



PRESS RELEASE

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LOCAL COMMUNITIES INVITED TO LAUNCH OF £6.1 MILLION PEACE IV PROGRAMME

Derry City and Strabane District Council Peace IV Partnership Board are delighted to invite communities and interested individuals to register for the launch event celebrating £6.1m worth of funding under the European Union's PEACE IV Programme coming into the local area.

The launch, a 'Café Culture' style half-day conference, aims to give community organisations, youth organisations, volunteers, and individuals in the council area and immediate cross-border area the opportunity to develop a better understanding of what's in the local £6.1million PEACE IV Programme and how to engage with and benefit from it.

Welcoming the funding offer the Mayor, Maolíosa McHugh stated: **“This European Peace funding to help build positive relations locally will make a significant difference on the ground across our entire council area from rural areas, towns and villages and in the city. PEACE IV funding is strongly focused on reconciliation, challenging prejudice and promoting understanding of diversity and good relations.”**

Gina McIntyre, CEO with the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), which manages the PEACE IV Programme, said: **“Local authorities will make an invaluable contribution to the delivery of the new PEACE IV Programme by ensuring that funding is distributed at a local level where it can make a real impact. In providing this support the EU will help to promote positive relations between people from all walks of life so that they can live, learn and socialise together free from intolerance.**

“The event is about recognising this investment and finding out how it will be delivered through the partnerships that have been created by Derry City and Strabane District Council,” she continued.



Gearóid Ó hEára, Chair of the PEACE IV Partnership Board, indicated: **“Our programme, which was developed in direct consultation in the spring with local communities, includes grant aid opportunities for local community organisations and tendered programmes with community and youth impact as well as a number of council led initiatives for children and young people, sports development, capital works, community planning and community development.”**

He added: **“I would encourage community organisations to consider the various ways they can bring benefit to local people from engagement in the programme which is much wider than just a grant aid approach.”**

The council’s PEACE IV team will be responsible for the delivery of a ‘PEACE Action Plan’ focused on three key themes: ‘Children & Young People’; ‘Shared Spaces and Services’ and ‘Building Positive Relations’.

“The roll out of the programme on the ground is now beginning,” indicated Drew Thompson, co-chair of the Partnership Board. **“I would encourage interested organisations and individuals to attend the launch to find out more and to sign up for PEACE IV e-bulletins by going onto the web page www.derrystرابane.com/Peace-IV where there is also more detailed information on the programmes. Signing up for e-bulletins will ensure that you get information on opportunities to tender or apply for grants or importantly, opportunities to take part in events and programmes and project steering groups. The Board are keen to see people and groups from all communities and identities attending the launch and benefitting from this funding.”**

“The launch will be the first real opportunity for community organisations and individuals to find out in more depth about a range of our projects,” Sue Divin, Programme Manager for PEACE IV explained. **“Projects will include opportunities for youth to engage in employment, wellbeing, democracy, community and citizenship programmes. There will also be a broad range of cultural, sports and environmental programmes as well as specific programmes to develop shared spaces in parks, interfaces and contested rural areas. Issues such as bonfires/alternatives to bonfires; sectarianism, racism and dealing with the past are tackled throughout the programme.**



All programmes are on a cross-community basis, encouraging people to meet and develop friendships across identities and to engage in a sustained way with diversity.”

Advance registration is required for the launch event, which will be held in the Waterfoot Hotel, Derry~Londonderry at 10.00am on Wednesday 21st June 2017. Optional return bus transport for Castlederg/Strabane area attendees is provided free. The bus leaves from Derg Valley Leisure Centre at 8.40am with pick up at Council Offices in Strabane at 9.10am then going direct to the Waterfoot Hotel. For more information or to book, contact peace@derrystrabane.com (<tel:02871253253> ext 6935) by deadline Friday 16th June 2017. A maximum of 5 people per organization may register.

The PEACE IV Programme is an EU funded Programme designed to support peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the border region. It is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

Match-funding for this element of the PEACE IV Programme has been provided by the Executive Office in Northern Ireland and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in Ireland.

Notes to 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 address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders.
- For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu