



Belfast City Council

Report to: Strategic Policy & Resources Committee

Subject: Healthy Cities - Expression of Interest letter to Phase VI (2014-2019)

Date: 22 November 2013

Reporting Officer: Siobhan Toland, Head of Environmental Health

Contact Officer: Siobhan Toland, Head of Environmental Health

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>Belfast was first designated to 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 five phases of the initiative to place health and wellbeing on the policy agenda of all agencies within the city; to create an intersectoral approach across sectors; and to promote understanding and action to address inequity in health throughout the city.</p> <p>Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC) has therefore played, and continues to play, an important part in assisting the Council to meet its corporate priorities, particularly in helping it make the linkages between health, improving quality of life and inequalities and enhances the Council's civic leadership role in this area. The role is all the more important given the additional responsibilities that will be within the remit of Council during the Phase VI (2014-2019) period. BHC also supports work programmes within the Belfast Strategic Partnership and leads the work on Regeneration & Healthy Urban Environments and actively contributes to the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership and to the Active Belfast/Active Travel group.</p> <p>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. BHC is very successful in bringing expert speakers to build knowledge within the city on key health and equity issues. 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.</p> <p>The Head of Environmental Health is currently a member of the Belfast Healthy Cities Board of Directors. The Chair of the Health and Environmental Services</p>

	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. Other funders are Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Belfast Health & Social Care Trust.
--	--

2	Key Issues
----------	-------------------

	The WHO Healthy Cities Network will come to an end in 2013 and Phase VI of the Network will operate from 2014 – 2019. Dr Eddie Rooney, Chief Executive, Public Health Agency has indicated support for the city applying for membership to the WHO Phase VI Healthy Cities Network. The first stage of making the application is to submit a letter of ‘expression of interest’ to WHO. This is submitted on behalf of Belfast by Dr Eddie Rooney and the Lord Mayor.
--	---

	Dr Agis Tsouros, will be in Belfast on 28/29 November 2013 and it is planned that the ‘expression of interest letter’ will be presented to Dr Tsouros by the Lord Mayor and Dr Rooney at Belfast Healthy Cities 25 th Anniversary event on 29 th November. On receipt of this, WHO will make the decision if Belfast will be invited to submit a full application to Phase VI, based on Belfast’s delivery on the Phase V themes.
--	---

	The second stage of the application is to submit a full Phase VI application identifying the priorities to be taken forward during Phase VI. A workshop will be held on 10 January 2013 with senior officials from government departments and the Chief Executives from Belfast City Council, Public Health Agency, Belfast HSC Trust and Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The full application should be submitted by the end of March 2014.
--	--

3	Resource Implications
----------	------------------------------

	The Health & Environmental Services Committee meeting on 5 September 2012, agreed commitment to support the Belfast Healthy Cities until March 2016.
--	--

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
----------	---

	None
--	------

5	Recommendations
----------	------------------------

	It is recommended that the Lord Mayor will jointly with Dr Eddie Rooney present the expression of interest letter to Dr Tsouros, whilst he is here on 29 th November 2013.
--	---

6	Decision Tracking
----------	--------------------------

	None required
--	---------------

7	Key to Abbreviations
----------	-----------------------------

	WHO – World Health Organization BHC- Belfast Healthy Cities
--	--

8	Documents Attached
----------	---------------------------

	Official Call for Expression of Interest to Phase VI of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Draft expression of interest letter Lord Mayor & Dr Rooney
--	---