



PRESS RELEASE

Date: 23 January 2017

ARDS & NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL IS OFFERED £3,310,692.36 WORTH OF EU FUNDING TO HELP BUILD POSITIVE RELATIONS

Approximately £3.3m worth of funding under the European Union's PEACE IV Programme has been offered to Ards and North Down Borough Council.

The funding will be used to support a number of locally-based projects and initiatives that will promote positive relations between people from different communities and backgrounds.

It will result in an increase in the percentage of people who think relations between Protestants and Catholics have improved and an increased cultural awareness of minority ethnic communities.

Ards and North Down Borough Council will be responsible for the delivery of a 'PEACE Action Plan' focused on three key areas: 'Children & Young People'; 'Shared Spaces and Services' and 'Building Positive Relations'.

The support will be used in the delivery of local community initiatives for children and young people involving sports, arts, culture and language. It will help make public space in cities, towns and villages more inclusive and facilitate programmes for shared space.

The funding will also be used to assist conflict resolution activities at a local level to encourage positive interaction between residents and groups from divided neighbourhoods.

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.

An announcement of the total funding offered to all local authorities across Northern Ireland and the Border Region of Ireland was recently endorsed by Ministers from both of these match-funding Government Departments.

Welcoming the funding Ards and North Down Borough Council **Mayor of Ards and North Down, Alderman Deborah Girvan said,**



We are delighted that approximately £3.3 million worth of funding has been awarded to Ards and North Down Borough Council to deliver the PEACE IV Programme. We have undertaken significant consultation with the community and through the key priority areas of Children and Young People, Shared Spaces and Services and Building Positive Relations, a number of projects have been developed that will address the needs of the community. Together we can make Ards and North Down an area where young people can form positive relationships with others from different community backgrounds and where we can create a more cohesive society through the increased provision of shared spaces and services. The funding and resultant PEACE IV Programme will promote positive relations where cultural diversity is celebrated and people can live, learn and socialise together free from prejudice, hate and intolerance.

Commenting on the funding offer Gina McIntyre, CEO of the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), which manages the PEACE IV Programme, said: **“Local authority-led partnership played a key role within the previous PEACE Programme, in terms of ensuring that money was distributed at a local level, where it could make the most impact. As such they will play a similar role under the new PEACE IV Programme for the Ards and North Down Borough Council area.**

“Representing the public, private and community sectors this partnership is ideally placed to ensure that EU funding is invested within community-based projects that will make real and lasting change,” she continued.

- ENDS.

For more information please contact John McCandless, Communications Manager with the SEUPB on Mob. 07834 778018 or via e-mail john.mccandless@seupb.eu

Notes to Editor:

- The financial allocations for all of the local authority funding awards under the PEACE IV Programme are based on per capita (Census) and deprivation (NI Multiple Deprivation Measure and Trutz Haase Deprivation Index).

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