**Communities thanked for role in Co-Design of £8m PEACEPLUS Theme 1.1 funding bid.**

At a recent public event, local communities have been updated on the submission of a significant funding bid for £8m of PEACEPLUS funding.

‘The submission of the Local Co-Designed Peace Action Plan bid marks a significant milestone in our PEACEPLUS journey,’ said Derek Moore, Chair of the DCSD Council PEACEPLUS Board. ‘The Co-Design phase, where communities across our city and district put forward ideas in the public interest, lasted around 18 months. The Board are thankful for the huge effort and energy invested by local people in that process. The result now is that 58 projects have been included and hopefully, funding will follow. Collectively, these projects should make a difference to cross-community engagement, peace and reconciliation and key needs in our council area.’

It is estimated that Derry City and Strabane District Council, believed to be the first council to submit its bid, will hear early in 2024 about the outcome of the application. ‘In the next stage of the process, we move to procurement,’ said Jacki Connolly, Co-Chair. ‘The projects will be publicly tendered on a rolling basis. Local Community and Voluntary Sector organizations are encouraged to look at the opportunities and to bid to win the contracts. Tendering is not the same as a grant application, but it’s a similar skillset. A number of training and information sessions about the opportunities and about tendering will be run in the coming months.’

‘We’re delighted to have reached this point in the process,’ said Sue Divin, PEACE Manager in DCSD Council. ‘Our bid is under a specific part of the PEACEPLUS Programme for local councils to bid for. We’d also highlight that there are 21 other parts of the PEACEPLUS programme, including Theme 1.2 Small Grants opportunities. The SEUPB are in charge of that and interested groups should look out for those opportunities on the SEUPB website. We’d strongly encourage groups from our council area to apply to maximize the benefit from PEACEPLUS funding together.’

Anyone wishing to receive information about future Tendering opportunities under DCSDC Local Co-Designed Action Plan should visit the website and sign up for direct email updates on: <https://www.derrystrabane.com/community/peace-plus>

The Peace Team in council can be reached via peace@derrystrabane.com

The PEACEPLUS Programme is a funding partnership between the European Union, the Governments of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and the Northern Ireland Executive and will be administered by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). Match-funding for this element of the PEACEPLUS Programme has been provided by the Executive Office in Northern Ireland and the Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government in Ireland.