



**Special EU Programmes Body**  
**Comhlacht na gClár Speisialta AE**  
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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**

**Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

**Remote Meeting via MS Teams**

**Attendance**

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

**1. Welcome and introduction by Chairperson**

**The Chair** welcomed attendees to the eleventh meeting of the PEACE IV Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC) 2014-2020; the third to be held remotely via Microsoft Teams.

**The Chair** introduced himself as **Director of Corporate Services, Paul Sheridan**, chairing on this occasion as **SEUPB CEO Gina McIntyre** is on leave due to bereavement. **The Chair** welcomed all Members, including **EU Commission Desk Officers Joanne Knight** and **Kris Magnus**, and welcomed Helen Donaldson as the **Interim JS Director**, following Leanne Massey's departure in October 2021.

Changes to the PEACE IV PMC membership were outlined, and newly appointed Members were asked to extend a thank you on behalf of SEUPB to the departing representatives they replaced.

**The Chair** provided an update on developments in Programme implementation since the previous PMC meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2021, as follows;

- The SEUPB is delighted with the news in October that the Peace Plus Programme was approved by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government and subsequently, the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC). The Programme will be formally submitted to the EU Commission in 2022, ahead of the first calls for applications.
- The total value of the Programme is at €279.2m or 104%, therefore there has been no additional funding available to help projects navigate the effects of Covid 19 restrictions. Instead, the SEUPB has been assisting projects with modification requests and extensions to project end dates. The extensions have taken over 50% of PEACE projects into completion in 2022 or 2023.
- The effects of Covid have been keenly felt in the Shared Spaces objective. Several projects are forecasting that their construction timelines will run into the second half of 2023, which poses a risk to Programme delivery. In addition, projects are reporting issues due to the rising cost of materials. Members will receive an update of greater detail later in the agenda.

## **2. Agree Agenda**

The Agenda was agreed.

## **3. Conflict of Interest**

**The Chair** thanked those Members and Advisors who have returned their Conflicts of Interest and Code of Conduct forms to the Secretariat in the mandatory annual exercise.

No further Conflicts of Interest were declared.

## **4. Minutes of the previous meeting – 20 May 2021**

**The DRCD representative** informed the Chair of two minor amendments required in the minutes, to be forwarded to the Secretariat following today's meeting.

Pending the changes, 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.

## **5. Matters Arising**

**The Chair** outlined three matters arising from the previous meeting, all of which have been actioned.

## **6. Video presentation: The Futures Project and the Causeway Coast and Glens Local Action Plan**

**The Chair** introduced a short informative video presenting information on two PEACE IV funded projects - the Futures Project and the Causeway Coast and Glens Local Action Plan.

Members noted the content of the project video presentations.

## **7. Update on Programme Implementation**

Members noted the new format of Implementation papers, now split into a Programme Implementation paper and a Programme Management paper, as provided prior to the meeting. **The Chair** asked **JS Director, Helen Donaldson** to provide a presentation on implementation from the Joint Secretariat perspective. The presentation consisted of the following main points;

- The effects of Covid remain a challenge even as restrictions continue to lift, particularly around relationship building. The JS focus is on full commitment and full delivery of project outputs;
- SEUPB, with the assistance of Steering Committee Members, has been responding to a high volume of change requests, particularly requests for extensions to project end dates. The extensions mean a high number of projects will now deliver into the final two years of the Peace Programme;
- The JS team is working to ensure Lead Partners are aware of their responsibilities once their requested changes are approved and manage the associated risks.
- **Shared Education:** Despite the acute effects of Covid on this objective, both projects are now in their fifth year of delivery and are engaging with extremely high numbers

of participants after keeping the project alive by collaborating and improving online skills;

- **Children and Young People 14-24:** This objective underwent a review of the Output Indicator Guidance in March 2021, resulting in continuation of the 125 hours engagement indicator and reasonable adjustments in relation to disability requirements;
- The objective is on course to exceed the Programme output target;
- Since the last PMC, Youthpact has undertaken a consultation for the Peace Plus Programme and held a number of well-attended learning and sharing events;
- The Journeys project is the first of eleven Children and Young People projects to complete activity, with 854 participants completing the programme to date against a target of 813;
- **Shared Spaces and Services:** Three projects under this objective have had extensions requests approved; Waterside Shared Village to December 2022, Black Mountain and Riverine to September 2023;
- The JS recently wrote to all Lead Partners to request proposals for additional funding required to deliver the agreed outputs. Seven requests, which will involve addendums to Economic Appraisals, have since been submitted and are being processed;
- There is significant risk to delivery of the Ballycastle Shared Spaces project due to procurement issues. The tender process may need to be restarted, which would cause significant issues for both the project and the Programme;
- Waterside Shared Village, Newforge and the Monaghan Peace Campus are due to complete their construction works in Summer 2022;
- **Victims and Survivors:** In a significant increase since the last PMC, the project has achieved 57% of the output relating to individuals in receipt of advocacy support;
- Project Partner the Commission for Victims and Survivors has completed research towards a needs review assessment for Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain. The full report has been shared with Government Departments in Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Managing Authority will review the report and feed relevant recommendations into the call for Victims and Survivors in the Peace Plus Programme;
- **Local Authority Action Plans;** Four Local Authorities have completed activity on all three themes (Cavan, Lisburn City and Castlereagh, Sligo, Leitrim). A further three have completed activity on Building Positive Relations and Children & Young People, and four have completed upon Shared Spaces and Services. **The JS Director** outlined positive feedback from the closing events;

- There is a risk of non-delivery of the Louth County Council Shared Spaces element, which the JS team is monitoring closely;
- The seven Local Authorities which have successfully completed activity on their Children and Young element have self-declared an overachievement against the Programme target, and;
- **Building Positive Relations Regional:** Eleven projects have successfully completed activity, achieving engagement with 79,044 participants as at the end of July 2021, or 85% achievement against target.

**The DCEDIY representative** asked that the Futures project video be shared following the meeting.

**The CBI representative** asked that the presentations also be circulated to the PMC Members. In addition, the representative asked how strategic outcomes can be captured beyond the scope of the key output indicators, both for the current Programme and the Peace Plus Programme.

**The MA Director** explained the current outputs as a regulatory requirement by the EU Commission. There is currently an exercise underway, though in its early stages, to assess how the upcoming PEACE Plus Programme can capture impact beyond indicators. PMC Members will be provided with an update when possible.

**The DoF representative** thanked Paul Sheridan for assuming the position of Chair and **the JS Director** for her presentation, which addressed core issues as the Programme moves towards closure. **The DoF representative** made the following points;

- Welcomed the 30% of projects which completed over the period of covid restrictions, and the introductions of flexibilities which are greatly utilized and appreciated by projects;
- Thanked Steering Committee Members for their efforts in assessing and agreeing multiple project change requests, while working remotely;
- Stated DoF's concerns around the Shared Spaces objectives, and emphasized the need for continued close monitoring, particularly the Ballycastle project. The representative cautioned against re-tendering at this late stage of the Programme; DoF will request further detail on this project separate to today's PMC meeting.

- Stated DoF's concerns around the Shared Education objective, while noting that the degree of slippage has decreased from €5 to 7 million to €2 to 4 million.
- **The DoF representative** commended SEUPB's engagement with projects over a challenging 18 months, and;
- Welcomed the positive elements of the implementation report, as the impact of the PEACE IV Programme on the ground has become increasingly evident.

**The DPER representative** extended condolences to Gina McIntyre, and thanked Paul Sheridan for chairing and providing a comprehensive set of meeting papers. The representative acknowledged the significant challenges projects have faced due to Covid, particularly those operating under the Shared Spaces and Shared Education objectives.

**The DPER representative** echoed comments around the need to continue close monitoring of problematic areas, and offered DPER's assistance in any way required going forward.

**The Monitoring Committee:**

- Noted the progress that has been made in the Implementation of the Programme

**AP 2: Futures project and Causeway Coast and Glens video presentations to be circulated to PMC members**

**8. Update on Programme Management**

**The Chair** drew Members' attention to the second part of the new paper format, an update paper on Programme Management, and asked **the MA Director** to provide the update presentation.

**The MA Director's** presentation consisted of the following main points:

- The total Programme value of €279.2m (104%) has been committed to 97 projects across the programme, including Technical Assistance;
- In total, 29 PEACE IV projects, or 30%, have completed, and the SEUPB will be examining project spend as the Programme moves towards closure;

- The Shared Spaces (capital) projects have submitted requests for additional funding, all of which are subject to assessment of over commitment, available underspend across the programme and reviews of economic appraisals;
- The key message remains; the SEUPB continues ongoing engagement with all projects around adaptations to activity, extensions and budget modifications around the Letter of Offer to support implementation and achievement of targets. This support will include some temporary flexibilities around Output Indicator Guidance;
- **The MA Director** outlined financial allocation and commitment declared and paid by objective. He explained that variations between the claims submitted and paid are improving and being monitored. The FCU and JS are working with projects to maintain a claims flow;
- An additional €875,000 will be required to meet the 2021 N+3 target. There is a forecast surplus of €6.7m contributing to the 2022 N+3 target;
- In recent months, there has been a focus on a review of SEUPB business processes in order to increase the efficiency of verification. Measures have included improved communications with projects, training to improve the quality of submissions, and recruitment of further verification officers to process the claims through-puts. The SEUPB has also engaged external consultants to identify claim “bottlenecks” and recommend methods of improvement.
- The JS and MA will assess thematic-level underspend and overcommitment in the approach to Programme closure, aiming to maximise ERDF receipts, in parallel with mobilising the Peace Plus Programme.
- **The MA Director** provided an overview of progress against the Evaluation plan including the evaluation reports and findings, as seen by the Evaluation Steering Group in an October meeting.

**The DoF representative** acknowledged the SEUPB’s work in achieving 104% commitment in challenging circumstances and welcomed the achievement of the N+3 target for 2021. The representative requested consistency when reporting on risks between the Implementation and Management papers in the new reporting format.

**The DoF representative** continued, asking that the PMC be given further assurance on key issues, including the management of the claims through-put and the Shared Spaces objective, which he highlighted as critical issues requiring action as a matter of urgency.

**The MA Director responded**, assuring Members that the SEUPB is aware of the significance of the issues and is prepared for a difficult decision-making process in the coming weeks, with the ongoing support of the Member States.

**The JS Director** stated the JS is aware of the risks around the Shared Spaces objective and has been working closely with projects for a length of time, since the exponentially rising costs of materials due to the effects of Covid and Brexit became evident.

**The JS Director** continued, outlining an ongoing exercise to identify slippage across the remaining PEACE IV projects. Whether the slippage will be sufficient to balance the Shared Spaces requests for additional funding remains to be seen however, Shared Spaces is a high priority. In addition, the SEUPB is aware of the risk of end-weighted slippage, and the effects of any failed Shared Spaces projects on Programme budget towards Programme end.

**The Monitoring Committee:**

- Noted the progress made in the management of the Programme

**9. Update on Implementation of the Communications Strategy**

**The Communications Manager** provided a presentation which included the following;

- The Communications team has been involved in several virtual project closure events, with a number now taking place physically;
- In September 2021, the SEUPB and selected PEACE projects hosted separate visits from the Vice-President of the European Commission, Maroš Šefčovič, and Dr Stephan Holthoff-Pfoertner, Minister for Federal, European and International Affairs of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia;
- On 29<sup>th</sup> September, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge paid a surprise visit to the Sport Uniting Communities project;
- An outline of upcoming activity for the remainder of 2021 was provided;
- The new design of the Your EU! Magazine, with more of a digital focus, was detailed;

- The Communications team's achievements against Programme output indicators were summarised, all of which have been exceeded;
- The Communications Manager reported on media coverage and tone, and engagement with the SEUPB's website and social media accounts;
- The Communications team's work towards the official launch of the Peace Programme Learning Platform on 15<sup>th</sup> September, through a social media and direct email campaign and the resulting positive feedback was highlighted, and;
- An overview of anticipated 2022 Communications activity was provided.

**The DoF representative** commended the Communications Manager for the achievements described, undertaken over an extremely challenging and busy period. The representative asked for an indication of the usage of the Peace Platform to date.

**The Communications Manager** stated the usage figures will be detailed in the next agenda item, and the Communications Team are developing plans to market and promote the Platform in early 2022.

**The DPER representative** thanked the Communications Manager for the update and complimented the Communications team on its clear and accessible infographics and videos. The representative stated she was present at the EU Vice-President's visit and the presentations given were highly effective and impressive.

**The Monitoring Committee;**

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

## **10. Peace Platform Update**

**Christina McCartney, MA Programme Officer**, provided a presentation detailing progress in mobilising the Peace Platform, which consisted of the following main points;

- The Peace Platform is an online digital archive containing information on all PEACE Programmes since their inception in 1995, comprising over 22,500 projects;
- Resources available include project case studies, evaluations, research and reports, audio, films, photographs, press coverage, publicity and promotion materials;
- An overview of the home page was provided, with attention drawn to the three core aims; of “Discover, Collaborate, Learn”;
- The launch was regarded as highly successful. 140 attended the live event, with 268 participants joining via YouTube and, as of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021, there have been 1872 unique page views, 1043 new unique users globally and 22 organisations registered for accounts;
- An overview of the next steps and responsibility of the Platform Working Group was provided, and;
- The Programme Officer directed Members to the Peace Platform online and dedicated email address.

### **The Monitoring Committee;**

- Noted the update on implementation/ mobilisation of the Peace Programmes Learning Platform

## **11. PEACE PLUS Programme Update**

**The Director of Managing Authority**, extended apologies for **MA Programme Manager Declan McGarrigle**, as the Lead on Peace PLUS Programme implementation.

**The MA Director** provided a presentation detailing progress on preparing for the Peace Plus Programme, which included the following main points;

- The overall Programme budget has been confirmed at around €1.145 billion across six themes and 21 individual investment areas;
- The Programme was approved by the NI Executive, the Irish Government and the North South Ministerial Council in October 2021;
- The initial calls are scheduled to open in 2022, with pre-application support available. The majority of calls will release later in 2022 and into 2023.
- MA are continuing work to develop a call schedule and will approach the relevant Departments individually, and;
- The Managing Authority's next key tasks include the following;
  - Developing Individual Calls for Applications
  - Putting in place pre-application support
  - Developing Application and Assessment processes
  - Developing Programme Rules and Guidance
  - Setting up and establishing the new Programme Monitoring Committee.

**The DPER representative** congratulated the SEUPB on the adoption of Peace Plus by both Governments and the NSMC, and thanked the PMC for their efforts in pushing forward a substantial Programme package.

**The DoF representative** echoed those comments, congratulating the SEUPB and emphasising the need to continue momentum in undertaking the next steps. The representative asked that sincere thanks were passed to Declan McGarrigle.

#### **The Monitoring Committee**

- Noted progress in designing and implementing the PEACE PLUS Programme

#### **12. AOB**

In the sole item of further business, the Chair asked for voluntary participants for membership of the Evaluation Steering Group (ESG), which has difficulty in meeting quorum. Members were asked to contact the Secretariat if interested.

No further business was declared.

### **13. Date of next meeting**

**The Chair** stated the next meeting will be scheduled for Spring 2022 in a format consistent with health guidance at the time. A date has not yet been set, as the PMC of the current Programme will run in parallel with the Peace Plus PMC.

The Chair thanked Members and concluded the meeting.

**ANNEX I**

**ACTION POINTS/ISSUES OF CLARIFICATION  
ARISING FROM MONITORING COMMITTEE**

**Thursday 04 November 2021; Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams**

**ACTION POINTS**

<b><u>Agenda Item</u></b>	<b><u>Action Point</u></b>	<b><u>Action</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility</u></b>
4	1	Minutes of previous meeting to be amended and uploaded to SEUPB website	Managing Authority
7	2	Futures project and Causeway Coast and Glens video presentations to be circulated to PMC members	Managing Authority



Catherine Powell	Department for the Economy NI
Anne Tohill	The Executive Office NI
Deirdre Kearney	DRCD
Tony McKibben	Department for Communities NI
Aoibhin O'Malley	Department of Education and Skills Ireland
Paula Keatley	DCEDIY
Shauna Markey	DCEDIY

**Observers**

Paul Boylan	Joint Secretariat, SEUPB
Tanya Hamilton	The Executive Office NI
Christina McCartney	Managing Authority, the SEUPB
Peter Molloy	DPER
Pamela Meekin	Office of the CEO, SEUPB
Glenny Whitley	Joint Secretariat, SEUPB
David Lynch	Department of Finance NI
Orla Dowling	Department of Education and Skills Ireland
Ryan Donaldson	Department of Finance NI
Deirdre Bourke	North South Ministerial Council
John Barr	Department for Communities NI
Sarah Goldberg	DFHERIS
Maura Young	FCU, the SEUPB
Sean McAteer	NSMC

**Secretariat (SEUPB)**

Tara McCormick	Managing Authority (minutes)
Nora Winder	Managing Authority (remote tech support)

**Apologies**

Gina McIntyre	CEO, SEUPB
Declan McGarrigle	Managing Authority, SEUPB

Joanne Breen	The Executive Office NI
Margaret Downey	The Executive Office NI
Cllr Jim McKeever	NILGA
Marie Matthews	The Executive Office NI
Kathryn McCamley	Department for the Economy NI
Emily Smyth	CNCC
Jill Caldwell	Department of Education NI
Cllr Stevie Corr	NILGA
Cllr Frances Burton	NILGA
Gerry Doyle	NWRA
Cllr Frank McBrearty	NWRA
Cllr Conor Keelan	EMRA
Seamus McAleavey	NICVA
Tim Smith	ICTU Ireland
Wesley Aston	Ulster Farmers Union

### **Departing Members**

- Jim Wilkinson, Department for the Economy;
- Gerry Lavelle, North West Regional Assembly;
- Sean Kelly, CNCC, Council for Nature, the Countryside and Conservation;
- Leanne Massey, who left her post as JS Director on 01 October 2021;
- Emer McGeough, NSMC;
- Julie Carson, Executive Office NI, and;
- John Williamson, the Department for Education NI.

### **ANNEX III**

#### **Glossary of acronyms used in the minutes:**

<b>AIR</b>	<b>Annual Implementation Report</b>
<b>CBI</b>	<b>Confederation of British industry</b>
<b>CNCC</b>	<b>Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside</b>
<b>CPD</b>	<b>Central Procurement Directorate (Northern Ireland)</b>
<b>DAERA</b>	<b>Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs</b>
<b>DCEDIY</b>	<b>The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth Ireland</b>
<b>DfE</b>	<b>Department for the Economy</b>
<b>DRCD</b>	<b>Department of Rural and Community Development</b>
<b>DoF</b>	<b>Department of Finance (Northern Ireland)</b>
<b>DJEI</b>	<b>Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation</b>
<b>DoH</b>	<b>Department of Health NI</b>
<b>DPER</b>	<b>Department of Public Expenditure and Reform</b>
<b>EMRA</b>	<b>Eastern &amp; Midland Regional Authority</b>
<b>eMS</b>	<b>Electronic Monitoring System</b>
<b>ESG</b>	<b>Evaluation Steering Group</b>
<b>EUC</b>	<b>European Commission</b>
<b>IBEC</b>	<b>Irish Business and Employers Federation</b>

<b>ICTU</b>	<b>Irish Congress of Trade Unions</b>
<b>NICVA</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action</b>
<b>NILGA</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Local Government Association</b>
<b>NISRA</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency</b>
<b>NSMC</b>	<b>North South Ministerial Council</b>
<b>NWRA</b>	<b>Northern Western Regional Assembly</b>
<b>OECD</b>	<b>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development NI</b>
<b>SEUPB</b>	<b>Special European Union Programmes Body</b>
<b>JS</b>	<b>Joint Secretariat</b>
<b>MA</b>	<b>Managing Authority</b>
<b>VSS</b>	<b>Victims and Survivors Service</b>