



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	OFMDFM Active Ageing Strategy 2014-20 Consultation Response
Date:	18 th April 2014
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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will be aware Belfast, like other communities across the world, is facing the challenges of an aging population. Currently 19% of the population of Belfast is over 60 and this is expected to rise to 36% by 2050.
1.2	Members will also recall the Council has identified older people as a priority within its current corporate plan, and Belfast became the first area in Northern Ireland to join the World Health Organisation Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. At the Council's request, Belfast Strategic Partnership has developed a 3 year Age-friendly Belfast Plan which it will implement 2014 -2017.
1.3	The Council's work programme in this area is directed and overseen by the All Party Reference Group on Older People, currently chaired by Councillor Bernie Kelly.
1.4	On 21 st February 2014 the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister launched their Active Ageing Strategy 2014 -2020 for public consultation.
1.5	The strategy is designed to make a real difference to the quality of life for older people and to enable as many people as possible to enjoy the benefits and rewards of life for as long as possible. The strategy seeks to recognise the diversity of older people and challenge the negative stereotype that they are a cost to society when they are actually an asset.
1.6	The aims of this strategy are closely aligned to those within the Age-friendly Belfast Action Plan and it is anticipated its implementation will significantly contribute towards Belfast becoming a more Age-friendly City.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The Active Ageing Strategy sets a vision that "Northern Ireland is an age- friendly region in which all people, as they get older, are valued and supported to live actively to their fullest potential; with their rights and dignity protected". To help achieve an Age-friendly Northern Ireland the action plan proposes to assist the eleven new Councils becoming members of the WHO Age-friendly Cities and communities network. This would appear to endorse the approach taken by Belfast joining the network in 2012 and producing its 3 year plan in 2014. Age-friendly Belfast should significantly benefit from such support.

2.2	<p>The strategy sets out 5 strategic aims based on UN principles for older people, to promote :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independence: choice and control in their lives through the co-ordinated delivery of good warm housing in safe neighbourhoods, accessible transport, adequate income and standard of living, access to social networks and good user friendly information and equal access to participation in the workplace. 2. Participation: active participation of older people in all aspects of life, including social participation which helps address isolation and loneliness and ensures that older people are properly integrated, valued and included in society; to promote the active participation and citizenship of older people in decision making on policies, the provision of services and volunteering opportunities. 3. Care: equal access to high quality health and social care services, which promote and maintain physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing, and support those with long-term conditions. Health and social care services should conform to best practice and be informed by continuous professional development, research, individual preference and need. 4. Self-fulfilment: To support older people to develop to the fullest of their potential through promoting education, training, leisure and arts opportunities which will support the development of life skills, positive mental, emotional and physical health and wellbeing. 5. Dignity: protect the human rights of older people
2.3	<p>here; to uphold dignity and respect for older people in all areas of life; to promote equality, address inequality, challenge ageism and outlaw discrimination, recognising the additional challenges faced by older people with multiple identities such as gender, age, religion, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation and the locality that they grew up in.</p>
2.4	<p>It is envisaged that these aims will be delivered by Government departments, agencies and health and social services. They will be used to direct their own policies, programmes and services to improve the lives of older people.</p>
2.5	<p>The Strategy also includes a wide ranging action plan of additional programmes to help address issues such as fuel poverty, benefit uptake, decision making, dementia services, safer homes, carers support, education, transportation and legislation.</p>
	<p>Members are asked to consider and agree the draft response to OFMDFM (in Appendix1) which includes the following the key areas this committee may wish to highlight for consideration :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The potential to simplify the strategy so it is clearer and more concise, ▪ The need for the strategy and action plan to have clear outcomes and indicators against which it can be monitored and evaluated, ▪ The need for the strategy to recognise the importance of strong partnerships at regional and at local level to effectively deliver aims, ▪ The need to recognise the essential role of Councils, particularly through leading the Community Planning process, this will give older people the opportunity to influence the shape of local services ▪ The need to further emphasise the important role community planning has for the other Government Departments and agencies at the table who will need to develop and deliver targeted resources for agreed outcomes, ▪ The need consider to establishing an regional Age-friendly forum including the Public Health Agency, DOE and the eleven new Councils to collaborate, share information and resources, ▪ The need to consider developing a regional positive ageing campaign, involving local Age-friendly Partnerships, to promote the value of older people, to encourage respect and

	<p>improve intergenerational relationships,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The need with reflect the current proposals published by the DSD in February 2014 to roll out the affordable warmth scheme across Northern Ireland and to work with all Councils to target the 33,000 households who are spending more than 25% of their income on fuel. The Action Plan should seek to clarify the full extent of actions planned to tackle fuel poverty over the next 6 years. ▪ To support the proposal for the DHSSP/Public Health Agency to extend and enhance the home safety check scheme, currently delivered by Councils, to promote the health and wellbeing of older people and reduce accidents through a home visitation scheme which will also make small home improvements and fit equipment. Councils may be ideally placed to manage such a scheme provided it is fully funded by DHSSP/PHA
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	HR Implications None
3.2	Financial implications None
3.3	Equipment Implications None

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	Equality screening has been carried out.

5	Recommendation and decision
5.1	Members are asked to consider the consultation response to the Active Ageing Strategy and agree the response to OFMDFM.

6	Decision Tracking
6.1	Belfast City Council response will be forwarded to OFMDFM by member services.

Key to abbreviations	
World Health Organisation (WHO)	
Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP)	
Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP)	

Documents attached and Links to Documents	
Attached	
Appendix 1: Consultation response	
Links	
Active Ageing Strategy 2014-20 consultation summary http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/active-ageing-strategy-2014-2020-consultation-summary.pdf	
Active Ageing Strategy 2014-20 consultation full version http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/active-ageing-strategy-2014-2020-consultation.pdf	