



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2018**

### **OVER €5.5M PEACE IV ACTION PLAN FOR DONEGAL LAUNCHED**

**The new €5.5million PEACE IV Action Plan for Donegal was launched today (Monday 30 April) at a special event in the County House in Lifford.**

This new plan has been prepared as part of the PEACE IV Programme and will build on the positive work done in Donegal, the border region and Northern Ireland over the last two decades and will see the delivery of projects, interventions and initiatives that will continue to play an important role in reinforcing progress towards a more peaceful and stable society.

The PEACE IV Programme focuses on a range of areas where it wants to make significant and lasting changes including Children and Young People; Shared Spaces and Services; and Building Positive Relations.

In Donegal 19 interventions will be delivered across these three areas with approximately €1.2m allocated to Children and Young People and this will see an emphasis on projects focusing on fostering good relations, citizenship, youth training, leadership, conflict mediation and personal development through a range of interventions such as sport; drama and culture.

€2m has been allocated to the theme of Shared Spaces and Services with the objective being to create more cohesive society through an increased provision of shared spaces and services which has the potential to have a transformative effect on local areas.

€2.4m has been allocated to building positive relations at local level and is about promoting and celebrating cultural diversity where people can live, learn and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance. A range of interventions are proposed under the this theme including restorative practices events linked to the decade of commemorations that explore history in a sensitive manner and build mutual understanding; sport, arts, culture (including Irish and Ulster Scots language) and cross border media project, and small grants funding to promote positive relations and regeneration activities.

The first PEACE Programme was agreed in 1995 as a direct result of the EU's desire to make a positive response to the opportunities presented by developments in the Northern Ireland peace process during 1994. As the peace process has evolved and matured the PEACE Programmes have played an important role in reinforcing progress towards a more peaceful and stable society.

The PEACE IV programme is financed through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) of the European Union and managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). In Donegal, the programme is being delivered by the PEACE IV Partnership which is a sub group of the Local Community Development Committee or LCDC with secretariat support from Donegal County Council.

The PEACE IV Action Plan for Donegal has been developed following extensive consultation and engagement sessions, public information events, focus groups as well as work on



project design and development culminating in an extensive application and assessment process with the Special EU Programmes Body.

Speaking at the launch, Chief Executive of Donegal County Council Seamus Neely welcomed the €5.5m allocation to Donegal under the PEACE IV Programme saying **“The impact that this funding has had on the lives of people living in Donegal and indeed along the border since the first PEACE programme was introduced back in 1995 is evident for all to see”**.

**“Donegal County Council has been involved in this funding programme from the very start and we are proud of what has been achieved from the investment in environmental improvement schemes in our towns and villages to the development of community facilities and playgrounds to the funding of unique, innovative and ambitious programmes bringing together people from different cultures, religions and ethnicities and promoting greater levels of understanding and respect through a diverse range of projects and interventions. I look forward to continuing with this work and to continuing to work with our communities and our partner organisations in building a peaceful and stable society leaving a lasting legacy of peace for generations to come.”**

Chair of the Donegal Peace IV partnership Cllr Paul Canning believes that this funding will have a significant impact on the lives of people living in Donegal and particularly in areas along the border.

**“This PEACE IV Action Plan for Donegal was developed following extensive consultation with our local communities to ensure that the plan addressed the needs and issues identified. We are confident that each programme and initiative will support peace building and cross community interaction through a range of innovative approaches including, for example, youth training, sports, arts, heritage, and community development.”**

Gina McIntyre, CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body said **“approximately one third of the total value of the PEACE IV Programme is being offered to Councils, like Donegal, to help heal divided communities across the border region of Ireland and throughout Northern Ireland. The support will be delivered at a localised level to directly address the needs of local people. This approach proved very successful under previous programmes and as such will be built upon under the current programming period. I look forward to hearing more about the positive impact it will have over the coming months and years”**.

Cathaoirleach of Donegal County Council Cllr. Gerry McMonagle also welcomed this funding saying: **“in an era of uncertainty, both at home and on a wider global scale, the promotion of peace and reconciliation is increasingly vital. This European Peace funding will help to continue to build positive relations locally and will make a significant difference on the ground across Donegal. This funding will focus strongly on reconciliation, challenging prejudice and promoting understanding of diversity and good relations.”**

John Lonergan former Governor of Mountjoy Prison provided a keynote address at the launch which was also attended by representatives of the SEUPB and members of the PEACE IV Partnership and the Local Community Development Committee.



Match-funding has been provided the Executive Office NI and the Department for Rural and Community Development Ireland.

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Notes for the editor:

- The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance in Northern Ireland and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in Ireland.
- It is responsible for managing two EU Structural Funds Programmes, PEACE IV and INTERREG VA which are designed to enhance cross-border co-operation, promote reconciliation and create a more peaceful and prosperous society.
- The Programmes operate within a clearly defined area including Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and in the case of INTERREG VA, Western Scotland.
- The PEACE IV Programme has a value of €270 million and aims to promote peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland.
- For more information on the SEUPB please visit [www.seupb.eu](http://www.seupb.eu)