

North Belfast
Community Action
Project

Memo

To: Mr. Danny McNeill
From: Mrs. Sandra Buchan
Date: 01/02/02
Re: Ardoyne Development Work

Please find attached a recommendation with respect to progressing work in the Ardoyne area.

I am happy to discuss.

Sandra Buchan

Sandra Buchan

James

Approved,

Danny

1.2.02

Ardoyne Development Work

Background

The community of Upper Ardoyne has been involved in the much-publicised Holy Cross Primary School protest/dispute since June 2001. Although the months of July and August of 2001 were relatively quiet, the violence re-ignited on September 3 when the children returned to school. Between September and December 2001 the protests were daily and the tension between the two communities - Upper Ardoyne (Glenbryn) and Ardoyne - led to violent street riots.

The suspension of the protest in December 2001 has created an opportunity to work with both communities, not only to resolve the Holy Cross situation but to create / build on the existing community infrastructure.

Community Capacity Building

The starting point of the communities of the Ardoyne/Upper Ardoyne areas are poles apart.

Glenbryn's starting point for developing the community infrastructure is in its infancy. There are a number of groups in the area but they are working in opposition to one another and the leadership is very weak. There are a number of key community activists, however the 'community leadership' is constantly changing as tensions grow between the members

The Nationalist Ardoyne community has worked hard to create a vibrant community infrastructure that continues to grow and will require further support for some specific pieces of work to enable the groups involved to develop their capacity and meet their aspirations. The Loyalist Upper Ardoyne is totally fragmented and lacks any cohesion.

The Task

The key groups involved with the Ardoyne Focus Group (13 in total) have identified the need for consultancy support to enable them to progress their thinking with respect to the development of an Ardoyne Community Forum that would be representative of the whole community and enable them to develop a more 'professional' approach.

For this piece of work, I would envisage a series of planning days to support the development of a strategic plan and a clear structure for the proposed Ardoyne community forum.

The Ardoyne Focus Group, as part of its developmental role, is keen to develop new premises in the area that could be accessed by all community organisations. To progress this, a statement of need and (if it stacks up) an option / economic appraisal is required. If the outcome of the appraisal process is positive, it would be the group's intention to make an application under URBAN II.

Recommendation

The development of a local community forum for the whole Ardoyne area would prove a useful mechanism towards the development of an inter-community forum for this troubled area. It is important that the Ardoyne community have an 'early win' from the Project as they have a great deal of scepticism about the value of the work and their perceptions are that the Project has a focus on weak community infrastructure only – i.e. that it is a Protestant initiative.

Given the time-bounded nature of this Project and the need to urgently engage with the community organisations in the Ardoyne area, I would recommend that the Team consider a single tender action for the strategic development work, in this instance.

I would intend to discuss the possible consultant with the group (Ardoyne Focus Group) and to select one that they feel comfortable with. The consultant would of course have to be on the Panel of Approved Consultants for the Local Strategic Partnerships (developed through public advertisement by DSD), the Government Purchasing Agency's list of approved service providers and the DSD Economics Branch select list.

With respect to the statement of need / economic appraisal I recommend that Terms of Reference are drawn up for the work and tendered to a minimum of three (3) consultants from the three lists mentioned above.

If this approach is approved, I will discuss the next steps with Michael Liggett during the week commencing 4 February, 2002.

For your consideration & advice.

Sandra Buchan
01 February 2002



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Hand delivered
via Derek Wheeler
24/01/02
SB

22 January 2002

RE: REQUEST FOR RESOURCES

Dear Sandra,

SB 25/01/02

Following our conversation on 16-01-02 I wish to request assistance to implement the following measures which I believe will go a long way in alleviating inter and intra community strife and develop more efficient and effective infrastructures.

1. Since 25th May 2000, with the assistance of BEPB, BRO North team and NICVA, an attempt at laying the foundations of an Ardoyne/Marrowbone Forum was set in motion. A constitution was drawn up by the groups in the area and after a consensus was achieved the mechanism was launched at an inaugural meeting in May 2000. Groups were asked to complete an application form which were subsequently collected by the Ardoyne Focus Group.
Since that date the Forum has only come together to deal with the Holy Cross School crisis. A considerable amount of work has to be completed to assist the Forum operate in a community development role. This work could be assisted through intervention by the North Belfast Community Action Project by supplying the resources to underpin a series of planning days. The outcome of the planning days would be a Forum with a clear function for strategic community planning, and precise sector position with regard to their authority and autonomy.
2. Since 1996 the community sector within Ardoyne completed a needs analysis to identify and justify a 'new-build' to house the myriad of community groups with a view to centralizing the same within a purpose-built premises. This bid fell by the wayside due to the failure to agree land purchase price. The deficiency remains. The Ardoyne Focus Group, as part of its developmental role in community organising also recognize this deficiency and believe it effectively hampers growth and efficiency.
We identified 5 possible options to relocate our operation which currently operates from leased premises at Brompton Park. We believe that intervention by the North Belfast Community Action Project by supplying resources to finance and assist an economic appraisal at this time would enhance our opportunity to bid for Urban II monies.

I hope the explanation for our request is presented clearly and let me once again thank you for your time and assistance in this matter. Should you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me at the above numbers.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Liggett
Project Coordinator

Charity Inland Revenue No XR40644