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### Minutes of the Stage Two PEACE IV Review Panel Meeting

Wednesday 13 December 2017, 10.30am  
SEUPB Offices, Belfast

**Project Applicant** – Clanrye Group  
**Project Title** – X'PRESS

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In Attendance:	Gina McIntyre	SEUPB (Chair)
	Sean Kelly	MC Panel Member
	Ivan Cooper	MC Panel Member
	Maureen Brennan	Independent Member
	James Russell	MA, SEUPB
	Gráinne Vallely	MA, SEUPB
	Tara McCormick	SEUPB (minutes)
	Liam Devine	Clanrye Group
	Rachel Duffy	Clanrye Group
	Paul Boylan	JS, SEUPB
	Brenda Hegarty	JS, SEUPB

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#### 1. Introductions

The Chair welcomed Members to the Stage Two Review Panel meeting of the PEACE IV 2014 – 2020 Programme.

#### 2. Register of Interests/Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Panel.

#### 3. Review

The Chair reminded the panel that the applicant has requested a review on both grounds, i.e. –

- (a) The outcome was a decision that no reasonable person would have made on the basis of the information provided to the Steering Committee; and
- (b) There was a failure in adherence to procedures or systems that materially affected or could have materially affected the decision.

The Chair confirmed that in line with Section 4.0 of the Review Procedure, the panel would consider ten-minute presentations from both the applicant and the Joint Secretariat (JS). On this occasion, neither party prepared a PowerPoint presentation. Both parties then joined the meeting.

The Chair introduced the Panel to Liam Devine and Rachel Duffy, representing the Clanrye Group, and Paul Boylan and Brenda Hegarty, representing the Joint Secretariat (JS).

The Clanrye Group representatives distributed additional printed material to those present including a general statement and a list of comments related to JS Stage Two Assessment points of clarity. The project representatives then proceeded to provide a ten minute presentation, outlining their reasons for requesting a review of the Steering Committee decision. The main passage of the general statement was;

“Clanrye Group and partners would like to put on record their dismay at the decision of SEUPB not to fund the X’PRESS Project. We would encourage the appeals panel to take a wider view of the proposal and its benefits to the Community and while the percentages of participants from the PUL communities is lower than the RC community IT ACCURATELY REFLECTS OUR COMMUNITY and as such forms a unique microcosm of the society we live in. Furthermore we would ask the panel to consider in a more nuanced way the complexities of the relationships in the area which includes at least “3 shades of green” never mind the relationship with the BME community peculiar to the region. Lastly we would ask the panel to consider how raising the number of participants from the PUL community on the project would damage the outcomes of the project. After this project finishes people go back to their local communities and live within that demography. Participants will only benefit if their participation reflects what happens on a daily basis in the community from which they emanate.”

The remainder of the Clanrye representatives’ presentation made the following main points;

- The Stage 2 application effectively addressed all recommendations made by the SEUPB;

- The application sufficiently reflects the project's responsiveness to young people, through the hire of appropriate Youth and Support Workers, work on an individual's social skills and self-esteem, and 19 Personal Development activities;
- The application makes repeated and numerous references to the highly-responsive, young-person centred approach and activities designed to address their needs;
- The cross community and cross border ratios detailed in the application are reflective of the existing community demographic, and manipulation of participant ratios in order to meet Programme targets would have a negative effect on project impact;
- The Clanrye Group believe scoring awarded in Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessment are linked, contrary to the Guide for Applicants;
- Queried the use of the term "normally" within the Output Indicator Guidance as allowing for interpretation and flexibility in the community breakdown ratios;
- The Clanrye Group uphold their 10 hour per week contact during the 6 month intervention period as of sufficient intensity and in line with SEUPB advice that engagement should be "ambitious, of high quality and responsive to the needs of the individual";
- Asserted that the level of engagement is the choice of the participant, as per the youth- centred approach, and contact in excess of the stipulated 10 hours is encouraged;
- Detailed Clanrye's success in securing funding under the ESF Social inclusion Investment Priority, using similar project design;
- Highlighted 30 activities planned across 3 council areas which address the cross-community engagement elements of SEUPB's recommendations;
- Contested the assessment and subsequent scoring of "poor cross community composition" as arbitrary, and owing to a lack of consideration of the project's geography, demography, culture and experience of the partners involved.

The Chair thanked the applicants for their presentation and invited the JS to provide a ten minute verbal response, which included the following main points;

- Defined the main aims of the PEACE IV Programme in peace and reconciliation, with a focus on promoting cross-community relations and understanding, in order to create a more cohesive society;
- Detailed the need for applicants under the Children and Young People 14 to 24 call to ensure balanced participation from all communities in their activities, resulting in meaningful, sustained, change-focused contact between young people from different community backgrounds;
- Provided further explanation of the 20% variance permitted in cross-community participant ratios, as stated in the Output Indicator Guidance;
- Informed the Panel the Clanrye Group failed to reference the Indicator Guidance in their application, and were not compliant with the required community composition in 2 Local Authority areas; geographically and at project level;
- The SEUPB acted fairly in seeking clarifications on the application. JS clarifications are sought to provide clarity and do not have a role in furthering project development;
- The relevant Accountable Department (Department for the Economy) and Steering Committee agree with SEUPB's assessment relating to the 10 hours of engagement. 10 hours was not considered sufficient over the lifetime of the project. All successful projects under the call contain an average contact of 12 hours and above. The JS representatives continued to provide examples of cross community participation ratios of successful projects in meeting the indicator guidance;
- The PEACE IV Programme has been subject to Section 75 equality screening and deemed fully compliant;
- Concluded that the scores awarded reflect a design failure in relation to the cross community output indicator and sufficient contact to bring about/ implement transformative effect in the target group.

The Chair thanked the JS for their presentation and opened the meeting to further questions and discussion.

The Review Panel made the following comments and observations;

- Questioned the applicants' statement during their presentation that raising PUL participation would be harmful to the project;

- Queried whether other projects received similar scores, defining whether they received funding;
- Referred to sections 2.3 and 2.4 of the Output Indicator Guidance, specifically the 80% participant attendance required to complete the Programme and the minimum 3 to 4 days of participant contact per week, against the 10 hours of engagement detailed in the application;
- Stated their understanding of terminology such as “should” in the Output Indicator Guidelines is unambiguous and definitive;
- Asked whether the Clanrye Group possesses the capacity to expand beyond the 10 hours engagement;
- Reiterated that the PEACE IV Programme has been subject to Equality and Section 75 screening;
- The Peace IV Programme differs significantly from other ESF and Government funding Programmes, and operates under its own unique objectives.

In response, the applicant provided the following clarifications;

- Stated their understanding that the project should reflect the existing community demographic and that it would skew results if other community groups were brought in to reach an arbitrary target;
- Stated that they do not believe the SEUPB’s process is unfair;
- Explained the difficult backgrounds and complex issues faced by the targeted youths and, as such, the need for a bespoke project involving engagement with various community and voluntary groups in order to ensure attendance;
- Stated they do not contest the 3 to 4 days outlined in the Guidance however, their experience in this demographic has shown the benefits of short bursts of engagement, with progressively increasing intensity;
- Stated the 10 hours engagement is a minimum. The representative admitted this point could have been more clearly stated in the application;
- Reiterated their understanding that the language used in the Guidelines, including “should”, allowed for flexibility and interpretation of the outputs;
- Asserted that the project would still deliver on respect for diversity, regardless of the community breakdown

The Chair also responded detailing one other project which had dropped beneath the funding threshold.

The JS representative concluded by stating the Peace Programme's objectives towards sustainable and meaningful contact and the inclusion of minorities. JS noted the existing demographic in the project area however, she rejected their argument that an increase in PUL participation would negatively impact upon the project and its participants.

JS reminded the Panel that the decision on scoring was taken by both the JS and the Steering Committee; both agreed the level of contact and intensity was insufficient in meeting the Programme outputs.

The Chair thanked the Clanrye representatives and informed them they will receive written confirmation of the Review Panel's decision within 14 days.

Both parties left the room, and the Chair opened the meeting to discussion. The Review Panel made the following main points and observations;

- Queried Clanrye's ability to provide a more balanced split in community representation for the ESF funded projects they had discussed and yet not in this application;
- Stated the presentation was too general rather than focused on Criteria 2 and 3;
- The Panel did not agree with the concept of designing project participation to mirror the existing demographic:-
  - The Panel expressed concerns as to whether the Clanrye approach would achieve a sustainable attitudinal change;
  - The Panel noted all successful applicants must manage unique demographics and circumstances in their own regions in order to meet the Programme outputs;
  - The Panel expressed the view that imbalanced cross-community representation could be difficult for the minority participants, potentially affecting attendance;
  - The Panel concluded that the proposed approach would reinforce existing attitudes and behaviours, not in line with the objectives of the PEACE IV Programme;

- The Panel agreed that the frequency of cross community contact was weak in comparison to the key criteria, and;
- Noted the applicant's admission that the 10 hours per week should have been highlighted as the minimum requirement in the application;

In relation to the appeal on the basis of the first ground, an unreasonable outcome, the Panel agreed to maintain the scores for Criterion 2 and Criterion 3 as awarded by the Steering Committee. The Panel concluded that the information presented to them did not justify a change of the scoring in relation to the quality of project design and cross community contribution.

In relation to the appeal on the second ground, a failure in adherence to procedure, the Panel agreed a breach of procedure had not occurred.

The Chair thanked the Review Panel and concluded the meeting.