



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Health and Environmental Services Committee
Subject:	Request for Funding for Phase VI to Support work of Belfast Healthy Cities
Date:	5 th September 2012
Reporting Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Head of Environmental Health, Ext 3281

1.0	Relevant Background Information
1.1	At its meeting on 7 th January 2009, the Committee agreed to endorse an application to the World Health Organisation for the re-designation of Belfast under Phase V of the Healthy Cities Network (2009 -2013), and at its meeting in June 2009 agreed to financial funding of Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC) for a three year programme from April, 2010 to March, 2013.
1.2	Belfast was first designated by the WHO European Healthy Cities Network in 1988 and the city has been a key member since that time. Belfast Healthy Cities, which operates through a Board of Directors from various statutory and voluntary agencies and a small staff team, has worked over the past four phases of the initiative to place health and wellbeing on the policy agenda of all agencies within the city; to create a real partnership approach across sectors; and to promote understanding and action to address inequity in health throughout the city.
1.3	Phase V began in 2009 and runs until March, 2013. The main theme of Phase V has been <i>Health and Health Equity in All Local Policies</i> . Belfast Healthy Cities has played, and continues to play, a role in assisting the Council to support some of its corporate priorities, particularly in helping it make the linkages between health and improving quality of life. This role is all the more important given the changes proposed under RPA (which will include a new Power of Wellbeing for councils) and the new joint working arrangements that have been set up with the Public Health Agency and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust in the work of the Health Development Unit and the delivery of the Belfast Strategic Partnership's action plan: A framework for action to address life inequalities, 2011-2015.
1.4	Another key element in the success of the Healthy Cities approach is the added benefits that cities can attain from being able to network with other cities internationally. The coming together of different perspectives and approaches on common themes can significantly enhance initiatives for health improvement and can often help reinforce confidence in an approach being adopted within a city.

1.5	The Head of Environmental Health is currently a member of the Belfast Healthy Cities Board of Directors and the Chair of the Health and Environmental Services Committee is considered to be the lead politician representing Belfast at the European business meetings. The Council is also one of the core funders of the organisation and its programmes.
1.6	<p>The application for designation for Phase V (2009 – 2013) was made in May 2009. Phase V has three sub themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1. Caring and supportive environments: <i>A healthy City should be above all a city for all its citizens, inclusive, supportive, sensitive and responsive to their diverse needs and expectations.</i> • Theme 2. Healthy Living: <i>A healthy City provides conditions and opportunities supportive of healthy lifestyles.</i> • Theme 3. Healthy Urban Environment & Design: <i>A Healthy City offers a physical and built environment that supports health, recreation and wellbeing, safety, social interaction, easy mobility, a sense of pride and cultural identity and which is accessible to the needs of all its citizens.</i>

2.0	Key Issues
2.1	It is key that the focus of future funding to BHC by the Council also supports and complements the work of the Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) and the work of the Health Development Unit and in particular supports the relevant working groups and themes identified in the Framework for Action.
2.2	BHC have presented a case and work programme review demonstrating how it intends to support the Corporate work on tackling health and inequalities and in particular continue to support the Council's bid to achieve WHO designation as an 'Age Friendly City'.
2.3	<p>BHC has identified work that supports that of the BSP Framework and BCC Investment programme commitments. Key actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age Friendly Cities – BHC has a central role working directly with BCC and HASP (Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership), a partnership within BSP, established as a result of BHC's work on Healthy Ageing, to support the city to become an 'Age Friendly City' • Healthy Living, concentrating on well being; active living; and active travel. BHC support the Active Belfast Partnership; e.g. by leading in the development of the walkability index with BCC and Queens University and ensuring that health and inequalities is a core element of the DRD Active Travel Strategy
2.4	A mid way review of BHC Phase V programmes, 2009 – 2011 was carried in 2011/2012 by an external independent consultant to assess BHC's achievements and effectiveness in programme delivery.
2.5	The key findings were that progress has been achieved on 98% of all stated actions and represented an exceptionally high standard of performance consistent across all of the key areas. Key outputs over the two and a half years were:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement of 2253 participants in a wide range of activities aimed at addressing health inequalities; • Delivery of high level lecture series by international experts in the field of health and in equalities; • During 2009-July 2011 BHC responded to 22 government policies related to healthy urban environment (land use; regeneration; transport and built environment); • Establishment of key intersectoral groups with progress on all action plans; Healthy Urban Planning; Climate Change & Health; Health Equity in All Policies; • Production and circulation of over 7000 copies of reports and information resources and use of BHC website resources averaging over 800 hits per month.
2.6	<p>BHC has prepared a business case to demonstrate the effectiveness of the programmes it has delivered and to make the case for continued future Council funding to support their work. The report is attached.</p>
2.7	<p>Belfast Healthy Cities is funded by Belfast City Council, the Public Health Agency, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The funding commitment from Belfast City Council is currently around £80,000 per year and this is secured until the end of this financial year (as agreed in June 2009). Further funding commitments are now required to ensure that Belfast Healthy Cities can continue to operate and can meet the objectives of Phase V until 2013 and support Phase VI from 2013/14 to March 2016.</p>

3.0	Resource Implications
3.1	<p>Financial</p> <p>In 2008/2009, the Council provided £78,660 by way of grant funding to Belfast Healthy Cities and there is approval to continue this level of funding (with an inflationary increase) within this financial year. This funding agreement was approved in June 2006 for three years (from April 2007 - March 2010) and again in 2009 (April 2010 – March 2013). A revised and more formal funding agreement between the Council and Belfast Healthy Cities was put in place in 2012, with advice from the Director of Legal Services.</p>
3.2	<p>A similar level of funding for a further 3 years (April 2013 – March 2016) is now being sought by BHC. Members should note that whilst a figure of £78, 660 was agreed in 2009 the inflationary increase has brought this up to £89,586 in 2012.</p>
3.3	<p>It is suggested that given the efficiencies which BCC (including the Health and Environmental Services Department) needs to find within its Revenue Estimates that the Committee may wish to consider reducing the grant to BHC by £10,000 to £80,000k.</p>
3.4	<p>If this is agreed the future funding could be set at a fixed annual contribution of £80,000 which equates to the base figure agreed 3 years ago) for 2013- 2014 and the subsequent next 2 years, subject and conditional on budget estimating and affordability plus a satisfactory review of the project delivery specified as part of a future funding agreement.</p>

3.5	The other funding organisations are the Public Health Agency, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. They have collectively committed to a total annual contribution of £207, 000.
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4.0	Equality Implications
4.1	None.

5.0	Recommendation
5.1	It is recommended that the Committee agrees to continue to provide funding to support the delivery of the WHO Phase V priorities by Belfast Healthy Cities at a fixed level of £80,000 a year from April, 2013 – March, 2014 and for a further two years, subject to budget estimating and delivery against the programmes within the funding agreement.

	Document Attached
DRAFT: Belfast Healthy Cities: Funding for 2013 – 2016 from Phase V (2009-2013) and Phase VI (2014-2018)	

DRAFT: Belfast Healthy Cities: Funding for 2013 – 2016 from Phase V (2009-2013) and Phase VI (2014-2018)

Relevant Background Information

Belfast has been successfully designated to each of the five phases since of the World Health Organisation European Healthy Cities Network since 1988. Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC) has been instrumental within the city in putting health and inequalities on the agenda of political and administrative decision makers. BHC remain a strong lobby for promoting health outside of the health sector; open new doors and engage new sectors and departments (who previously did not consider health) in tackling issues that affect people's health and contribute to inequalities. Through its intersectoral groups of other agencies and government departments, BHC builds relationships and creates discussion forum for BCC to engage. BHC have an effective and experienced partnership approach delivering innovative intersectoral programmes, and building capacity across all sectors at the local level to improve quality of life and well being, essential to attract investment and economic growth.

The success of the programmes and approach Belfast Healthy Cities pioneered in the city are now adopted in BCC Healthier City Plan and Belfast Strategic Partnership but much remains to be done to tackle inequalities. At a European level, Belfast is a leading member of the European Network, and promotes Belfast on the European and global stage, building networks necessary to build Belfast as a healthier city. Since its inception, Belfast City Council has been a core partner in Belfast Healthy Cities.

BHC operate through a Board of Directors with a number of working groups that have representatives from the public, voluntary, community and university sectors, chaired by senior staff across agencies/departments. The Chair of the Health & Environmental Services Committee is the lead politician for Belfast within WHO. BHC have a small core team of five staff and the strategic and operational content for each phase is agreed by the Board of Directors in consultation with all partners to meet the needs of the city. The Head of Environmental Health is the BCC representative on BHC Board.

The success of BHC resulted in WHO Europe inviting BHC to be the WHO Secretariat function of the WHO European Networks which is operated from the BHC office at no cost to local funders.

Belfast Healthy Cities continues to have a valuable role in supporting Belfast City Council to meet its corporate objectives and a fundamental and key role in supporting the implementation of the Investment programme, tackling health inequalities; assisting implementation of the BCC Healthier City Plan and are a central partner in delivering Belfast Strategic Partnership's (BSP) Framework to address life inequalities.

Key themes

BHC will continue to deliver the core themes of Phase V, reflecting the commitments within BCC Investment Programme and the BSP framework. WHO has announced Phase VI (2014-2018) and whilst work on Phase V core themes is well developed, preparations for a transition and the city's application to Phase VI will be initiated in 2013 whilst continuing delivery of Phase V priorities in the city.

The overall goal of phase V is '**Health & Health Equity in All Local policies**', now an underlying theme within BSP Framework for Action to tackle life inequalities and BCC Healthier City Plan.

BHC deliver this programme on their behalf and have worked directly with:

- **Parks & Leisure** in developing the draft '**Council's Growing Communities Strategy**', supporting its clear focus on promoting health and in addressing inequalities.
- the **Children & Young People's Partnership** and 'Belfast Better Outcomes for children' group, supporting delivery of the BSP framework with a focus on investing in early years, essential in addressing inequalities in health and the widening inequalities gap in the city.
- Policy developments plans are in place for 2012/2014
- BHC success has led to Belfast being invited by WHO to be the lead city in the Health equity Sub network and representing Belfast will be BSP partner organisations.

BHC through its policy and action programmes maximise health benefits to communities, tackling deprivation and inequalities by developing a supportive built environment through land use planning and regeneration; developing skills and knowledge; investing in early years; engaging communities all of which are key to tackling inequalities and building a healthier city as reflected in BSP framework and BCC Investment programme commitments.

Theme 1: Caring & Supportive Environments, concentrating on **children & older people**:

- **Child Friendly Cities** - KidSquare in St. Anne Square and the Child Friendly Neighbourhoods in Lenadoon and Suffolk successfully delivered projects under this theme in 2011. Putting children at the heart of decision making to influence their neighbourhood environment and city centre space, promotes art and culture and economic and tourist benefits for the city centre and creates child and family friendly environments. The project is being transferred to a number of other communities in 12/13 and is being promoted through the University of West of England, a WHO Collaborating Centre on the built environment as pioneering work.
- **Age Friendly Cities** – BHC will have a central role working directly with BCC and HASP (Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership), a partnership within BSP, established as a result of BHC's work on Healthy Ageing, to support the city to develop 'Age Friendly City' indicators in consultation with older people and the development of the action plan to support Belfast's commitment to becoming a WHO Age Friendly City. BHC will provide direct contact with WHO for BCC and learning from across other European cities on good practice.

Theme 2: Healthy Living, concentrating on **well being; active living; and active travel**.

BHC supports:

- **Active Belfast Partnership** within BSP at both operational and strategic level to tackle health inequalities and as a member of the PARC Steering Group of the Connswater Greenway to increase physical activity levels.
- BCC and Queens University in developing and implementing a '**walkability index**'; promoting Belfast as 'a walkable city' which encourages tourism and investment

- **DRD Active Travel Strategy** – BHC worked directly with DRD providing evidence on the health impacts of active travel, focusing on inequalities, accessibility and social, community benefits as well as mental well being benefits which resulted in health and inequalities being a core element within the strategy.
- BCC 'bike hire scheme' will be supported by BHC/BSP Regeneration & Healthy Urban Planning group, facilitated by BHC staff.

Theme 3: Healthy Urban Environment: The BHC Regeneration and Healthy Urban Environment group has representation from senior staff from DSD, DoE, DRD and DSD, is now accepted within BSP as having a mandate to deliver projects that contribute to the regeneration, supports the implementation of the Investment Programme commitments of Economy and People, Communities and Neighbourhoods maximising health benefits and tackling inequalities through regeneration to communities. The BHC/BSP action plan has been adopted by BCC Healthier City Plan to be delivered by BHC.

Key BHC programmes:

- **Implementation of the Good for Health, Good for Regeneration; Good from Belfast**, urban development indicators with action research pilots in three of the five Belfast Area Partnerships: East; South and North working to maximise the health benefits to communities of a number of regeneration projects including the new UUJ campus in Belfast.
- **Child Friendly Cities** – a sub group established & project plans include supporting the creation of Child Friendly Space in New Lodge Long Streets, a NIHE Regeneration Project in partnership with local agencies; promotion of Children's Environment Charter; development of a toolkit to support child friendly environments with DSD Streets Ahead Phase 2 and Phase 3, promoting the concept of a network of child and family friendly spaces in the city centre; plans for KidsSquare, Belfast City Hall October 2012; all of which encourage and promote economic and tourism benefits.
- **Climate Change & Health:** Sustainable Food & Obesity project with young people, contributing to Restaurant Week
- **Capacity Building & policy influence with all sectors:** Development of Tool/Guidance on Land Use Planning & links for other sectors; Publication of *Healthy Places: Strong Foundations* as a resource for organisations on the impact on health of issues related to land use planning, regeneration, housing & the built environment; response to policies on planning and the built environment to promote health and well being with a focus on addressing inequalities.
- **BCC Master plan:** creating opportunities to maximise health benefits to communities and to address health inequalities

Capacity Building & Training:

BHC support BCC and BSP partners by delivering training and carrying out publications to increase capacity and leadership for health, well being and inequalities. Plans include:

- *2012: Equity in Health: Leadership for the Common Good, Master class series*
- Lecture Series bi annually with WHO and international speakers on key subjects: 2012 Health For All: Stronger Equity & Better Governance
- *A Guide for Political Representatives: Tackling Inequalities & promoting well being, produced in 2011.*
- BHC publish evidence base & health profiles that includes information on the unequal distribution of health across the city and across population groups

- Host an electronic library resource with 500 publications *on inequalities; healthy urban environment; active living; climate change & health; transport; children & young people and well being for use by staff from other sectors*

External Mid Way Review:

A mid way review of BHC Phase V programmes, 2009 – 2011 was carried in 2011/12 by an external independent consultant to assess BHC achievements and effectiveness in programme delivery.

The key findings were that progress has been achieved on 98% of all stated actions and represented an exceptionally high standard of performance consistent across all of the key areas. Key outputs over the two and a half years were:

- Engagement of 2253 participants in a wide range of activities
- Delivery of high level lecture series by international experts in the field of health and in equalities
- During 2009-July 2011 BHC responded to 22 government policies related to healthy urban environment (land use; regeneration; transport and built environment)
- Establishment of key intersectoral groups with progress on all action plans; Healthy Urban Planning; Climate Change & Health; Health Equity in All Policies, which now take forward two key areas for within BSP framework.
- Production and circulation of over 7000 copies of reports and information resources and use of BHC website resources averaging over 800 hits per month

Key outcomes:

- Policy development and influence for improving quality of life and tackling inequalities;
- Capacity building to develop skills and knowledge to tackle health inequalities
- Network developments to support a healthier city
- Collaborative engagement to influence health and inequalities
- Opening new doors with sectors and departments who have not previously been involved in health to support health inequalities

Critical Success Factors:

- Independence of BHC from specific stakeholder groups
- Innovative approach of BHC in addressing inequalities
- Access to a European network which offers international models of good practice
- Range of staff skill, experience, expertise and high level commitment in the field of health and inequalities was a critical component to the success
- Maximum use of limited resources to support sectors to deliver health benefit to communities

Resource Implications

Financial

BCC has been a partner and funder of BHC since it was officially designated as part of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network in 1988. The Healthy Cities Network is in Phase V which runs from 2009-2013 and BCC and the other key funding partners (PHA, Housing Executive and BHSCT) endorsed designation to Phase V. Phase VI is to run from 2014 and Belfast, as one of the core cities of the Network, hopes to again seek designation.

BCC current funding arrangements are for approximately £90,000 for 2012/13. The Health and Environmental Services Committee is asked by BHC to approve funding for the same amount from April 2013 to March 2016 to cover the remainder of Phase V work and to move forward into Phase VI.

This allows BHC to lever temporary funds from other sources for specific temporary projects.

In times of economic downturn it is particularly important that addressing inequalities remains high on the agenda of all sectors in the city and BHC success to date and wealth of experience is well placed to support BCC deliver its commitment within the Investment programme on inequalities and the BSP Framework and to continue to bring leading edge practice from WHO Europe to support building a healthier city.