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**NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE BORDER REGION OF IRELAND
EU PROGRAMME FOR PEACE & RECONCILIATION
(2014 - 2020)**

CCI No: 2014TC16RFPC001

MINUTES MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 18th June 2019

Lough Rynn Estate, Mohill, County Leitrim

Attendance

A list of attendees and apologies is attached at Annex II.

1. Welcome and introduction by Chairperson

The Chair welcomed attendees to this eighth meeting of the PEACE IV Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) 2014-2020.

The Chair explained the PEACE IV PMC has not met in Leitrim in recent years and thanked the hotel and Council for arranging such a beautiful but reasonable venue. The Chair welcomed suggestions on future venues which could accommodate PMC meeting requirements. NICVA offered their offices

The Chair welcomed **EU Commission Desk Officer Tamara Pavlin** to her final meeting after eight years working on the PEACE IV Programme. The Desk Officer is taking extended leave and, on 01 July 2019, will be replaced by her colleague, **Stefan Welin**, also in attendance.

The Chair recorded her gratitude to PMC Member **Denis Leamy of Pobal**, who has left the PEACE Programmes after a number of years to assume a new position, and is replaced by **Paddy McGinn**.

The Chair also thanked Member **Caitlin Connelly**, who has left the NWRA and therefore the PMC.

The Chair welcomed a number of new Members and Advisors to the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC), including;

- **Anne Marie Caulfield of DPER**, who replaces **Gearoid O’Keeffe**;
- **Tim Smith of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions**, who replaces **Pat McCauley**, and;
- **Carol Morrow of the Executive Office NI**.

The Chair provided an update on developments in Programme implementation since the previous PMC meeting on 07 November 2018, as follows;

- Brexit has been delayed until 31 October 2019. The SEUPB is following the political negotiations, and await further news of current talks around restoring the Northern Ireland Executive;
- **The Chair** congratulated newly-elected MEPs in Northern Ireland and the Border Region and welcomed the opportunity to work with them in promoting the Programmes;
- The PEACE IV Programme has received extensive support from all the parties involved to ensure the continuation of the Programme until its conclusion in 2023. This commitment has been included in the Withdrawal Agreement between the UK and the EU. In December 2018, as part of the EU’s contingency planning, the European Commission developed a Regulatory proposal, which was approved by the European Parliament in March 2019.
- As previously communicated, the EU’s Multi Annual Financial Framework budget includes provision for a future PEACE PLUS Programme, which will include INTERREG activity and is supported by the UK and Irish Governments. The SEUPB has begun high-level background work and has a consultation plan in place with an aim to commence consultation at the end of 2019;
- In February 2019, the SEUPB’s Managing Authority (MA) held Project Forecasting training, attended by 165 Lead Partner representatives. The training reflects the prioritisation of effective expenditure and forecasting, with Lead Partners encouraged to forecast, identify and return any unneeded funding for reallocation, and;
- In mid-May 2019, the SEUPB were invited to share the work and value of the PEACE Programmes in Colombia. The Chair outlined the benefits of this knowledge-sharing exercise, and how this reflected so well on the work of the PEACE Programme.

Agree Agenda

The Agenda was adopted.

2. Conflict of Interest

No Conflicts of Interest were declared.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting – 07 November 2018

The DRCD representative requested a minor amendment to the naming of the Department in page seven of the minutes.

The EU Commission Desk Officer requested a minor amendment to the wording around the transfer of funds on page nine.

Pending the requested amendments, the Committee agreed the minutes as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.

The approved minutes will be uploaded to the SEUPB website.

<p>AP 1: Requested amendments to be made to minutes. Minutes to be uploaded to SEUPB website</p>

4. Matters Arising

The Chair outlined two matters arising from the previous meeting, both of which have been resolved.

In addition, **the Chair** drew the Committee's attention to the stands outside the meeting room, displaying quilts created by Leitrim County Council's Stitch and Stories cross-border women's project.

5. Update on Programme Implementation

The MA Director introduced the Programme Implementation paper and provided a detailed presentation, making the following main points:

- The SEUPB attended the Annual Review Meeting with the EU Commission on 31 January 2019, providing a mid-term update on the PEACE IV Programme;
- The 2018 Performance Framework output targets have been achieved;
- The Steering Committee met on 12 and 13 December 2018 to assess applications within the Shared Spaces objective, which is now overcommitted at a total value of €59.4m;
- At the Lead Partner Forecasting event in February, projects were asked to forecast their expenditure for the remaining project cycle against outputs and assumptions, and declare and return any unused funds in order to maximise expenditure elsewhere in the Programme;
- In March 2019, SJC Consultancy was appointed to conduct the Shared Education impact evaluation, and is working closely with the Managing Authority to ensure delivery;
- On 22 March 2019, two new calls were released under Action 4.2: Building Positive Relations- Regional; Building Peace through Emotional Resilience and Building Community Cohesion through Social Enterprise;
- The technical specification for the Peace Platform has been approved by CPD and will open for tenders on 20 June. The Platform is an important tool in recording the legacy of Peace activity in the region;
- **The MA Director** asked the Committee to encourage tenders to the Platform from suitably qualified organisations; the link to the applications on <https://etendersni.gov.uk> and <https://www.etenders.gov.ie> will be forwarded following the meeting;
- The MA is working with INTERACT to refine the current system and discuss requirements for the PEACE PLUS Programme;
- The Programme is committed to the value of €269 million, or 99% commitment;
- The 2019 N+3 target has been overachieved by €0.53m, with forecasted total overachievement of €22.47m. Assuming projections are on target, this represents 53% achievement of the 2020 N+3 target of €43.1 million;

- Member States have, in principle, approved an overcommitment level of 105% across both Programmes. Taking pending proposals, new calls and slippage into consideration, PEACE IV commitment is anticipated around 99.9%. This remains under continual review;
- Think People has been appointed to conduct a review of the SEUPB's current training provision and suggest innovative solutions;
- Work on the third and final report of the Implementation Evaluation will commence in autumn 2019. An update on the SEUPB's progress against the Evaluation recommendations has been provided in today's papers;
- The Implementation Evaluation and the three Impact Evaluation consultants are each required to hold a mid-term stakeholder conference. Queen's University and RSM are collaborating in a joint conference (Children and Young People, Victims and Survivors, Local Authority Action Plans, and Regional projects) and the PMC will be issued with an invitation in due course, and;
- **The MA Director** presented survey data on the result indicators for Specific Objectives three and four, which has been received in recent days and has not been subject to analysis by NISRA.

The EU Commission representative made the following comments;

- Thanked **the MA Director** for his presentation and progress report;
- Agreed with **the Chair's** comments on the strong position of the Programme and the need to focus on expenditure and drawdown;
- Requested clarification on the commitment figures in the Implementation paper, which report ERDF plus match funding, against those reported in the Annual Implementation Report (AIR). The representative sought assurance from the Managing Authority on the accuracy of the data in the AIR, as this data will inform the Performance Framework;
- Congratulated the SEUPB on the achievement around the Shared Spaces objective, which previously represented a significant risk;
- Welcomed the inclusion of project examples in the progress report as a tangible measure of impact;
- Requested further detail on the Victims and Survivors Service advocacy research projects;
- Noted the archaeological findings behind the delays in the Leitrim County Council Local Action Plan;

- Welcomed the update on progress against the Implementation Evaluation recommendations, and the collaborative PEACE Conference in autumn as an opportunity to bring together expertise to examine lessons learned to maximise impact in current and future Programmes;
- Commended the inclusion of N+3 updates in the Implementation paper, and;
- Noted the issues with the eMS system, inviting the SEUPB to formally notify the EU Commission if necessary.

The MA Director explained that the figures in the AIR are inclusive of ERDF, match funding and other public expenditure, where the Implementation paper lists ERDF and match funding only. The SEUPB will meet with **the EU Commission representative** to agree a narrative going forward, and will submit a proposal to finalise the AIR by the end of the week. The Managing Authority will continue to engage with the EU Commission to ensure reporting within the SFC and PMC are consistent.

The EU Commission representative suggested a Certifying Authority review of the AIR figures, which appear significantly higher than those reported in the Implementation paper.

The DoF representative made the following comments;

- Welcomed the achievement of the Performance Framework milestones;
- Commended the SEUPB for responding to the needs of applicants to the Emotional Resilience and Community Cohesion Regional calls and ensuring a better quality of application by extending the deadline;
- Agreed with the prudent approach to overcommitment and forecasting in maximising expenditure;
- Welcomed progress on the Peace Platform and the opportunities it presents, and;
- Stated that, in the absence of a NI Executive, the DoF are in the preliminary stages of Peace Plus planning and consultation with the Northern Ireland Accountable Departments to define their policy interests.

The EU Commission representative outlined the importance of clarity and transparency in selecting programme content based on the objective needs of the region, and hence effective management of expectations in conducting any scoping exercise for PEACE PLUS.

The DoF representative noted **the EU Commission representative's** comments and outlined the need for the scoping exercise at this time against the high profile of the PEACE PLUS Programme and the possibility of a resumed Executive.

Monitoring Committee Members made the following comments;

- Agreed with the early approach to PEACE PLUS Programme planning, and advised the SEUPB to approach social partner organisations in their preliminary consultations;
- Pointed out the need for a clear definition of the parameters of the PEACE PLUS Programme in providing focus and understanding among potential stakeholders and applicants;
- Queried whether analysis of the result indicator data would examine super outputs areas and community division;
- Queried whether delays in the payment of Local Authority claims are related to insufficient SEUPB resources;
- Welcomed the positive outcomes presented at today's meeting and queried if the design and priorities of the PEACE PLUS Programme are exclusively in the remit of the NI Executive;
- Queried variances between the attitudinal result indicators in Specific Objective Four and results seen in reports from 2013 and 2017.

The following responses were provided;

- **The Chair** informed the Committee of research undertaken by ASM on Peace Plus forward planning and stressed the need for clear communication in informing stakeholders that the Programme is not yet open for consultation;
- The SEUPB has a consultation plan in place, and will approach all relevant parties prior to public consultation;
- Analysis will disaggregate the result indicator data by age, gender and religion however, the scope of the survey does not allow for geographical break-down or the measurement of super output areas;
- The SEUPB is in regular receipt of inaccurate and delayed claims across all Local Authorities, which leads to lags in payment. The provision of Local Authority training sessions has had limited effect in resolving the issue, leading to the appointment of Think People to examine the SEUPB's training approach;

- **The DoF representative** explained the decision making process in the absence of an NI Executive, which remains fluid until the current restoration talks conclude;
- **The NISRA representative** explained a degree of variability in survey results is normal, and analysis of the data will provide further answers and context;
- This year's survey was undertaken by a new organisation. An assessment of the technical delivery of the survey will take place to examine continuity, and;
- The SEUPB aim to design and deliver an innovative and ambitious PEACE PLUS Programme with a lasting legacy of transformative action, and will share the parameters as soon as is possible.

The JS Director provided a presentation on implementation by thematic area.

(01:59:45) The EU Commission representative thanked **the JS Director** for a comprehensive presentation, which provided the Committee with an insight into the impact of the Programme, particularly on interface areas.

With regards to the Shared Spaces objective, **the EU Commission representative** emphasised the importance of sustained shared usage, and encouraged the SEUPB to carefully monitor usage against the peace and reconciliation objectives.

The CNCC representative stated that the Steering Committee makes funding decisions based on the project principles, and defers decisions on the final building design. The representative strongly advised the SEUPB to incorporate Climate Change objectives into the approved capital build projects. **The Chair** noted the comments.

The Chair thanked **the MA and JS Directors** for their presentations and **the Monitoring Committee**;

- **Noted** progress that has been made with regards to the regulatory requirements of the Programme, and;
- **Noted** the progress that has been made with regards to programme implementation.

AP 2: Peace IV PMC to receive link for PEACE Platform applications

AP 3: MA to assure EUC on accuracy of AIR figures

6. Performance Framework Update

The MA Director provided a presentation which detailed progress on achieving the mid-point milestones in the PEACE IV Cooperation Programme.

The Environmental Pillar representative congratulated all involved in the achievements against the Performance Framework targets.

The EU Commission representative echoed the congratulatory comments, and thanked the SEUPB for including the work of the Joint Secretariat in data verification in the update report.

The Monitoring Committee:

- **Noted** the progress that has been made with regards to achievement of 2018 milestones and the Performance Framework.

7. Annual Implementation Report

The Chair welcomed comments on the draft Annual Implementation Report, confirming that the SEUPB will meet with **the EU Commission representative** to discuss the figures highlighted earlier in the meeting.

The Monitoring Committee approved submission of the Report to the Commission by the deadline of 30 June 2019, subject to any amendments requested and agreed by PMC.

8. Project Presentations – Leitrim County Council

The Chair introduced **Suzanne Duffy, Peace IV Manager in Leitrim County Council** who provided a summary presentation on the Leitrim Local Action Plan.

Following the Leitrim County Council presentation **the Chair** introduced **Francis Davitt of Engineering, Building Surveying & Architectural Services and Graham Hull of TVAS Architectural Consultants**, presenting a summary presentation on plans for development of Mohill library.

The Environmental Pillar representative queried whether the remains of the 18th century wall discovered will be visible on completion of the extension build, and received a response from the project representatives.

The Irish Rural Link representative complimented the project on their partnership approach and the levels of inclusion and integration evident.

The Chair thanked all presenters for their comprehensive presentations.

9. Update on Implementation of the Communications Strategy

The Communications Manager provided a presentation which outlined upcoming project launches, the positive or neutral tone of media coverage surrounding the Programme and SEUPB's engagement with stakeholders over social media.

The EU Commission representative thanked the **Communications Manager** for consistent delivery of communications activity, and referred to the merits of Brussels event in showcasing the Programme.

The EU Commission representative asked for clarification on the decreased impact evident in the Border Region.

The Communications Manager explained the limited parameters of the survey in terms of sample size and budget, to be discussed further with **the NISRA representative**.

The CNCC representative highlighted a variance between the text and the graph in the Communications paper. **The Communications Manager** will make amendments and issue clarification if necessary.

AP 4: SEUPB to provide clarification on data in Communications graph

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Noted** the communications activity since the last Programme Monitoring Committee meeting, and;
- **Noted** progress in implementation of the Communications Strategy.

10. Evaluation Plan Update

10a. Progress on Implementation/ Impact Evaluation Action Plan

10b. Impact Evaluation Presentation – RSM UK Consulting

The Chair introduced the Evaluation Plan update paper as provided in the meeting papers and welcomed **Gary McLeod of RSM Consulting**, who provided a summary presentation on the impact evaluation across six actions associated with Specific Objectives two, three and four.

The Monitoring Committee;

- **Noted** progress made in implementing the Programme's Evaluation Plan, and;
- **Noted** the progress on the Implementation Evaluation Action Plan.

11. AOB

The Chair took the opportunity to once again thank **the EU Commission representative** for her work and dedication on the Peace IV Programmes over the last eight years. This was echoed by the DoF and DPER representatives.

The EU Commission representative thanked the Committee and encouraged Members to maintain integrity and commitment to the objectives in continuing the work of the PEACE Programmes.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The Chair informed Members the next meeting will take place in November 2019, most likely in the Belfast area.

The Chair thanked the Committee and concluded the meeting.

ANNEX I

ACTION POINTS/ISSUES OF CLARIFICATION ARISING FROM MONITORING COMMITTEE

Tuesday 18 June 2019, Lough Rynn Estate, County Leitrim

ACTION POINTS

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Action Point</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
4. Minutes of Previous meeting	1	Requested amendments to be made to minutes. Minutes to be uploaded to SEUPB website	Managing Authority
6. Update on Programme Implementation	2	Peace IV PMC to receive link for PEACE Platform procurement websites (e-tendersni and tenders.ie)	Managing Authority
6. Update on Programme Implementation	3	MA to assure EU Commission on accuracy of AIR figures	Managing Authority
9. Update on Implementation of the Communications Strategy	4	SEUPB to provide clarification on data in Communications graph	Managing Authority/ Communications

ANNEX II

Attendance – PEACE IV Programme Monitoring Committee, 18 June 2019, Lough Rynn Estate, County Leitrim

Chair

Gina McIntyre SEUPB

Members

Wesley Aston	Ulster Farmers' Union
Anne Marie Caulfield	Department for Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Frank Duffy	Department of Finance NI
Mark Feeney	Managing Authority, SEUPB
Hazel Francey	The Equality Commission NI
Ruth Gallagher	Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission
Tom Lavin	Irish Rural Link
Leanne Massey	Joint Secretariat, SEUPB
Paddy McGinn	Pobal
Seamus McAleavey	NICVA
Dr Aedin McLoughlin	the Environmental Pillar
Cllr Paul Robinson	NILGA/ DUP
Paul Sheridan	Head of Finance and Corporate Services, SEUPB
Tim Smith	ICTU Ireland
Emily Smyth	CNCC

Advisors

Paul Boylan	Joint Secretariat, SEUPB
Catherine Clynes	Department for Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Frances Curran	Department of Education
Marie Matthews	the Executive Office
John McCandless	Communications, SEUPB
Geraldine McCarthy	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
Ian McKenna	Department of Education and Skills
Tony McKibben	Department for Communities (DfC)

Carol Morrow	The Executive Office
Tamara Pavlin	European Commission
Michael Power	NISRA
Rosie Smyth	Department of Rural and Community Development
Stefan Welin	European Commission

Presenters

Suzanne Duffy	Leitrim County Council
Francis Davitt	Engineering, Building Surveying and Arhcitectural Services
Graham Hull	TVAS Archaeological Consultants
Mary Quinn	Leitrim County Council
Marian McGovern	Leitrim County Council
Toni Ogle	Letrim County Council
Gary MacLeod	RSM Consultants

Observers

Roisin Barr	Department of Children and Youth Affairs
Joanne Breen	The Executive Office
Tanya Hamilton	The Executive Office
Andrew Johnston	Department for Communities
Sean McAteer	NSMC
Emer McGeough	NSMC
Hugh O'Reilly	the Wheel
James Russell	MA, SEUPB
John Williamson	Department of Education

Secretariat (SEUPB)

Tara McCormick	Managing Authority (minutes)
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Apologies

Cllr Tommy Byrne	EMRA
Ivan Cooper	The Wheel
Cllr Dermot Curran	NILGA/SDLP
Michael D'Arcy	IBEC
Cllr Frank Dolan	NWRA
Pamela Dooley	Irish Congress of Trade Unions

Damian Duffy

CBI

Cllr Garath Keating

NILGA/SF

Alderman Angus Carson

NILGA/UUP

Jim Wilkinson

Department for the Economy

DRAFT

ANNEX III

Glossary of acronyms used in the minutes:

AIR	Annual Implementation Report
CNCC	Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside
CPD	Central Procurement Directorate (Northern Ireland)
DAERA	Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs
DfE	Department for the Economy
DHPCLG	Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government
DOF	Department of Finance (Northern Ireland)
DJEI	Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation
DoH	Department of Health NI
DPER	Department of Public Expenditure and Reform
EMRA	Eastern & Midland Regional Authority
eMS	Electronic Monitoring System
ESG	Evaluation Steering Group
EC	European Commission
ICTU	Irish Congress of Trade Unions
NICVA	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
NILGA	Northern Ireland Local Government Association

NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NSMC	North South Ministerial Council
NWRA	Northern Western Regional Assembly
SEUPB	Special European Union Programmes Body
JS	Joint Secretariat
MA	Managing Authority
VSS	The Victims and Survivors Service

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