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

Wednesday 18 November 2009, 10:00  
SEUPB, 11 Kevlin Road, Omagh

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In Attendance:	Pat Colgan	SEUPB (Chair)
	Denis Galway	Panel Member
	Michael Hughes	Panel Member
	Adrian McNamee	SEUPB (Secretariat)
	Christine Markey	SEUPB (Secretariat)

Apologies:	Maire Hunt	Independent Member
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**1. Agree Agenda**

The agenda was agreed.

**2. Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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

None

**4. Reviews**

**The Review of South East Fermanagh Foundation – The Nechama Project  
(Ref – 001499)**

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

In Attendance:	Kenny Donaldson	SEFF
	Brian Fegan	Tyrone West Phoenix Group
	Alan Madil	Fermanagh Phoenix Group
	Mark Bresland	Omagh Support and Self Help Group
	Jim Dennison	Consortium
	Colette Nulty	Consortium
	Donnacha McSorley	Consortium
Apologies:	Jeff Barr	Koram Centre

After introductions, the Chair stated that due to unforeseen circumstances the Independent Member could not attend. The Chair gave the project promoters the option to either re-schedule the meeting or go ahead with three members. The project promoters exited the room to consider the offer and decided they were happy to go ahead. The Chair thanked the promoters for their decision and noted that the outcome of the meeting would be taken by the three panel members in attendance. The Chair then outlined the procedures to be followed. The Project applicants were then invited to outline the reasons for their request for a review.

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

- ) The Review is based on the grounds that the decision taken was unreasonable.
- ) The Economic Appraisers and the Consortium had misunderstood and overlooked aspects of the application.
- ) There is no duplication, it was a replication of services with the Phoenix Project.
- ) There seemed to be a misunderstanding of the membership of SEFF, 65% were victims and survivors that are normal civilians.
- ) The application was not assessed as a stand alone project.

- ) The Nechama and Phoenix projects would have different target groups.
- ) Nechama would target the South West regions whereas Phoenix was Northern Ireland wide.
- ) The Economic Appraisers interacted with SEFF and all budget figures have been provided, the Economic appraisers stated that they were content that there was no duplication of services.
- ) There was negligible acknowledgement of the track record of the project partners.
- ) There was little acknowledgement of the GP Primary Care Model.
- ) The value for money score seemed very low.
- ) The Economic Appraisal recognised a need for the project.
- ) There is no other funding like this in the region through PEACE III.
- ) SEFF have a monitoring system, a social impact tracker to ensure that there is no duplication.
- ) There were inaccuracies in the Consortium's assessment on pages 11 and 16.

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

A representative from the Consortium made the following points:

- ) The aims and objectives are good and it fits with the criteria of the programme.
- ) The score of 63.5 appears to be a marginal score, however, the project failed considerably in efficiency and effectiveness.
- ) The Consortium felt that it was clear that there was duplication.
- ) The application was assessed in its own right but it still had to be cross-referenced with the other large scale bid. Large elements were the same as the Phoenix proposal.
- ) The Economic Appraisal flagged up concerns with value for money.
- ) The Consortium had offered the applicant the option to merge elements of this project with the Phoenix project, the applicant did not respond.
- ) The consultation with the victim's services is reflected on page 12 of the assessment and this was not a determining factor.

- ) Concerns had been raised over the services offered by the Lead Partner for two large projects.
- ) Concerns were raised in relation to the outputs and the reality of the Lead Partner being able to implement two large projects.
- ) There are other organisations in the region that are providing the services.
- ) It fell down on value for money and achievability of outcomes.

*The Chair thanked the Consortium for their comments. The Chair then asked if the Review Panel had any questions.*

A Review Panel Member asked if the assessment had been undertaken on the revised budget of £1.29million. The Consortium replied that it had.

A Review Panel Member asked if the same people that assessed the application had provided feedback to the Economic Appraisers.

The Consortium stated it would have been a manager or development officer that was not involved in the assessment or Steering Committee and the Chair highlighted that the feedback had been positive.

The project promoter stated that the ethos of the Nechama project was very different to the Phoenix Project. He noted that there are still members of the community that have difficulty in working with others. Nechama is about the next level, bridging the needs for victims and the Victims Commission had been supportive.

A Review Panel Members asked why the applicant had not considered one project.

The project promoter stated that this cause issues due to the nature of the Phoenix project and its focus on the ex-members of the security forces. The Phoenix project is working with ex-security force members and they would not engage with the partners involved in the Nechama project. The two boards will work together to bring the two projects into line with each other by 2011. The

applicant also stated that SEFF had been asked to act as Lead Partner for both projects as the capacity does not exist in any other organisation.

A Review Panel Member noted the different amounts and asked if different figures had been used in working up the application.

The project promoters stated that they provided both an initial amount and a scaled down amount. He noted that at times figures were incorrect due to time pressures although these had been rectified.

A Review Panel Member asked if there was capacity within SEFF to manage the project and guarantee efficiency.

The applicant stated the project board and partners will implement the project.

A Review Panel Member asked why the Consortium were keen to merge elements of both projects into one.

The Consortium wanted to see synergies with the service level provision. They accept that different participants will be targeted in each project but services could have been provided at a core level.

The Chair asked the project promoters if it would be possible to have a single technical team to deal with the finance and administration.

The project promoters stated that interaction in the early stages depends on how people are perceived in an area. They noted that the beneficiaries of PEACE I are still not fully healed. The ex-security forces have engaged with the programme at a late stage and trust needs to be established before they can engage with other groups. They also highlighted the current situation with dissident threats which is making it more difficult to work in these areas.

A Review Panel Member asked the Consortium what information they had been looking for which the applicant had not provided.

The Consortium stated that at the debrief meeting they had discussed various options with the applicant including the possibility of merging elements of the Nechama project with Phoenix. The applicant needed to discuss this and the Consortium did get a response. He also stated that the Consortium would work with the applicant when the call re-opens.

A Review Panel Member also asked if the services provided in the Nechama project were the same as those in the Phoenix project.

The Consortium stated that this was the case. While the target groups might have been different the outputs were the same in both projects.

The project promoters noted that while the outputs seem the same Nechama is South West focussed and Phoenix is regional.

A Review Panel Member asked the project promoters three questions:

- He noted that there were other organisations that provided the advice support strategy and asked why the Citizens Advice Bureau was a non-starter?
- He asked what skills would be left behind when the project was finished to bring this to another level.
- He stated that peace and reconciliation appeared to be an add-on and asked what the project will do to allow people to move to a different stage?

The project promoters responded:

- The perception of the Citizens Advice Bureau was a problem. Perceptions are very negative and beneficiaries of the group would not be comfortable. Training provided is CAB accredited and so they are involved at that level. He noted that there will be efforts to engage with Service Level Agreements with the CABs.
- The GP Primary Care Model is a strong factor, the Health Minister, Head of Mental Health and the Western Health and Social Care are all supportive. This is a holistic service where GPs can refer their patients to the befriending

services. Nechama is trying to reach the hidden people that have not accessed the services before.

- The project actively looked for partners that did not have the same ethos; there will be interaction with all organisations in terms of training with equal opportunities observed and thus strong peace and reconciliation.

The Consortium stated that the peace and reconciliation element was strong.

A Review Panel Member asked if CAB offices across the region had been considered. He also asked what was being done to target the hidden people.

The project promoters stated that they had similar concerns with the CAB offices in other areas as well. He did note that CAB have recognised this problem and have tried to resolve this through staff appointments. He referred to the hidden people and noted that this will be achieved on a one to one basis.

A Review Panel Member stated that the Access NI checks will either contribute to the project beginning on time or being stalled.

The project promoters stated that the checks are in place and they have attempted to put the work in place already.

A Review Panel Member asked how the applicant arrived at the precise figures or participants and if that included the hidden people?

The project promoters stated that the figures were arrived at through questionnaires and a Needs Analysis. These had considered hidden participants. There is also an element built into the project to deal with people coming forward that have not been foreseen. There are internal monitoring procedures to prioritise people that have not accessed services.

The Chair stated that as Lead Partner the onus is on SEFF for the administration, governance and management of the project. SEFF are solely responsible for the monies and asked if SEFF had considered this?

The project promoters stated that SEFF had been asked to undertake the role of Lead Partner because they are widely acknowledged as being able to deliver projects albeit on a smaller scale. The staff are competent and salaries are set so that they can deliver the project.

The Consortium stated that their key concern was of the cash flow, the ability to manage the level of funding and the capacity to deliver both projects.

The Chair asked about the applicant's status with their bank.

The project promoter stated that they had had tentative discussions but that the bank felt this was reasonable enough although they have no formal letter confirming this.

A Review Panel Member highlighted that SEUPB will approach the Lead Partner if anything goes wrong.

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 applicants and the Consortium exited the room.*

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

- ) There were concerns around the management capacity of the project.
- ) A scaled down project would work better.
- ) There were concerns over their willingness to engage with other service providers.
- ) A core administrative team could deliver both projects.

- ) There appeared to be a duplication of services between Nechama and Phoenix
- ) The value for money was a key concern.

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

The Panel recognised the considerable effort made in preparing this application and both the strategic importance and valuable impact of the activities contained within the Nechama application. In order to maximise the benefits of such activities and to address the concerns raised over value for money and additionality, the Panel has recommended that the project promoters work with the Consortium to develop a proposal either as part of the Phoenix Project or as a new application that may be considered in a future call for applications in Theme 1.2.

#### **5. Any Other Business**

None

#### **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.