A Review Panel member asked what was different about this project from the one previously funded.

The project promoter stated that there was very little difference. They were developing more techniques and would be offering training after the visits to the Messines.

The Chair clarified that the training was not part of this particular project.

A Review Panel member asked what evaluation would be used to assess the effectiveness of the project and what they would be evaluating.

The project promoter stated that there would be an internal evaluation of each element within the programme then an overall external evaluation at the end. They would be evaluating the effect, changes in perceptions and the possibility of building new programmes at the community level.

The JTS stated that the Steering Committee did not have a problem with the reconciliation element which was reflected in the scoring. He noted that the

Steering Committee felt that it was more of the same thing and the training referred to earlier was not part of this project. He also highlighted that there were other applications with similar type activities.

A Review Panel Member stated that the young participants outlined by the project promoters earlier was not evident in the application form.

The project promoter referred to the cross-cutting theme of poverty and stated that the issue of poverty cannot be solved until there is a combined workforce in the community, where employment is accessible to all, this will help people move forward and accept this principal.

A Review Panel member asked for more information in terms of research.

The project promoters stated that the group holds two conferences a year, which includes a wide range of stakeholders from government representatives to community workers. At last year's conference they all stated that a coherent movement was needed to be taken forward collectively and it was agreed that ISPS was the only organisation that could do this.

The Chair clarified that the fundamental reason for it being turned down was because it was not innovative and it was relative to other bids.

A Review Panel Member referred to the emphasis on a cross-border partner stating that this was not a requirement of the programme.

The JTS stated that a guidance note was issued to the applicant in relation to the call which clearly identifies that this had to be implemented on a regional basis across the whole region and therefore a cross-border partner was required.

A Review Panel member asked if this theme can be isolated from the whole programme.

The Chair explained that a target was set in the programme to achieve 30% cross-border partnerships, and to ensure that target could be achieved the regional elements were put in place.

The applicant stated that it was evident that there was a split of participants across the eligible region.

The JTS confirmed that the decision to reject was due to a lack of innovation and other projects with similar activities. The Steering Committee recognised that society has moved on as a result of projects such as this, and were therefore looking for more dimensions.

The Chair asked the JTS if the project promoters were aware of what was required.

The JTS confirmed that there was an initial expression of interest where the JTS discussed the strengths and weaknesses of possible projects and would have emphasised the key factors required. The JTS did make it as clear as possible. The idea was there, but that it was not communicated effectively on the application. The JTS also re-emphasised that they need to meet the threshold of 65% in three separate areas, no scores were below the evident band but they were in the lower end.

The project promoters stated that this project is doing what is needed on the ground and is endorsed by a variety of stakeholders. There is a need for this project because there are still problems on the ground.

A Review Panel member asked what would be the impact if this funding was not received.

The project promoters stated that it will continue on a smaller scale, the capacity is there with other contracts. He noted that this is the only fund that allows overseas travel and this is essential to the project.

The Chair asked the Project promoters and the JTS if they were happy with the way the Review Panel had been conducted, and if they felt they had been given the opportunity to convey all the main points of their argument. Both the Project promoters and the JTS confirmed that they were happy with the process.

*The Project promoters and the JTS exited the room.*

The Review Panel discussed the application and information presented and noted:

- The lack of an identified cross-border partner was an issue.
- Additionality was an issue.
- Sustainability is a risk.
- The strategic nature required was not demonstrated.
- The targeting of participants was not clear.
- The project is an excellent one and the value was recognised.

The Review Panel concluded that in light of the information provided and the arguments put forward the Steering Committee decision was not unreasonable. The Panel also acknowledged that the proper decision making procedures had been followed.

The Review Panel recognised both the value of the project and the significant contribution which the organisation has made towards peace and reconciliation. The Panel is of the belief that there is potential for the project under activities within the local action plans, implemented by the Council Clusters and would encourage ISPS to work closely with the Joint Technical Secretariat to identify opportunities in forthcoming calls for applications and to reapply to the PEACE III Programme.

## **5. Review**

**The Review of University of Ulster (UoU) – Shared Memories Project (Ref – 003013)**

*Representatives from UoU and the Consortium of Pobal and Community Relations Council were invited to enter the room.*

In Attendance:	Maurice Mulvenna	(UoU)
	Cahal McLaughlin	(UoU)
	Patricia Kearney	(UoU)
	Chris Brown	(UoU)
	Colette Nulty	(Consortium)
	Kelan McClelland	(Consortium)
	Pauline Perry	(Consortium)

After introductions, the Chair outlined the procedures to be followed.

The Project promoters were then invited to outline the reasons for their request for a review.

The representatives for UoU presented their case. The main points included:

- The project is very innovative and is not being completed by any other organisation.
- The promoters have many years experience in dealing with victims and survivors
- The project involves a combination of old and new media and the promoters have strong links with the old media identified through letters of support.
- They are dealing with victims and survivors in a new and different way to other groups.
- They do not agree with the description of 'passive' and stated that the nature of work makes it much more engaging.
- The project is designed to be sustainable which is ensured through the participants taking ownership of their stories.
- It will be an interactive experience for end users, contributors and will have significant educational aspects.
- They felt that the score for promoting reconciliation and good relations should have been higher.

- The score for need should have been higher as they uncovered a need for stories to be told, especially those that are seldom told. The differences between the scores for need and value for money seemed disproportionate.
- There would be a potential therapeutic benefit.
- They would be capturing a plethora of topics and events.
- Participants would be structuring their own stories, label them themselves which, with the memory marking, allows other people to engage with these stories.

*The Chair thanked the Project promoters for outlining their points and invited the Consortium to respond.*

Representatives from the Consortium made the following points:

- They gave a background of the Strand and the processes to date.
- The Steering Committee for this Strand were looking for projects that would work throughout the whole eligible region; reach all sections of society; maximise the people engaged; have a clear understanding of the conflict; experience in story collecting; use a bottom-up approach; have appropriate technological standards; and collaborative approaches with media and IT partners.
- The project failed to meet three of the threshold scores of 65% under priority and theme, efficiency and effectiveness, and the overall score.
- The Steering Committee felt the project lacked demonstration of promoting reconciliation.
- There was evidence of large amount of stories being collected but there was no support identified for those people supplying the stories.
- A more focused project might be able to gather the same amount of information.
- The Steering Committee felt that the methodology was potentially weak and concerns were raised in relation to their method being transferred to a much larger scale than they had previously undertaken.
- There was no evidence of whether or not the victims and survivors would want to tell their stories.

- There was not enough evidence supplied in addressing all the needs on a local and regional level and across the different types of victims and survivors.
- The Steering Committee recognised the track record and expertise of the promoters and noted that it was a good project but that there were concerns around the reality and achievability.
- The Steering Committee questioned whether the peace and reconciliation impact of the project was worth the money requested.

A Review Panel Member asked who would own the material that would be produced and asked about the legal implications involved.

The project promoters stated that the UoU would co-own the material with the participants. They also noted that the participants would be giving informed consent to tell their stories and would be aware of legal implications. The UoU code of ethics would be used.

The Consortium stated that they would need to make sure that the proper ethics and support is available.

A Review Panel member asked if the UoU's protocol for this issue had been satisfactory and the Consortium confirmed that it has not been an issue.

A Review Panel member asked about the costs for keeping the database live.

The project promoters stated that the Vice Chancellor had agreed that the university would sustain this.

A Review Panel member noted that the carbon footprint was significant and noted that the project was being implemented in a traditional way of face to face meetings.

The project promoter stated that they accepted that the carbon footprint was high but with previous experience they are aware that to engage people, the

promoters have to physically go and meet them. They highlighted that the intention was to move to an electronic format in the form of a portal that can be accessed by all.

A Review Panel member stated that the breadth of what they are trying to achieve did not come across in the application.

The project promoters stated that engaging with people on a face to face basis at the local level demonstrated the projects worth.

The Chair asked how the Consortium felt about the expertise and carbon footprint issues.

The Consortium stated that this was not an issue as the project had met the minimum threshold for the cross-cutting themes.

The Consortium highlighted that the Steering Committee expressed concern around the methodology and whether the participants would want to engage.

The project promoters stated that other funding programmes were very happy with what had been achieved in a similar project with prison officers, a difficult group to tell their stories, but the UoU were able to get stories from them.

The Chair clarified that the issue was with the translation of the methodology into a larger scale project.

The project promoters stated that there is flexibility in their methodology, and their experience is to use key strategies such as working with representative groups and advertising for people to tell their stories.

The Chair referred to the 5,000 participants and noted that this was a significant undertaking and asked if £3m was worth it.

A Review Panel Member also asked if the project really needed 5,000 participants.

The project promoters stated that the number came from the timeframe and resources that the promoters could commit to the project.

A Review Panel member stated that the same results could be achieved with much less participants.

The Chair clarified that the Consortium had stated that it could be put forward on a smaller scale.

The project promoters stated that they wanted to reach as many people as possible to help in building reconciliation. The promoters wanted their project to be as inclusive as possible and maximise their reach which is why they had so many participants. They noted that it was about getting the ball rolling and then more people would begin to add to it, it is a project where no one is turned away.

A Review Panel member noted that the project would have fixed costs and running costs and asked what the breakeven point was, i.e., what is the minimum number of participants needed.

The project promoters stated that anything fewer than 1,000 would be worthless.

A Review Panel member asked in terms of reconciliation if it would be more appropriate to conduct fewer interviews and create more work with the individuals participating such as workshops after events and asked if that was the thinking of the Steering Committee.

The Consortium clarified that this was the case.

The project promoter stated that they have taken a slightly different approach which includes letting the participants structure their own stories and giving them

their own space. Groups without a voice would have the opportunity to tell their story and this would help victims to move away from victimhood.

A Review Panel member asked how the promoters would ensure the groups were targeted on a cross-border, cross-sectional basis.

The project promoters stated that they had built in processes of periodic review to highlight these issues.

The Chair asked if the reason the Steering Committee rejected the application was because of concerns with the transference of methodology and the approaches to reconciliation and the value for money against that.

The Project Promoters stated that they felt it was unreasonably marked down in a number of areas and reiterated their issue with the use of the term passive. They also referred to the difference in scoring between need and value for money.

The Consortium noted that value for money was broken down into different areas which is why score here is higher than need.

The Consortium also highlighted that the term passive was used in terms of reconciliation and that the project did not reflect a challenging element of moving people forward.

The Chair asked if the idea of expecting 1-2 flagship projects had been made clear to the project.

The project promoters stated that they were aware of what the Steering Committee were looking for. They then asked how many projects had been approved.

The Consortium highlighted that no projects have been approved to date; seven of those received are currently going through Economic Appraisal.

The Chair asked if broadcasting had been an issue and the Consortium clarified that it had not.

The project promoters stated that the 5,000 participants was within their capacity but they would be open to negotiation to re-visit that, he highlighted that this was an innovative project that no one else was offering.

The Consortium clarified that the term passivity had been over-emphasised. He then noted that the programme will re-open for funding and they are happy to work with the applicants to look at future funding for smaller scale projects.

The Chair asked the Project promoters and the Consortium if they were happy with the way the Review Panel had been conducted, and if they felt they had been given the opportunity to convey all the main points of their argument. Both the Project promoters and the Consortium confirmed that they were happy with the process.

*The Project promoters and the Consortium exited the room.*

The Review Panel discussed the application and information presented and noted:

- This was a good project with lots of professional experience available.
- It was very ambitious.
- There is the possibility of duplication between the stories.
- The project promoters had underestimated the methodology.

The Review Panel concluded that in light of the information provided and the arguments put forward, the Steering Committee decision was not unreasonable. The Panel also acknowledged that the proper decision making procedures had been followed.

The Review Panel fully appreciate the value of the project, but it was felt that in the context of what was asked for within the call under this strand of Theme 1.2, the decision of the Steering Committee was reasonable. The Panel is of the

belief that there is potential for activities within the project and therefore would like to encourage the applicant to work closely with the Consortium or Joint Technical Secretariat to identify opportunities in forthcoming calls for applications and to reapply to the PEACE III Programme.

## **6. Conclusion**

The Chair thanked the Review Panel members for attending and informed them that he would write, on behalf of the Review Panel, to inform both project applicants and the Consortium of the Review Panel's decisions. He also stated that the minutes from the meeting would be e-mailed to Review Panel members in due course for their approval.