

## Children and Young People's Strategy

# Consultation Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to provide you with an opportunity to comment on the development of the new Children and Young People's Strategy. It has intended that through this document you will have an opportunity to put forward your views to help inform this Strategy. **This questionnaire -- should be completed in association with the consultation document** available on the Department of Education website.

Copies of the consultation document and the response form can be downloaded from the Department's website at [https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/consultations/children\\_and\\_youngpeoples\\_strategy\\_2017\\_2027](https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/consultations/children_and_youngpeoples_strategy_2017_2027)

Comments on the Strategy can be made online at the DE website, sent by email or posted to the address below. The deadline for responses is **5.00 pm on Monday 27 February 2017**.

By email: [cyps.consultation@education-ni.gov.uk](mailto:cyps.consultation@education-ni.gov.uk)

By writing to: Children and Young People's Strategy Team

Room 6.14  
Department of Education  
Rathgael House  
43 Balloo Road  
Rathgill  
BANGOR BT19 7PR

Please note that all responses will be treated as public, and may be published on the Department of Education website. If you do not want your response to be used in this way, or if you prefer for it to be used anonymously, please indicate this when responding (see Statement of Confidentiality and Access to Information at the end of this questionnaire).

## About You

### I am responding...

As an individual

On behalf of an organisation

## Details of Organisation

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Your name            | Aideen McLaughlin<br>Play Development Officer<br>Children and Young People's Unit |
| Organisation name    | Belfast City Council  |
| Organisation address | Cecil Ward Building<br>4-10 Linenhall Street<br>Belfast<br>BT2 8BP                |

## The Proposed Aim of the Strategy

**The proposed Aim of the Executive's Children and Young People's Strategy is:**

*"To work together to improve the well-being of all children and young people in Northern Ireland - delivering positive long-lasting outcomes."*

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with the Aim as outlined above?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comments below you have relating to the aim:**

Belfast City Council welcomes the publication of the Children and Young People's Strategy 2017-27 and the overall aim to improve the well-being of all children and young people in Northern Ireland. This aim fits closely with the proposed outcomes for the Belfast Agenda, the first community plan for the city namely:

1. Growing the economy - creating jobs and investment in the city.
2. Living here - creating a great city and neighbourhood living experience and developing our programmes to support children and young people and families.
3. City development - creating the right infrastructure and regenerating our city and creating the Local Development Plan; a new spatial and land-use plan for the city.
4. Working and learning - supporting growth and connecting people to opportunities and reducing the educational inequalities that exist across the city.

In addition Belfast City Council already has in place desired outcomes for children and young people which were aligned with the previous Children and Young People's Strategy and which were founded on our commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). These outcomes included supporting children and young people to play their part in their city and communities, to be healthy, to be achieving at each stage of life, to be happy, safe and empowered. These outcomes remain relevant as we move forward with the proposed Children and Young people's strategy 2017-27.

This response is in line with the Council's response to the consultation on the draft Programme for Government.

Belfast City Council has an active Youth Forum made up of young people from across the city who act as the voice of children and young people, campaign on issues that affect them and lobby policy makers and decision-makers to consider the needs and interest of children and young people when taking decisions that may affect them.

## Proposed Key Principles

The consultation document proposes key principles that the Strategy and its delivery will be guided by. These key principles are listed below:

- Participation
- Partnership
- Co-design
- Evidence-informed
- Focused on early intervention
- Age-appropriate actions
- Rights-based
- Subject to review

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the key principles:

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comments you may have relating to the key principles, including details of any you would add, change or remove:

Belfast City Council agrees with the key principles but would highlight that the term early intervention can mean different things to different things to different organisations and perhaps it would be helpful to widen the definition to ensure that it is understood that the term "early intervention" can refer both to early years and early stage intervention.

It may also be useful to include the principle of Protection here as it would fit with the safeguarding agenda and relate to the promotion of young people's rights, supporting them to achieve and keeping them safe from harm.

With regard to the strategy being subject to review it would be helpful to provide more detail as to how it will be reviewed, who would be involved in reviewing it and how often this would happen

## Proposed New Structures

**The consultation document proposes that new structures will be established, and existing structures utilised, to oversee the delivery of the Strategy. These structures are:**

- Ministerial led Sub-Committee for Children and Young People
- Children and Young People's Strategy Group
- Stakeholder forum
- Children and Young People's Strategy Partnership (CYPSP)
- Ongoing engagement with children and young people
- Ongoing engagement with parents and guardians
- Accessing relevant research from academia

**Please indicate to what extent you agree with the proposed structures:**

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comments you may have relating to the structures:**

Belfast City Council welcomes the proposed establishment of a Ministerial sub-committee for children and young people as this should ensure greater co-operation across Departments and a greater focus on aligning outcomes. It is noted that the proposed Children and Young People's Strategy Group will include senior representation from all Departments and representatives from other children's authorities or relevant stakeholders. From a Council perspective consideration will need to be given as to how the 11 councils across NI will be represented and what reporting mechanisms will need to be established to ensure good information exchange. It is not clear from the consultation document whether there are plans to have sub-groups of the C&YP Strategic Partnership. Further clarity is needed in respect of a terms of reference for the Strategy Group and for the Partnership and more detail as to how each will contribute to the monitoring and review of the implementation plan.

Belfast City Council welcomes the proposal to have ongoing engagement with children and young people and parents and guardians as this represents an opportunity for them to have real ownership of the strategy and shape and influence it. It is not clear who will facilitate this engagement. It will also present

challenges to organisations to actively seek the views of children and their parents and carers and demonstrate how they have implemented any suggestions for change. The Belfast City Youth Forum would hope to have a voice in ongoing engagement. It will be important for this ongoing engagement to be meaningful and real for these stakeholder groups and there will need to be a commitment to feedback what actions were taken as a result of the engagement exercises and how they have influenced the strategy.

## Proposed Outcomes to Improve Well-being

To improve well-being, the consultation document outlines **8 proposed outcomes** we want for our children and young people, these are:

- Children and young people are physically and mentally healthy.
- Children and young people enjoy play and leisure.
- Children and young people learn and achieve.
- Children and young people live in safety and stability.
- Children and young people experience economic and environmental well-being.
- Children and young people make a positive contribution to society.
- Children and young people live in a society which respects their rights.
- Children and young people live in a society in which equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted.

**For each outcome, you are asked to consider the following:**

- Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?
- How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)

**Outcome: Children and young people are physically and mentally healthy**

**Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?**

Within the 'physically and mentally healthy' outcome, the areas below have been identified as requiring the greatest effort. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each.

1. **Infants:** By establishing good health habits in the home from an early age the foundations for achieving this outcome will be established.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

*Strongly Agree* ✓ *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Focusing on infants and promoting strong attachments between children and their caregivers is a good starting point for contributing to positive physical and mental health but additionally good habits need to be further reinforced at both Primary and Post-Primary levels. A wide range of agencies will support this from Health visiting and school nurses through to Community Centres, Youth groups and After-schools provision.

Belfast City Council has delivered a range of programmes based on a whole family approach and aimed at improving outcomes for adults and children such as "Fitter Families" and Council remains committed to working in partnership with others to promote good health habits for all ages.

2. **Children and young people with mental health problems:** Concerns relate to depression and anxiety, eating disorders, drug and alcohol related problems and increased levels of self-harm.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

*Strongly Agree* ✓ *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree* Please

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

It is noted that concerns about depression and anxiety for children and young people can emerge at a young age and one of the priorities for this area will need to be ensuring that those working with children and young people are equipped to recognise and respond to early signs of mental health and signpost children and parents to appropriate services. Council welcomes the recognition of drug and alcohol related





problems as requiring a mental health response and would highlight the need to ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to this area to ensure effective intervention programmes. Often the young people experiencing mental health issues are the most difficult to reach and can disengage from services placing themselves at greater risk. There is a need therefore to have flexibility in the delivery of CAMHS and other services and increase the level of community provision to address mental health. Council would hope to contribute to this outcome the delivery of a range of leisure development programmes such as "Every Body Active 2020" and other initiatives designed to get children and young people more active.

3. **Children and young people with a disability and/or complex health needs, including life limiting conditions:** We must ensure that disabilities are not a barrier to the realisation of this or other outcomes for these children and young people.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

*Strongly Agree*    ✓ *Agree*                      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*                      *Disagree*                      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Belfast City Council agrees that all steps must be taken to support these children and young people with complex needs or disabilities to achieve their full potential and all organisations should work to remove or overcome any potential barriers.

The Sport NI Every Body Active 2020 programme of which the Council is a key delivery partner is designed to increase participation in sport and physical activity. The programme targets underrepresented and hard to reach groups including people with a disability. Under the programme the Council has a contract with Disability Sport NI to deliver 2 City wide programmes at various venues including schools, leisure and community centres and drop in centres. There is also a contract with Ulster Rugby to employ a disability coach to work with special needs schools and young people with a disability within mainstream education to increase participation in the sport.

Where possible children with disabilities are accommodated within programmes and activities in our leisure centres, examples of this include where required offering children with disabilities a number of one to one swim lessons to bring them up to the standard to allow them to take part in classes.

Carers are free when accompanying a person with a disability.

4. **Children and young people living in areas of deprivation:** Health outcomes for our children and young people can be significantly affected by where they live and whether their family experiences poverty.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Seven of the ten most deprived wards in Northern Ireland are in Belfast and many of Belfast City Council's Community Centres and Play centres are located within these areas. Council staff witness first hand the impact of poverty on the outcomes for children and young people and their families. Council seeks to deliver high quality play services, After-schools provision and local community events at no cost or low cost and we support any actions that target and support the most deprived and vulnerable families in communities. It should be acknowledged that poverty is not only experienced in areas of deprivation and it will be important to ensure that those experiencing hidden deprivation are also the focus of the strategy. Working with our partners through the delivery of "Making Life Better" strategy, The Belfast Agenda makes a commitment to reduce life inequalities and enable active, healthy and empowered citizens and by 2021 aims to be working towards the goal of a reduction of 50 percent in the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived neighbourhoods in the city.



## Outcome: Children and young people are physically and mentally healthy

### How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)

Based on the issues identified and the data currently available, the proposed headline indicators identified for the 'physically and mentally healthy' outcome are outlined below. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each indicator:

1. **Childhood obesity:** Percentage of Primary 1/Year 8 children who are obese - including breakdown by deprivation quintiles to examine the impact of deprivation.

Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?

Strongly Agree   ✓   Agree   Neither Agree nor Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:

This is a clear measurable outcome but there is perhaps scope to widen this indicator as there is evidence to suggest that as a result of an increasing sedentary lifestyle there are increasing numbers of children living in all areas who are classed as obese and interventions need to be targeted at all children within this category not only those in the areas of greatest deprivation.

Through a range of initiatives such as "Every Body Active" and other programmes, Council works in partnership with a number of other organisations to encourage communities to be more active.

2. **Low birth weight:** The proportion of babies born at a low birth weight.

Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?

Strongly Agree   ✓   Agree   Neither Agree nor Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree Please

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:

The links between low birth weight and the impact on outcomes is well documented so any action that can be taken with mothers to reduce the numbers of children born at low birth weight is to be welcomed.

Council delivers a range of different services such as Parent and Toddler Groups and and play services and would welcome the opportunity to develop partnerships and work with a range of health professionals and others to deliver programmes for prospective parents. This could include making use of local Community centres / Play Centres for ante-natal classes and education sessions on healthy eating, smoking cessation and promoting attachment through play.

3. **Mental health and emotional well-being:** Percentage of children and young people with GHQ12 scores less than or equal to 4 - signifying possible mental health problem (GHQ12 is a screening device for identifying minor psychiatric disorders).

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

It is noted that a screening tool for mental health and emotional well-being will need to be identified for younger children and for children and young people with a disability. It will be important also to ensure that children and young people with hidden disabilities such as speech and language and communication difficulties are considered when applying a screening tool as they may be hardest to assess.

Further detail is required as to who will administer the screening tool and at what point the tool will be completed. Is it completed for all children and young people who attend Community Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)? If so are there others who are experiencing poor mental health and not screened because they are not referred?

**Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the ‘physically and mentally healthy’ outcome:**

Overall the proposed indicators for this outcome will provide clear measures for assessing the physical and mental health outcomes for children and young people.

Improving Health and Well-being is one of the five core planning principles of the planning system. The SPPS states that Councils may bring forward local policies that contribute to improving health and well-being and sets out a range of health and wellbeing policy areas that could be considered. Belfast has specific local challenges around the health and well-being of its residents, evidenced as a persistent element of local inequalities over the last decade.

Ensuring that ‘Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and well-being’ is also one of the five outcomes of the Belfast Agenda, with emphasis placed on healthy lifestyles, physical and emotional well-being, reducing health inequalities and better services for those who suffer poor health. Belfast City Council will also look for opportunities to maximize the health impact of Belfast leisure transformation programme, encourage greater participation in sports, deliver the Growing Communities Strategy and address food poverty, health and nutrition.

The Local Development plan has an important role to play in facilitating social inclusion and creating healthy communities. Improving Health and Well-being is one of the five core planning principles of the planning system and the SPPS states that Councils may bring forward local policies that contribute to



improving health and well-being and sets out a range of health and wellbeing policy areas that could be considered.

**Outcome: Children and Young people enjoy play and leisure**

**Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?**

**Within the 'enjoy play and leisure' outcome, the areas below have been identified as requiring the greatest effort. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each.**

1. **Early Years:** Play and leisure needs to be encouraged and supported from birth.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

As the only Council in Northern Ireland with a dedicated Play Service within our Children and Young People's Unit, Belfast City Council recognise and value the benefits of freely chosen play for children and young people. Through our outreach play service to parent and toddler groups we deliver a range of different play types to children under 5 and we'd be keen to explore more options of developing our play service to support parents both in the ante-natal stage and from birth. We deliver a weekly Play club for under 5s from the Travellers community. Our After-schools service for Primary-school aged children to engage in play in our Play Centres and we deliver additional services to specific groups such as the Roma community, Chinese and Indian community. These are not homework clubs but rather opportunities for children to engage in a whole range of play activities including outdoor play. This is further supplemented by weekly outdoor Come and Play sessions in a number of local parks across Belfast. Through our leisure provision there are a range of activities for parents and children, including swim lessons and other sports activities. Our park outreach services deliver a range of outdoor activities including wildlife educational sessions for Primary school aged children all with the aim of getting children outdoors and becoming active in the city.

2. **Children and young people with a disability:** Children with a disability, and their families, require additional support for play and leisure activities.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree* Please

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Within the design of all play facilities within Belfast City Council consideration is given to making the fixed equipment as accessible as possible for children with a disability. We also have a sensory garden in our Musgrave Park. With regard to provision of our Play services and After schools provision we have an open access policy and we seek to make provision for children with a disability when they register for our services. It will be important to consider hidden disabilities and consider those children who have Autism, ADHD or other sensory processing disorders. As previously highlighted leisure centres make provision for children and young people with a disability. Services may need to have designated leisure activities specifically for these children and their families. Equally some children and young people and parents from ethnic minority groups for example from the Islamic community may need to have separate swim sessions and may need additional supports in place to enable them to access the full range of leisure facilities.

3. **Children and young people in poverty:** Children from less affluent backgrounds are much less likely to participate in structured play, cultural or arts-based activities

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Poverty and access to activities and services is an issue which has been highlighted by the young people of the Belfast Youth Forum and their poverty research makes recommendations as to how this might be addressed such as providing free or reduced prices for children and young people to access cultural and arts-based activities and make use of leisure facilities. Belfast City Council recognizes the links between involvement in creative arts and activities with positive mental health, and personal and social development for children and young people and actively supports a range of free community arts festivals throughout the city in parks and open spaces targeted at children and young people and their families. In addition Council contributes to the funding of the Play Resource Centre which delivers a range of free outreach art workshops to schools, community organisations and youth groups for children and young people. Events such as our Spring Fair, Park days and our funding via park grants, support children and their families to access free cultural and arts events across the city.

In our most recent household survey, when residents were asked 'what would make my neighbourhood a better place?', the most popular response was 'more activities for children and young people?' With

22% of our population aged 16 and under, and in the face of rising youth unemployment, children and young people remain a priority for the future of our city. Culture and arts can help them become more confident and accomplished. They can develop skills and experiences to become valuable employees and accomplished entrepreneurs. They will be our future artists and audiences.

### **2013 DCAL Engagement in culture, arts and leisure by young people in Northern Ireland report, p6**

Young people entitled to free school meals

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Engaged in the arts                  | 90% |
| Participated in arts activities      | 72% |
| Attended arts events                 | 82% |
| Visited any museum or science centre | 64% |
| Not entitled to free school meals    |     |
| Engaged in the arts                  | 95% |
| Participated in arts activities      | 77% |
| Attended arts events                 | 89% |
| Visited any museum or science centre | 74% |

These differences were identified as ‘significant’ by DCAL. No significant differences were identified in relation to physical activity and sports.

We would concur that children from less affluent backgrounds are much less likely to participate in structured play, cultural or arts-based activities.

Children from more advantaged families read more frequently and are more likely to take part in structured cultural lessons or clubs; these activities serve to enhance their within-school learning, thus contributing to the social gradient in school achievement. Children from less advantaged families watch more television, which does facilitate the development of language skills but also contributes to the kinds of socio-emotional difficulties (such as inattention and hyperactivity) that are likely to be disruptive to their school engagement.

While arts and cultural participation should not be valued in instrumental terms alone, the study findings regarding its impact on child outcomes reinforce the importance of an inclusive arts policy for children and young people.

Studies of children and young people reveal similar patterns, which are attributed to the way in which parents socialise their children to have particular tastes and, more importantly, use cultural activities as a way of promoting the academic and social development of their children... middle-class children are more likely to be exposed to reading and other cultural activities that foster their development of the skills rewarded within the school system.

The findings presented in this report show significant social differentiation in children’s cultural participation, with the nature of such variation depending on the type of activity considered. Even from



an early age, more advantaged families are more likely to read to their child, take them on educational visits and cultural outings, and encourage them to engage in creative play. They are also less likely to allow their young children to watch a lot of television and to play computer games for prolonged periods. Among older children and young people, those from more advantaged families are more likely to read for pleasure and attend afterschool, music or drama lessons/clubs. The latter activities typically require payment so, even taking account of parental education and social class, those in the higher income families are much more likely to attend.

***Arts and Cultural Participation among Children and Young People: Insights from the Growing Up in Ireland Study 2016***

4. **Young People:** It is important that teenagers are given the freedom, time and space to enjoy self-directed play and leisure time.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Play is often considered to be an activity for the 0-11 year olds and those children at Post-Primary level can be play deprived. Council welcomes the focus on teenagers and play but recognises there will need to be a societal shift in how the community views play. Young people tell us that they need space to just hang out and just to be with one another and we know that this often happens in large groups across the city. In addition children and young people are more mobile and travel to different locations outside of their immediate community to connect with others. Local residents tell us that at times they can feel anxious about large groups of young people hanging around their area and worry about noise levels and possible anti-social behaviour. There is a need to facilitate dialogue between the adults, young people and local providers of youth activities to promote understanding between these groups, mutual respect and tolerance and agree how to support teenagers to enjoy their freedom and leisure time in safety and in a way that ensures they are integrated and not isolated from their local communities.

**Outcome:** Children and young people enjoy play and leisure

### How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)

Based on the issues identified and the data currently available, the proposed headline indicator identified for the 'enjoy play and leisure' outcome is outlined below. It is intended that additional indicators will be identified through the Data Development Agenda. Please tell us to what extent you agree with the indicator:

**Enjoyment of Play and Leisure:** The enjoyment experienced by children and young people as they play in their homes, their communities, their schools and their local play facilities.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

The benefits of play for physical, social, and emotional development are well researched and the commitment to provide safe, accessible and inclusive spaces for play in the strategy is welcomed. There are challenges as to how to measure a child's level of enjoyment of play and Belfast City Council Children and Young People's Unit would welcome opportunities to work with other partners in identifying additional indicators. There may be measures related to development of skills such as gross motor movements, and co-ordination such as skipping, improved agility etc and enhanced team-working, co-operation and social skills that could be put in place to further evidence of children's enjoyment of play. It will be important within this outcome that individual case studies are used from a range of different settings to capture the positive changes in behaviour that take place when a child is engaged in regular play opportunities e.g. the change from a quiet withdrawn child to one who participates and is engaged with others.

## **Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the ‘enjoy play and leisure’ outcome:**

It will be important for this outcome and the associated indicators that all actions align with the Executive's Child Poverty Strategy 2016. Belfast City Council would welcome the opportunity to be involved in the development of additional indicators for the enjoyment of play through the Data Development Agenda.

Considerable investment is being made by Council in developing safe and accessible outdoor play and leisure spaces for children and young people and we're in the process of consulting with children and young people on the Local Development Plan for Belfast to seek their views on how green spaces should be developed within the city. We are committed to engaging further with children and young people on an ongoing basis to involve them in the design and development of new play areas. City planners ensure that children and young people in our city are in close proximity to high quality and accessible play areas. We recognise the importance and the benefits of outdoor play and through our After-schools services and Come and Play provision in a number of parks we ensure that regardless of weather, children are given an opportunity to engage in play outside. Currently we are developing our outdoor play to include opportunities for the under 5s and their parents through piloting a provision for this age group in North Queen Street and Ballysillan play parks in the period April to June 2017.

Council Play services are founded on the Playwork Principles:

1. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well being of individuals and communities.
2. Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
3. The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
4. For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
5. The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
6. The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
7. Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.
8. Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well being of children.

It may be helpful for all agencies working with children and young people to consider adopting these playwork principles in their practice. Belfast City Council has a remit to deliver play services within the Belfast Council area but we recognise the importance of facilitating play opportunities for children and young people who have limited opportunities to access services as a result of being in hospital or in the Juvenile Justice Centre. Council would welcome the opportunity to support other services in developing their play provision in these types of settings and within the adult custodial setting where parents often lack the opportunity to play with their child during visits.

For young people Council delivers an annual outdoor Party in the Park event which brings groups from across the city together for an evening of free music, activities and fun. Other activities such as Midnight soccer and boxing programmes are designed to appeal to and engage young people.



## Outcome: Children and young people learn and achieve

### Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?

Within the 'learn and achieve' outcome, the areas below have been identified as requiring the greatest effort. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each.

1. **Pupils entitled to free school meals:** It is important that our most disadvantaged learners are given particular focus and evidence clearly demonstrates that social disadvantage has the greatest single impact on attainment.

Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:

Belfast City Council welcomes the focus on supporting all children and young people having access to an education which will develop their full potential. In addition to focusing on this group of pupils who are entitled to free school meals it will be important to ensure that those young people with a disability particularly those with a hidden disability such as speech and language or communication difficulties are afforded equal opportunities to succeed within education. It is also important to look beyond the education stage and ensure that appropriate support is given throughout the recruitment and selection stage for jobs.

The impact of welfare reform on this indicator may need to be considered as will the effectiveness of using free school meals in capturing data around social disadvantage and attainment. Northern Ireland is set to be hit harder by welfare reform than any other part of the UK with estimates that, when the reforms have come into full effect, they will take £750m a year out of the Northern Ireland economy. This is equivalent to a Northern Ireland average of £650 a year for every adult of working age (compared to an average of £470 a year across Great Britain). Belfast, with an expected loss of £840 per adult of working age, is hit harder than any major city in the UK – and significantly harder than other parts of Northern Ireland.

2. **Children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN):** Work needs to continue to ensure that all pupils with learning difficulties receive a high quality education and fulfil their potential.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree* Please

provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:

See comments above.

3. **Care experienced children and young people:** Children and young people leaving care are at a greater risk of not transitioning to employment, education or training. It is important that they are supported during their education and as they transition out of education and out of care, to ensure they experience positive outcomes.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Belfast City Council agrees that care experienced young people often do not achieve their full potential within the education system and are at greater risk of not gaining or maintaining a training or employment placement. They often reject the support services that are made available to them via Social services at age 18 and there is a need for additional pathways and support to be put in place via other services and organisations to mentor, support and nurture these young people as they transition from school to the world of employment.

Belfast City Council recognises the need to provide support and interventions to those furthest removed from the labour market and is committed to working with partner organisations to deliver programmes that support people to gain work experience and jobs. We are also committed to showcasing our examples of best practice with other organisations and encouraging them to adopt similar approaches e.g. pre-recruitment and training programmes for long term unemployed.



4. **Newcomer, Traveller and Roma children and young people:** There is a clear and demonstrable attainment gap for children and young people who are newcomers to Northern Ireland, from the Traveller or Roma communities.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree* Please

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Significant evidence exists about the disadvantage and discrimination experienced by many Travellers and Roma. The lack of a regional agenda to tackle this inequality means that there is no clear framework to address this. Belfast City Council recognizes the attainment gap for children and young people from these communities and invests resources in working with the adults and children from these communities to try and support their integration into the local community ensure that they can access local services and resources. Reference has already been made to the services that are delivered to children from a range of community backgrounds.

We have a dedicated Traveller Liaison Officer and specialist staff within the Good Relations unit who are tasked with engaging with the newcomers to the city and ensuring that these families and individuals have opportunities to avail of Council services and can access support from other statutory and voluntary organisations.

5. **Children and young people in custody:** These young people should receive education provision to the same standards, under the same legal basis, as any other young person.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Belfast City Council does not have a remit to deliver education within a custodial setting but would fully support this focus on children and young people in custody.

## **Outcome: Children and young people learn and achieve**

### **How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)**

**Based on the issues identified and the data currently available, the proposed headline indicators identified for the 'learn and achieve' outcome are outlined below. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each indicator:**

1. **Child Development:** Percentage of children who are at the appropriate stage of development in their immediate pre-school year.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Economic destiny is often shaped by the earliest years of life and Council recognises that we must work with other partners to ensure that children are "school-ready" and that as they progress they have the life skills set that they need to get a job and progress in life.

The Play service within Belfast City Council deliver Play programmes to Parent and Toddler groups across the city and to a number of Preschool Playgroups. We also deliver two services for under 5s one of which is a Playclub for Traveller children. We recognise the importance of children being school-ready and having attained the appropriate stage of development prior to commencing formal education and would support this indicator.

2. **Educational Attainment:** Percentage of school leavers achieving level 2 qualifications ~ five+ GCSEs at A\*-C or equivalent, including GCSE English and Maths (including equivalent level 2 qualifications eg BTEC level 2 certificates/diplomas).

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree* ✓ *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

The Belfast Agenda recognises that having a good job is a way to improve the quality of life for people living in the city. In a recent study undertaken by the Centre of Cities it was reported that Belfast ranked second highest in terms of the share of the population having no formal qualifications. Belfast City Council are therefore giving a commitment to working with other partners to address educational inequalities and increase skills attainment and address barriers to employment at a structural and personal level. We have set ambitious targets for the next 4 years to increase the proportion of the working age population with





Level 2 qualifications and above to more than 82 per cent. We would therefore support this indicator but recognise that this will require long-term collaborative commitment by many organisations.

3. **Educational Inequality:** Gap between percentage of non-FSME (Free School Meal Entitled) school leavers and percentage of FSME school leavers achieving level 2 qualifications ~ five+ GCSEs at A\*-C or equivalent, including GCSE English and Maths (including equivalent level 2 qualifications eg BTEC level 2 certificates/diplomas).

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*    ✓ *Agree*        *Neither Agree nor Disagree*        *Disagree*        *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Belfast City Council agrees with this indicator and has set a target that by 2021 there will be a reduction in the gap in educational attainment\* between those entitled to free school meals and those who aren't from 33 per cent to less than 30 per cent (\*at Level 2 or above, including English and Maths).

**Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the 'learn and achieve' outcome:**

Following our Traveller Needs Assessment in 2015 Council identified the following principles that should inform any potential indicator aimed at improving outcomes for this group. The principles are adapted from the Hague Principles of Integration 2004 and could be grouped in the following thematic areas:

1. Political and civic representation
2. Socio economic factors
3. Cultural integration
4. Access to services

It is suggested that these principles be incorporated into the outcomes for Traveller and Roma.

In this section there is no indicator in place for measuring the level of school attendance. This is important when considering educational attainment and is an issue that impacts disproportionately in Traveller children and Roma. It is suggested that levels of school attendance is added. As part of the outcomes for the Belfast Agenda Council hope to measure school attendance rates.

In addition to the achievement of formal educational qualifications it would be helpful to specify which alternative qualifications would provide a measure of success in this area.

It is suggested that within this outcome there should be specific indicators for NEETS in this section.

It should be noted that access to education and training opportunities can be difficult for children and young people arriving in NI, awareness of rights and language barriers.



## Outcome: Children and young people live in safety and stability

### Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?

Within the 'live in safety and stability' outcome, the areas below have been identified as requiring the greatest effort. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each.

1. **Youth homelessness:** A young person cannot feel safe or live with any stability if they do not have a place they can call home.

Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:

Youth homelessness is another issue that has been raised by the young people in the Belfast Youth Forum and is an area that the current Forum plans to continue to work on. It may be worth considering the use of terminology here as whilst some young people may refer to a "place they call home" they may for a range of reasons not feel that it is a place that they belong and it may not feel like home to them. They need to have a sense of belonging and ownership, a sense of safety and feel accepted wherever they live. For young people within the Traveller community there is a lack of provision of suitable Traveller sites and ethnically suitable accommodation. As such this creates an automatic "homelessness" situation for young Travellers who are then accommodated in hostels and at times separated from family. The issue of access to accommodation for Travellers is paramount to ensure equality of access to rights such as education, health provision and economic stability.

2. **Looked After Children:** Looked after children may have experienced living conditions which are unsafe and unstable – leading to them leaving their family home and living in care. Therefore, it is important that whilst in care they are given the safety and stability which they were previously denied.

Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:

Belfast City Council doesn't have a remit to provide services to children in care but we would seek to work in partnership with others to contribute to this outcome and would support this priority.

3. **Internet Safety:** Children and young people, and their parents, should be supported to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to stay safe online and on how to respond when subject to online abuse.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:

Belfast City Council has invested significantly in developing Super-connected communities and supporting children and adults to get on line and avail of some of our community based digital IT programmes delivered in various Community centres around the city. We recognise the importance of IT connectivity for employment and social contact but recognise that Internet safety needs to be paramount and we have in place safeguards and controls to manage usage. The area of Internet safety is one which needs to be prioritised for parents and other workers and teachers who are engaging with children and young people. It is an area that is constantly evolving and there will be a need to keep education programmes and new developments in Internet safety updated for both young people and parents / carers and others.

4. **Children and young people under the threat of paramilitary intimidation:** This was raised consistently during co-design as an area of concern for young people – paramilitary intimidation can lead to feelings of instability and insecurity, causing the young person distress and leaving them isolated from family, friends and community.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree Please*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

Through the Community Safety Unit, our youth provision within Community Centres and our outreach work, Belfast City Council staff would come into contact with children and young people who are subject to paramilitary threat. It is not acceptable for children and young people to be subjected to threats in this way and as a Council we regard these instances as child safeguarding issues which need to be referred to Social services. We agree that this group of children and young people should be a particular focus of the strategy.



5. **Children experiencing neglect or domestic violence:** Neglect or domestic violence can affect any child and/or young person. The impact of such abuse on children and young people can be significant and long lasting.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

The impact on children and young people of witnessing or being subject to domestic abuse has been well documented and Council's Play staff have linked with one of the local Womens' Aid services to provide a weekly After-schools to the children living there. We recognise that these children often need additional opportunities to engage in play and we would be supportive of this group being a priority.

In addition to direct involvement with children Council has also received recognition as a Safe Place for victims of domestic abuse and has support systems in place for staff and service users.

6. **Children and young people in contact with the youth justice system:** We must work to ensure that children and young people who come into contact with the youth justice system – including the children of prisoners – are not destined to have poorer life chances.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree* Please

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

Although Council does not provide any direct services to the children of prisoners or children and young people involved with the Youth Justice system we recognise that the life chances of this group of children and young people can be adversely affected because of their involvement in offending behaviour or as a result of separation from a parent who is incarcerated.

Council has invested in working with other community and statutory partners via the Youth Engagement Project to divert children and young people from anti-social behaviour and offending. Although this has now ended we would be keen to explore how we can work in partnership with other voluntary and statutory agencies to improve outcomes for this group of children. Council is also a designated member of the Anti-Social Behaviour Forum and works closely with other statutory organisations to put interventions in place to support young people to desist from negative behaviours within their communities.

Council is the convenor of Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership and four area District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships. These partnerships invest significantly in interventions that will:

- divert children and young people from offending behaviour
- raise their awareness of the consequences for their life chances of engaging in offending behaviour
- invest in the personal development of the young person to enable them to make positive choices
- raise their awareness of how to keep themselves from becoming a victim of crime

7. **Family Breakdown:** Children and young people have a right to preserve their family relations and a right to maintain direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, if that is in their best interests. We must ensure that those rights are respected and help parents to work through their difficulties in a way that does not cause additional stress and harm.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

*Strongly Agree*    ✓ *Agree*        *Neither Agree nor Disagree*        *Disagree*        *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

No additional comments.



## Outcome: Children and young people live in safety and stability

### How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)

Based on the issues identified and the data currently available, the proposed headline indicators identified for the 'live in safety and stability' outcome are outlined below. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each indicator:

1. **Youth homelessness:** Number of 16/17 year olds presenting as homeless.

Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

There may be a difficulty in accurately recording the numbers of 16/17 year olds who are homeless as from the work undertaken by the Belfast Youth Forum there are many young people who are "sofa-surfing" and spending time moving from one friend's address to another and who are not presenting themselves to statutory agencies as being homeless. There is a need therefore to consider how to capture information about this "hidden homeless" population of young people. This is an issue that would need to be taken into consideration under the data development agenda.

There is a need also to look at the quality of living accommodation as the impact for a young person living in a house which is sub-standard may have as great an impact on that individual as being homeless.

2. **First time entrants into the criminal justice system:** Number of first time entrants into the criminal justice system.

Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree* Please

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

It is noted that the Department of Justice has been carrying out a scoping exercise exploring how children can be kept out of the criminal justice system and any move towards greater diversion is to be welcomed. It is important as we know that young people who obtain a criminal conviction face greater challenges in terms of accessing employment and can be limited in terms of their ability to achieve their full potential. Council would therefore agree with this indicator and would be keen to explore how we could work collaboratively with other partners to contribute to this aim.

3. **Victims of crime:** Number of young people who are victims of crime.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    ✓ *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

This is a difficult indicator as it can only relate to the numbers of young people who are officially recorded as being the victims of crime and we know that a high proportion of crimes where young people are victims are not reported to police. There is a need to increase confidence in policing for young people and action needs to be taken to create opportunities for greater dialogue between young people and the PSNI.

We know that children and young people make use of support services and helplines such as Childline to report concerns and issues and it may be helpful to link with the NSPCC to review what information they collate about children reporting being victims of crime and use their measures in tandem with the victim statistics for young people.

4. **Child contact order:** Number of repeat applications made.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    ✓ *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

Belfast City Council is not involved in this area of work so is unable to make any additional comment.

**Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the ‘live in safety and stability’ outcome:**

Live in safety and stability: In addition to the groups highlighted above consideration may need to be given to including Newcomers, Roma and Travellers as additional groups as children and young people and their families can often be subject to intimidation and forced out of their accommodation and neighbourhoods and relocated in other areas.



**OUTCOME: Children and Young People experience economic and environmental well-being**

**Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?**

**Within the ‘economic and environmental well-being’ outcome, the areas below have been identified as requiring the greatest effort. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each.**

1. **Families experiencing poverty:** By helping families living in poverty, children and young people affected can experience a range of better outcomes.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Any action designed to help families out of poverty is to be welcomed but it will be necessary for all of the key Government Departments and agencies to work collaboratively to target those most on need and put in place a range of interventions which will be effective in terms of affordable childcare, accessible employment and training opportunities and targeted benefits for those who are unable to work. It will be important to recognise those families who are experiencing "in work poverty."

Council's inclusive growth strategy aims to address interlocking issues of poverty, economic inactivity, unemployment and under-employment. Our aim is to create more jobs and to ensure that those most in need of work can get those jobs. This is a clear measure.

2. **Children and young people in need of education, employment or training:** Children and young people should have opportunities to develop appropriate skills so they can become economically active, find a gainful employment and avoid poverty.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

This relates to the outcome regarding educational attainment and it is one with which Council agrees. It will be important to ensure that there is a tailored approach to individual young people for accessing training and ensuring that training allowances are sufficient to help young people avoid the poverty trap. It will be necessary to ensure that new training opportunities are linked to the current and emerging business growth areas including IT and domiciliary care for example.

3. **Rural young people:** Children and young people living in rural areas often face additional challenges in the area of economic well-being. There may be fewer employment opportunities and they may have to travel further to access education, training or employment.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

*Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      ✓ *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Whilst Belfast is primarily an urban environment there are rural communities within the city boundary and we aim to ensure that our services are accessible and inclusive for all children and young people regardless of where they live in the city.

## **OUTCOME: Children and Young People experience economic and environmental well-being**

### **How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)**

**Based on the issues identified and the data currently available, the proposed headline indicators identified for the ‘experience economic and environmental well-being’ outcome are outline below. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each indicator:**

1. **Child Poverty:** Percentage of children living in absolute poverty before housing costs.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

There is general agreement that the measurement of child poverty is based on both low income and deprivation whilst absolute poverty relates to the lack of basic necessities such as food, water sanitation etc. and therefore whilst a clear indicator has limitations. The Belfast Agenda has identified a number of population indicators aimed at tracking progress on Council's outcomes and one of those is the proportion of the population living in relative poverty. It will be important to ensure that the poverty measures for children and young people are in line with the four measures of child poverty specified in the 2010 Poverty Act.

It will be necessary for all of the key stakeholders, statutory agencies and government departments to work collaboratively to target those most in need and put in place a range of interventions which will be effective in terms of providing food, housing, affordable childcare, accessible employment and training opportunities and targeted benefits for those who are unable to work.

Based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2010, Belfast has 8 of the ten most deprived wards in Northern Ireland on the income domain, 9 of the lowest performing on skills, and 7 for employment.

Despite the considerable sums invested in interventions in these areas over decades. Existing initiatives have only had limited impact for a number of reasons. The Belfast Employability and Skills framework highlights that persistent inequality; deprivation and poverty go hand in hand in the most deprived wards. We would argue that new place-based solutions based on coordinated working and a long term vision are needed to embed change, rather than a regional one size fits all approach.

Whilst there is a myriad of activity to tackle various aspects of poverty there is little coordination, too much fragmentation and complexity. Provisions need to be assessed to ensure that programmes are targeting those most at need and moving families out of poverty, working in synergy with each other and mechanisms in place to avoid duplication.

Employment is the main mechanism through which individuals can lift themselves out of the poverty trap. The council has and continues to work on a range of Employability and Skills initiatives to ensure all

residents of Belfast including children and young people to move into employment. In particular family culture and cycles of decline in neighbourhoods need to be addressed as poverty and lack of aspiration impact on educational attainment, social inclusion and employability.

2. **Number of young people not in education, employment or training:** Number of 16-24 year olds not in education, employment or training.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

Whilst this is a useful indicator it only records the numbers of young people in education training or employment at a point in time. For those young people who are the most vulnerable it is often the case that although they register for training or commence employment they are unable to sustain a placement and it can break down very quickly. One additional measure may be the length of time in training or employment as it may be the case that greater efforts need to be made to nurture and mentor young people as they make the transition to further training or the workplace. In addition it is noted that fluctuations in the numbers of young people who are NEET may be related to a range of different factors such as changes in demographics, changes in social policy etc and it may be more helpful to measure the educational attainment of children living in poverty against the attainment for children from more affluent families.

There is a need for interventions to ensure that all children and young people are give opportunities to engage with education, employment and training. This including provisions aimed at engaging Children and Young people to engage with education, progress to training or to re-skill/up skill to gain employment and avoid poverty. NEET'S information needs to inform this and consideration must be given to how best to engage young people and children most at risk of becoming NEET's.

There are a number of interventions and activities aimed at tackling NEET's and to engage with those who are at risk of becoming NEET's, consideration should be given to existing provisions to ensure interventions are successful and to avoid duplication of services.

Skills provision should align to labour market demand, and provision of skilled young people to take up employment in future growth sectors such as ICT, Hospitality and retail should be a consideration when assessing skills provision.

The council notes that any provision should also take into account the need for technical skills, the skill level needed (level 1 to 4 and Apprenticeship) and provision of soft skills such as employability skills to ensure young people can access the labour market and that children can access it in the future. In addition to this children and young people should be aspirational and enterprise skills should be developed to allow people to access self employment. Entrepreneurship levels in Belfast are lower than the NI average at 14.7% compared with 9.3% for Belfast. This is also lower than in other UK cities such as Liverpool (10.8%), Manchester (14.4%), Newcastle (11.7%), Leeds (12.1%), and Sheffield (10.7%).

The Council recognises the need for personal circumstances and community environment to be taken into account when accessing existing and future provisions. Programmes should be flexible and take account of the barriers for those hardest to reach. There is a place for community provision of skills and outreach for those most at risk is a priority. Alternative learning methodologies and methods of assessment need to be more widely recognised by employers and the careers service has a role to play in this to ensure all skill levels are recognised by the market place and also learners.

**Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the ‘experience economic and environmental well-being’ outcome:**

The indicators highlighted above fit closely with the proposed outcomes for the Belfast Agenda and it will be important that whatever opportunities are created for economic well-being that the types of training and employment are fit for purpose and sustainable and can meet the needs of new and emerging technology and industry. This is a clear focus for Belfast City Council over the next 20 years.

It is noted that the environmental wellbeing outcome does not appear to have been addressed in these indicators and there will need to be measures in place for this. We know that many children and young people are concerned about their environment and measures such as improving air quality may go some way to improving environmental well-being. In addition the Local Development Plan for Belfast will support the development of increased cycle lanes, footways and footpaths and should contribute to this aim.

## **OUTCOME: Children and Young People make a Positive Contribution to Society**

### **Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?**

**Within the ‘positive contribution to society’ outcome, the areas below have been identified as requiring the greatest effort. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each.**

1. **Youth Work (youth organisations and groups):** Youth work (through youth organisations and groups) seeks to enable every young person to achieve their full potential, and to particularly support young people who may have experienced challenges in their early life. It is essential that the Strategy can be flexible and accommodate vulnerable young people in the 18-25 age bracket (aligning with the Priorities for Youth).

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

The transition from young person to becoming an adult can be a difficult one for the most vulnerable young people in society and it is positive that youth organisations can have the flexibility to work with young people up to the age of 25. It would be helpful if other services such as mental health services (CAMHS and others) could have the same flexibility to work with the most vulnerable for a longer period of time. In addition Education services including Further and higher Education have a role to play in supporting young people to achieve their full potential.

2. **“Seldom heard voices” of young people:** Participation should be for all children and young people and mechanisms should be put in place to facilitate and actively seek out the voice of young people who are seldom heard.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

This will present a challenge to many organisations as it is recognised that it is not an easy task to ensure participation by children and young people. It is equally important to ensure that organisations commit to adhering to the best practice guidance on participation (CINI Participation Network) in order that they can hear the views of children and young people and provide feedback on how their views have influenced

policy and practice. It is crucial that organisations have mechanisms to connect with those children and young people who are hardest to reach and that the exercise in participation is not just paying lip service to the principles of engagement.

Belfast City Council's Youth Forum is an example of best practice in terms of engaging young people on issues that impact on them and enabling them to have a voice that effects change. There may be opportunities for peer mentoring to support other organisations to develop effective participation mechanisms.

## **OUTCOME: Children and Young People make a Positive Contribution to Society**

### **How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)**

**Based on the issues identified and the data currently available, the proposed headline indicators identified for the 'positive contribution to society' outcome are outline below. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each indicator:**

1. **Participation:** Frequency of participation in voluntary and community work.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      ✓ *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

Belfast City Council has a strong ethos of supporting volunteering for all age groups and across a wide variety of Council services and we welcome the skills, the energy and the diversity that volunteers can bring to our work within local communities. Equally we know that from the volunteer's perspective, volunteering can promote their personal and social development and enhance their employability skills. For many young people however the opportunities to volunteer or engage in community work are not available due to their age or the need to obtain part-time employment to support themselves or finance further education. For others, their involvement in sports clubs or societies take up their time and again this may limit opportunities to volunteer. It may be more helpful therefore to have a measure in place to measure young people's engagement in constructive use of leisure time rather than limiting this indicator solely to involvement in voluntary work. Other measures may include the numbers of children and young people involved in decision-making for a such as Youth Forums. This will require further data collection mechanisms.

2. **Self-efficacy:** Measure the confidence and capability of young people through self-efficacy.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      ✓ *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

Additional information is needed here as to how this indicator of self-efficacy is to be measured and as it is presented this indicator seems less tangible than some of the others.

Further work is needed in relation to this area to identify some measure that will look perhaps at how young people have influenced or shaped policies and practice and have represented their views and opinions might be more useful.



**Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the ‘make a positive contribution to society’ outcome:**

Whilst it is laudable for young people to make a positive contribution to society should the focus here be on young people feeling accepted within society, feeling valued and being recognised as individuals with views and opinions which are valued as equally as those of the adults around them?



## OUTCOME: live in a Society which respect their rights

### Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?

Within the 'live in a society which respects their rights' outcome, the areas below have been identified as requiring the greatest effort. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each.

1. **Children acting as carers:** Children acting as carers are at risk of missing out on their childhood.

Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:

It will be important to ensure that the definition of carer is as wide as possible to ensure that children and young people with caring responsibilities for a parent/carer, a younger sibling or their own child/children are considered within this category.

2. **Children and young people who suffer from racism:** Children and young people can find themselves subject to direct or indirect discrimination or racism. It is important that these children and young people are aware of their rights and what support they are entitled to – they require extra protection to prevent negative experiences resulting in negative outcomes.

Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?

*Strongly Agree*    ✓ *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:

Through the Youth Forum Belfast City Council works closely in partnership with a number of voluntary and community groups such as the Children's Law Centre and NICCY across the city to promote the rights of young people and signpost them to services which can support them and enable them to tackle discrimination or racism. It would be hoped that all agencies can commit as part of this strategy to tackling instances of discrimination against young people.

It is widely accepted that Travellers are the most disadvantaged ethnic grouping and the most likely to suffer from racism and discrimination. The 2007 Task Force Report and PSI report highlighted specific



programmes aimed at young people to address this. It may be helpful to include specific actions for Traveller children.

3. **Children and young people who are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual (LGB):** Lesbian, gay or bisexual young people feel that their rights and awareness or their issues are largely ignored in their education, communities and wider society.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Greater awareness is needed regarding the complex issues related to children and young people who are Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual and in addition to prioritizing this group organisations have a responsibility to ensure that all staff working with children and young people have and awareness and understanding of the issues impacting on these children and young people and know how to support and signpost to access additional services.

4. **Children and young people who identify as Transgender:** Services need to be flexible in dealing with children and young people who identify as transgender and ensure they do not face discrimination, of any sort, based on their identity.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

*Strongly Agree* ✓ *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree* Please

**provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Please see comments above.

5. **Children and young people who speak a different language:** Where possible, services should be provided in a range of languages to cater for all children and young people.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

All organisations providing services to children and young people who speak a different language should ensure access to Interpreters and translators to ensure equal access to services. It is noted that with an increasing number of languages spoken in Belfast this may present a challenge and additional resources may be required to meet this aim. For those young people who are hearing impaired access to people who can use sign language will be important.

6. **Children and young people who seek to practice their faith:** Children and young people who seek to live out their faith in daily life are at risk of not having their fundamental rights respected. This also applies to those children and young people who have no faith and who class themselves as atheist or humanist.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

No additional comments.



## OUTCOME: Live in a Society which respect their rights

### How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)

Based on the issues identified and the data currently available, the proposed headline indicators identified for the 'live in a society which respects their rights' outcome are outline below. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each indicator:

1. **Understanding of the UNCRC:** Percentage of young people who have heard of the UNCRC and percentage of adults who have heard of the UNCRC.

Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?

*Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    ✓ *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:

Whilst it is helpful for both adults and young people to have heard of the UNCRC this measure is perhaps not the most useful in terms of ensuring that people embed the principles of the UNCRC in their policies and practice. The indicator here does not require anyone to act on the UNCRC but just to have heard of it.

A better measure would be to look at the number of organisations who have embedded the principles in their polices and practice with children and young people and explore how organisations have worked to ensure that the young people with whom they work have been able to exercise their rights under UNCRC.

2. **Respect for views:** Percentage of young people who feel they have a chance to give their views about the issues that affect them.

Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?

*Strongly Agree*    *Agree*    *Neither Agree nor Disagree*    ✓ *Disagree*    *Strongly Disagree* Please

provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:

Perhaps this could be taken a step further in terms of having given their views and have had them acted upon may be a better measure. Similar to the last point enabling children and young people to give their views does not require the organisation to act upon them and this indicator needs to be strengthened.

3. **Negative stereotyping:** Percentage of young people who feel the media represents young people fairly.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree*   ✓ *Agree*   *Neither Agree nor Disagree*   *Disagree*   *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

There is need to specify the definition of media and include all aspects of media including Internet and YouTube portrayals of children and young people. In tandem with this all agencies will need to promote positive news stories about young people and work to dispel the stereotypes and the myths.

**Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the ‘live in a society which respects their rights’ outcome:**

We have no additional comments to make.



**OUTCOME:** live in a Society in which equality Of Opportunity and good relations are promoted

### Based on evidence, where is the greatest effort needed?

Within the ‘live in a society in which equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted’ outcome, the areas below have been identified as requiring the greatest effort. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each.

1. **Children and young people most likely to experience inequality (S75):** Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 lists groups of people that require equality of opportunity. These groups include children and young people. Children and young people with different religious beliefs, political opinions, racial group, sexual orientation, gender, disability etc should all be treated fairly and equally. In addition, children and young people should not feel they are treated unfairly due to their age and negative perceptions of young people should be tackled.

Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:

It is important that the issue in relation to unfair treatment due to age is an important issue for young people and one which impacts on their daily lives. It is useful that the strategy highlights this in particular. This section appears to summarize all of the previous Section 75 indicators and it may be more helpful to use this as an indicator and to have something that states that there should be equality of outcomes for all young people.

2. **Children and young people living in interface areas:** Children and young people who experience the legacy of the conflict more keenly and who live in communities with more entrenched attitudes, need greater support to realise the outcome of improved attitudes.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree that this area is one where the greatest effort is required?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed area:**

Research has demonstrated that although there is greater movement of children and young people across the city and opportunities for cross-community contact through various schools based and youth work programmes those children and young people living in interface areas are more likely to become involved in anti-social behaviour and have more negative views of children who live in the other community. Belfast City Council would therefore support the focus of intervention being on children living in these areas and indeed a current Peace IV proposal has been made to undertake work in this area.

Council is aware the Ulster University has recently undertaken a research project baseline Report: 'Peacewalls in Belfast' exploring new data sets from communities that reside closest to the peace walls in Belfast. Whilst not yet published, this data will provide a new layer to understanding and framing the challenging issues that continue to impact on communities (including children and young people) that live closest to the physical barriers.

Council's dedicated Good Relations Unit leads on the delivery of an Action Plan for Belfast (co-funded by the Executive Office) and works closely with a range of partner organisations in delivering programmes and projects in the City which are aligned with the key themes of the Together Building A United Community Strategy and which focus on tackling sectarianism and racism, particularly among young people; creating a city where all areas are accessible to everyone and where cultural expression and diversity is celebrated. Significant work is ongoing around the inclusion and integration of new communities in Belfast; promoting positive cultural expression, Decade of Centenaries events and engaging local communities in good relations projects.

The report "Growing up on an Interface" (Cummings, Shirlow et al, 25th March 2016) commissioned by the NI Executive identifies that there are links between emotional and mental well-being and engagement in sectarian and other anti-social behaviours and crime.

The study observed that "those who engage in sectarian behaviour tend to identify much more strongly with being Catholic or Protestant than those who never or rarely engage in such activity".

The report suggests that "in terms of tackling issues of risk within interface communities that it is important to assist families to deal with risk, anger and emotional and mental health issues".

The "Growing Up on an Interface" research identified significant risks facing young people in interface areas namely alcohol and drug use, mental health problems, aggression, conduct problems including



antisocial behaviour and problems with authority figures. These factors were in turn related to the erosion of the traditional family unit and problems in the school setting.

The report recommended the use of psycho-educational approaches and programmes to improve family and community communication and safety as means of improving child, family and community well-being in interface communities. Strengthening communication and support mechanisms within the family system and between the family system and available support mechanisms at the community level are also suggested areas of intervention that will serve youth developing in economically deprived communities.

It further recommended that interventions are jointly developed and endorsed by professionals across domains that affect youth (mental health, policing and education).

Significant resources have been allocated for work with Children & Young People under the PEACE IV Programme aimed at *enhancing the capacity of children and young people to form positive and effective relationships with others of a different background and make a positive contribution to building a cohesive society*. Work will be carried out under the Programme in the 2017-2021 period within the timeframe of this strategy both through Council led Local Action Plans and on a regional basis. While implementation of this work is not yet fully underway PEACE IV activity should be referenced and taken into account as part of the strategy development process.

**OUTCOME:** Live in a Society in which equality Of Opportunity and good relations are promoted

### How do we know if we are achieving the outcome? (Proposed Indicators)

Based on the issues identified and the data currently available, the proposed headline indicators identified for the 'live in a society which equality of opportunity and good relations are promoted' outcome are outline below. Please tell us to what extent you agree with each indicator:

1. **Attitudes towards others:** Percentage who are favourable towards Catholics, Protestants and Minority Ethnic Groups.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree* ✓ *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

Changing attitudes requires input not only within schools and youth / community settings but also amongst parents and carers and therefore any agreed actions to promote good relations for children and young people should also seek to address attitudes for the adults who surround them. One of the Peace IV applications seeks to engage parents in this work too.

2. **Engagement between young people of different community backgrounds:** Percentage of young people who regularly socialise or play sport with people from a different religious community.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

*Strongly Agree* ✓ *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree* Please

**provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

This indicator fits with the aims of the Peace IV funding and it would be hoped that funded projects can evidence how they are addressing this over the next 4 years.

3. **Shared spaces:** Percentage of young people who think that leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres in their area are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics.

**Please tell us to what extent you agree with this headline indicator?**

✓ *Strongly Agree*      *Agree*      *Neither Agree nor Disagree*      *Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**Please provide any comment you may have relating to the above proposed indicator:**

Belfast City Council seeks to provide spaces across the city for all ages that are accessible open and shared and significant investment has already been made in designing and building community hubs such as Girdwood and redeveloping our leisure provision to ensure that these buildings are welcoming and safe for all. It is important not to restrict this indicator to the spaces listed above but achieving the Belfast Agenda aim of ensuring that Belfast generally is a welcoming, safe, fair an inclusive city for all.

We would highlight also that this indicator should not be restricted to Protestant and Catholics but should be open to those of all faiths and none.

Council are consulting with children and young people on the Belfast Agenda and the Local Development Plan to ensure that they are given an opportunity to share their views on what needs to be in place in terms of shared space for their age group.

**Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the Children and Young People's Strategy:**

Belfast City Council is committed to a society which extends equality of opportunity and good relations.

In Council, Our Good Relations Unit works to promote good relations and equality throughout the city. We also work internally with other services to help make Belfast a place where people want to live, work and do business.

The Shared City Partnership oversees all of our work and is also responsible for managing and administering funding to promote good relations in the city.

The unit is committed to making Belfast a place that is safe and welcoming to everyone, and we aim to give all our staff the advice they need to continue to work hard to transform a city known for division, into one shared by all.

## Additional Comments

### **Please provide any other comments you have in relation to the Children and Young People's Strategy:**

Young people make up a third of the population of Belfast, making our city one of the youngest in Europe. It is vital that their vision shapes the future. With our partners, Belfast City Council will work to support and integrated approach to achieving better outcomes for children and young people. This will include ensuring young people are listened to and valued and can confidently shape their own futures. We are committed to making sure that young people are empowered, safe, happy, achieving at each stage of life and able to play their part in their city and communities.

Belfast City Council welcomes the publication of the Children and Young People's Strategy 2017-2027 and is committed to working in partnership with statutory, community and voluntary organisations to assist in helping children and young people from all backgrounds across the city to realise their full potential. The focus on play and leisure is of particular importance as the right to play it is one of the fundamental rights under UNCRC and we recognise the importance of play for all children regardless of age as a means to promote their physical, emotional and social development.

Representatives from the Children and Young People's unit were involved in pre-consultation discussions with Departmental officials to help develop the strategy and the outcomes fit with the aims and objective of Council and the wider Programme for Government. This strategy will challenge all agencies to demonstrate the value of the work they are undertaking with children and young people but the use of the Outcomes Based Accountability model and the specific measures for each indicator once developed should ensure that all organisations are aligned in terms of how they measure success. It would be hoped that in addition to aligning all corporate and business plans to this strategy that pooled budgets could go some way to ensuring that organisations are working together delivering value for money and demonstrating real impact on the lives of children and young people.

For the most part the proposed aims, the principles, the outcomes and proposed indicators are clear and should ensure that the focus of the strategy is where it needs to be on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people in our society. It will be crucial that this strategy is reviewed on a regular basis and that it has flexibility in order to be able to respond to new and emerging issues as required. The Ministerial Sub-group should ensure that there is a joined up approach across all Government Departments to delivering on this agenda and it would be hoped that where Departments or other organisations are not focusing on the outcomes for children and young people that they can be called to account.

Belfast City Council is committed to working with the new strategy and views it as an opportunity to further develop services for children and young people and to ensure that whatever we do we do it based on outcomes and we look forward to the publication of the implementation plan.

We welcome the fact that there is a young person's version of the strategy and we will ensure that the young people with whom we work on the Youth Forum will have an opportunity to share their views on it but we would want to highlight our disappointment that consultation events designed for young people were not publicised along with the wider public consultation events but are only now being organised. This gives an impression of children and young people being included as an after-thought which is regrettable.

## IF YOU ARE RESPONDING AS AN INDIVIDUAL

### 1. Your Details:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

---

**2. Are you.....?**

Male

Female

**3. What is your age?**

0-15

16-19

20-24

25-34

35-49

50-64

65+

Single, that is never married

Married and living with husband/wife

Living as married with a partner

Married and separated from husband/wife

Divorced

Widowed

Civil Partner in a legally recognised Civil Partnership and living with civil partner

In Civil Partnership - separated

In Civil Partnership - legally dissolved

In Civil Partnership - partner since died

Other (*please specify*)

**4. Are you.....?**

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## 5. Are you.....?



Heterosexual

Other (*please specify*)

Bisexual

Gay

Lesbian

Other (*please specify*)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 6. What is your country of birth?

Northern Ireland

England

Wales

Scotland

Republic of Ireland

Elsewhere (*please write the name of the country*)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 7. What is your ethnicity?

White

Chinese

Irish Traveller

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Black Caribbean

Black African

Black Other

## 8. What is your religion?

No religion

Catholic

Presbyterian

Church of Ireland

Methodist

Baptist

Free Presbyterian

Brethren

Protestant - not specified

Christian - not specified

Buddhist

Hindu

Jewish

Muslim

Sikh

Any other religion (*please specify*)

\_\_\_\_\_

## 9. Do you have any dependants in your care

(*Please select all that apply*)

Child/Children

Elderly Relative

Sick or Infirm  
Relative

Disabled Relative

None

Other (*please specify*)

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10. **The Equality Act (2010)** defines disability as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' (more than 12 months) negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. Under this definition, do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes

No

## EQUALITY IMPACT

Any strategy is likely to have impacts beyond the specific areas and issues it may be targeting. We would welcome views on how delivering a Children and Young People’s Strategy may affect other groups in society.

Please describe any effect you think the delivery of a Children and Young People’s Strategy may have on the nine groups contained within Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act.

|   | Strongly Positive | Mainly Positive<br>No Effect | Mainly Negative | Strongly Negative |
|---|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Religious beliefs                             |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |
| Political opinion                             |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |
| Racial groups                                 |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |
| Age   |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |
| Marital status                                |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |
| Sexual orientation                            |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |
| Gender  |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |
| Persons with a disability and persons without |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |
| Persons with dependants and persons without   |                   | ✓                            |                 |                   |

Please provide further detail as to why you feel the Strategy will have negative/positive effects.

## Confidentiality and Access to Information Legislation

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with access to information legislation: these are chiefly the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice (section 45) with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department of Education.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 028 9026 9380 or email [ni@ico.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ni@ico.gsi.gov.uk) (or see their [website](#)).

Please tick the box below if you wish your response to be treated as anonymous.

*I want my response to be treated as anonymous*

## Thank You

That completes the survey - thank you for your valuable input into this consultation.