PRESS RELEASE
Date: Monday 4th November 2019

INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP PROJECT FOR BELFAST – PEACE IV’s TRANSFORM FOR CHANGE LAUNCHED TODAY

Transform for Change, an innovative leadership project for Belfast, was launched today in City Hall, as part of the council’s PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

This citywide project aims to develop new, collaborative, cross-sectoral approaches to peace-building and reconciliation, addressing social and economic disadvantage across 15 cluster areas in Belfast. The project is supported by the European Union’s PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

Transform for Change will build the leadership skills of citizens, policy makers and public/statutory service providers to work collectively at addressing issues of segregation, prejudice and hate. The project will incorporate Leadership Skills Development, Best Practice, Networking Events and Community Engagement Events.

Speaking at the launch, Lord Mayor, Councillor John Finucane, said: “I’m delighted to launch the Transform for Change project and look forward to seeing how it will enable us to work together differently for peace and reconciliation with our communities.

“It is through programmes such as PEACE IV and projects like Transform for Change that will help the Council to deliver its vision for the city that is welcoming and inclusive for all. We all have a responsibility to achieve and maintain lasting peace.”

Councillor John Kyle, Chair of the council’s Shared City Partnership, added: “Among the aims of the Shared City Partnership is promoting good relations and community cohesion across Belfast and partnering with organisations to proactively engage on peace and reconciliation issues on behalf of the citizens of the city.

“Strong, positive and transformative leadership with community change makers is a key outcome of our Good Relations Strategy. We very much welcome the launch of
Welcoming the project, Gina McIntyre, CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), said: “Peace-building is a delicate and long-term process. Therefore, we need to continuously invest in new and innovative approaches to reconciliation that are responsive to the changing needs of our society. This EU PEACE IV funded project will help to deliver upon that need. It will develop the leadership skills of local people, as well as the community and voluntary sector so that collectively they are better resourced to combat division, segregation and prejudice.”

Belfast City Council is working in partnership with delivery partners, such as, NICVA and their community partners to build trust, create understanding, address local peace-building issues and to ensure that the impact of peace is maximised within communities.

Representatives from NICVA attended the launch today along with community partners’ Forward South Partnership, East Belfast Community Development Agency, Falls Community Council and West Belfast Partnership Board.

Match-funding for the Transform for Change project has been provided by The Executive Office in Northern Ireland and the Department of Community and Rural Development in Ireland.

For more information on the council’s PEACE IV programme, visit www.belfastcity.gov.uk/PEACEIV

To find out about the SEUPB, visit www.seupb.eu

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Notes for the editor:

SEUPB
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