



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Developing Belfast as an Age Friendly City
<b>Date:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2012
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Council has identified older people as a key priority under its theme of “Better support for people and communities”.
1.2	In Belfast 19.65% of the population is currently over 60 and it is estimated that by 2030 25% of people in Belfast will be over 65 years of age. As a city we must plan for an ageing society and adopt our structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with their varying needs and capabilities.
1.3	The World Health Organisation (WHO) has established a global Network of Age Friendly Cities that encourage active ageing by optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people grow older. The WHO has produced a guide and checklist to help cities assess themselves from the perspective of older people and identify how they can become more age friendly. If a city meets this list of criteria and makes an application to the WHO it can be awarded “Age Friendly” status.
1.4	Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) through its “Framework For Action to address life inequalities 2011- 2015” highlights the opportunity to achieve an age friendly city and improve healthy and active aging. It also recognises the role of the Healthy Aging Strategic Partnership (HASP) to lead on a joined up approach to plan and deliver services for older people. HASP will form part of the mechanism for this delivery, support posts for the partnership are part funded by the Council.
1.5	On 23rd March the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed that the Council should sign the “Age Friendly Declaration”, the first formal step in the process towards Belfast becoming an Age Friendly City. This decision was ratified by Council on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2012. The Lord Mayor signed the Declaration at the Senior Citizens Convention in the City Hall on the 15 <sup>th</sup> May. The Declaration commits Belfast to participate in the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly cities and commence a 5 year cycle of continuous assessment and improvement to make Belfast more age friendly.
1.6	Under the direction of the Older Peoples All Party Reference Group, an initial baseline study was commissioned to establish how age friendly Belfast currently is and what needs

	<p>to be done to enable Belfast to make an application to WHO for Age Friendly Status. The baseline assessment was made against the 8 WHO age friendly criteria and was made from the perspective of the 103 older people (from the seniors forums) who participated in the consultation event held in Belfast Castle in early March. This study is now complete and the report is attached in Appendix 1.</p> <p>The initial study identified the main priority areas for improvement in the city for older persons to be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Community and health services, followed by</li> <li>2. Transportation, and</li> <li>3. Housing.</li> </ol> <p>The report also provides information on the aspects of each criterion that older people think are done well or need to be improved. Given the successful feedback from the Older people conference in City hall on the 15<sup>th</sup> May there was further views and ideas expressed which will be fed into the initial study. Further, it recommends how Belfast City Council should use this information and the steps to be taken to create an Age Friendly City.</p>
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<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<p>Belfast City Council has committed to participate in the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly cities and commence a 5 year cycle of continuous assessment and improvement to make Belfast a more age friendly city.</p>
2.2	<p>The baseline study of “Belfast as an Age Friendly City” (Appendix 1) recommends the following next steps:</p>
2.3	<p><u>Develop Consultation Methods</u>  More extensive consultation is required to develop the baseline further and seek the views of those who may not be represented through the existing senior’s forums. These are likely to include groups such as carers, care and nursing homes and men who may be particularly isolated.</p>
2.4	<p><u>Produce a detailed technical report and action plan</u>  A second more detailed technical report will have to be developed following wider consultation and review of data and literature. This will enable BSP to agree a 3 year action plan and identify indicators which can be submitted to WHO for review and endorsement.</p>
2.5	<p><u>Establish an annual Age Friendly Summit</u>  Following the award of Age Friendly Status BSP should hold an annual age Friendly summit which should build on and replace the current Annual Senior Citizens Conventions.</p>
2.6	<p><u>Establish an Age Friendly Steering Group and governance arrangements</u>  In order to develop an age friendly city the different sectors and organisations across the city, including the voluntary sector and those representing older people, must plan and work together. Belfast Strategic Partnership, incorporating the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership could deliver such a collaborative approach as it is a key area of work within its Framework for Action. HASP are supportive of this approach and will make a proposal to BSP on Governance arrangements on the agreement of this Committee.</p> <p>Updates on progress will be provided to the Strategic Policy and Resources committee via the older people All Party Reference Group.</p>

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	It is anticipated that Belfast City Council's contribution will be delivered within existing budget estimates. Staff from Belfast Health Development Unit, and HASP which is part funded by council, will support this project. Money from the older people's thematic budget may be used to organise events and carryout further research etc. BSP will be asked through the paper from HASP to provide additional staff and financial support as necessary.

<b>4</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
4.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <p>(i) Consider the attached report (Appendix 1) on the baseline study of "Belfast as an Age Friendly City" and agree the next steps towards Belfast being recognised by the WHO as an "Age Friendly City"; and</p> <p>(ii) Agree that the Belfast Strategic Partnership should provide the Governing Structure for the Age Friendly Approach and support HASP in a collaborative approach to deliver Belfast as an Age Friendly City.</p>

<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
<p>BSP – Belfast Strategic Partnership  HASP – Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership  WHO – World Health Organisation</p>

<b>Documents Attached</b>
Appendix 1 - Age Friendly Initial Baseline Report