



## **European Union**

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

Tuesday 01 November 2011, 1.00pm  
SEUPB Offices, Belfast

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In Attendance:	Pat Colgan	SEUPB (Chair)
	Michael Hughes	MC Panel Member
	John Anderson	MC Panel Member
	Audrey McKeown	Independent Member
	Sarah Reid	SEUPB (Secretariat)
	Anna Slotwinska	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 Charter NI – Engaging the Past – Building a Future**

*Representatives from Charter NI and the Consortium (CRC) were invited to enter the room.*

In Attendance: Frankie Gallagher, Charter NI  
Sean O'Boyle, Partner  
Goran Mirkovic, Partner  
Martin Kelly, Partner

Joe Blake, Partner  
Jim Donaghy, Partner  
Naomi Doak, Consortium (CRC)  
Gordon Walker, Consortium (CRC)

After introductions, the Chair outlined the procedures to be followed. The Chair then invited the Project promoters to outline the reasons for their request for a review.

The representatives from Charter NI presented their case. The main points included:

- Project fits in to PEACE III Programme.
- The Promoters felt that the project selection criteria and scoring was procedurally inappropriate.
- In setting the 'new' criteria the Steering Committee discriminated against the weakest.
- Not aware of different scoring criteria, and of the two stages of assessment process.
- This process has prevented a section of community engaging in the Programme.
- This is not a single identity project and has been underscored because of an inadequate process of desktop assessment.
- If this project fails to go through it will be a missed opportunity for this community because the application could not be scored holistically.
- If it fails to go through it will miss an opportunity that has not existed for forty years.
- This project addresses reconciliation, homophobia, sectarianism and racism.
- Project's experience not taken into account.

*The Chair thanked the project promoters for their presentation and invited the Consortium to respond.*

Representatives from the Consortium made the following points:

- This was a purely desk-based assessment conducted on the information provided.
- The project achieved an overall score for PEACE III Programme/Priority Objectives of 52.5%, therefore did not progress to the second stage of the assessment process.
- From the Steering Committee's point of view, the actions presented in the application did not fit with the Indicative Actions outlined in the Guidance Notes.

- Not clear in the evidence provided how the proposed interventions would contribute towards the Programme and Priority Theme objectives of Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past.
- Not clear information provided on how the proposed project activities namely, driving lessons, archery and befriending will effectively challenge attitudes towards sectarianism or contribute to the overall Theme of Acknowledging and Dealing with the Past.
- There is no clear evidence how the actions within the workplan will promote peace and reconciliation.
- There is little detail on the specific purpose of cross –border visits.

*The Chair thanked the Consortium for their comments.*

The Chair asked the Consortium for clarification in relation to whether the project was made aware of the assessment process.

The Consortium noted that they did provide a letter with explanation, which is enclosed in the pack.

The Project Promoters felt that did not give them all the information.

A Review Panel member asked the Consortium to clarify why a different criterion was informed after the call had closed and what they were specifically looking for at first stage of the assessment.

The Consortium stated that each application must provide evidence of how the project contributes to the priority and theme objectives. The second stage of assessment concentrates on value for money and need.

A Review Panel member asked if new scoring was made clear at workshops and Consortium stated that it was not discussed and that they expected all sections to be completed to very high standard.

A Review Panel member noted that it was difficult to see how activities such as driving lessons would contribute to peace and reconciliation.

The Promoters stated that in order to get young people to engage, activities must be created to firstly attract participation which would to enable follow up peace and reconciliation work to take place.

The Chair noted that the project did not provide this information in the application and the promoters agreed that it could have been explained better.

A Review Panel member asked for more information about the cross – border trips, and asked Promoters if they can describe one of these trips in relation to who would participate and the long term benefits.

The Promoters stated that everyone who wishes to be involved can participate which includes those participating in workshops and participants from ethnic communities.

The Consortium noted that the application form needs to be completely explicit. Charter NI is doing extremely good work however an assessor and the Steering Committee can only judge on what is presented in the application.

The Promoters commented that the use of a desktop assessment is unfair to ‘weaker’ groups and that the assessment should include on-site visits which would better demonstrate the impact of their work.

A Review Panel member asked the project for examples of peace building outcomes.

The Promoters stated that the group will develop a better understanding of cross-community relationships. Participants will get the opportunity to learn how to deal with the past and with difficult issues.

A Review Panel member noted that activities are demonstrated well on the project website; however, the paperwork did not convey these activities and asked if they were advised during workshops that certain activities would not be funded.

The Consortium noted that they provided workshops in advance of calls to give an opportunity for organisations to have a one to one meeting with a Development Officer.

The Promoters noted that this was limited to 30 minutes, which was not enough to discuss all issues.

The Consortium stated that the applicant could ask for additional time if necessary. The Consortium also pointed out that applications are scored by one officer. Scoring is then discussed and agreed or amended across 4 development officers. The application is then taken forward to the Steering Committee for a final decision on the score.

The Chair asked if any of the project partners who have extensive experience in writing applications assisted with this application.

The Project promoters stated that some experience was shared at the beginning of the process.

The Project promoters asked the Consortium for clarification on the terminology of scoring.

The Consortium stated that when an assessment is completed and scored, the application is presented to the SC who has the opportunity to reduce or increase the score. In this particular application, the SC agreed with the score and recommended that the project be rejected.

The Project promoters noted that the criteria should not be changed after a call for applications.

The Consortium stated that the criteria remained the same, it has always been a two stage process; the procedure was changed.

The Chair clarified that the project felt that the procedure was unfair and noted that the work of the project is appreciated, however, not fully conveyed in the application.

*The Chair asked for any final statements.*

The Consortium stated that decision was taken based on the information presented in application.

The Project stated that the process was inappropriate and noted if they had been aware of the new process, they would have been better prepared.

The Chair then asked the Project promoters and the Consortium if they were content with the manner in which 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 content with the process.

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

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

- The Project did not meet the programme and priority criteria,
- There were not new criteria set and all the same criteria applied to all applications.
- The Project provided a lot of information in the meeting; however, they did not put this in the application.
- The decision was taken based on the information in the application.
- Not enough evidence of what is a strategic and what is beneficial for this project.

After considerable deliberation, the Review Panel concluded that the Steering Committee decision had not been unreasonable. It also confirmed that there had been no failings in the procedures followed.

The Review Panel agreed that the Steering Committee's decision to reject the application should be upheld.