



Subject:	Update on Loneliness Motion
Date:	5 March 2019
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
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Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

No

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

No

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update committee on the notice of motion on Inter-Generational Loneliness proposed by Councillor Mullan at the January Council meeting:
1.2	“This Council notes with concern the impact that inter-generational loneliness and social isolation is having across the City. The Council recognises the good work already being done in the Council to address these problems but acknowledges that more needs to be done. Other agencies, such as Age NI, the Red Cross and the Campaign to End Loneliness are also recognising loneliness as a significant emerging issue.

1.3	<p>Due to the Northern Ireland Assembly not currently functioning, we are now falling behind other administrations in addressing these problems at an Executive level.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Council agrees to consider how best it can encourage an inter-agency approach to address the problems, including working within partner agencies in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors.”</p>
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the work being done to address loneliness within the Council and Belfast Strategic Partnership and to support the morning of action in the City Hall on 17th June 2019
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p><u>Age-friendly Belfast Plan 2018-2021</u></p> <p>The Belfast Agenda commits to ensuring an Age-friendly Belfast and members will be aware that the 2nd citywide partnership plan Age-friendly Belfast Plan 2018-2021 was launched last year with the thematic areas: Partnership; Infrastructure; Social Inclusion; Health and Wellbeing and Financial Security.</p> <p>Tackling Isolation and loneliness is important throughout all the actions in the plan but particularly addressed under social inclusion.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Citywide group on reducing isolation and loneliness</u></p> <p>As part of the previous Age-friendly Plan a sub-group of the Heathy Ageing Strategic Partnership was established in March 2017 to look at reducing isolation and loneliness.</p> <p>The membership of this group is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AgeNI • Belfast Central Mission • Belfast City Council • Belfast Health and Social Care Trust • Belfast Health Development Unit • Belfast LCG • British Red Cross • Campaign to End Loneliness • CLARE Project • Connected Community Care

- Eden project
- Engage with Age
- HASP
- NIFRS
- NIHE
- PSNI
- Public Health Agency
- Volunteer Now

3.3 In the current plan there are several actions for that group:

- Increase the availability of befriending and other services to reduce loneliness in older people
- Carry out a needs analysis and pilot training for key staff and volunteers on reducing isolation and loneliness in older people
- Develop and test systematic referral pathways to connect older people to services that they need

3.4 Increase the availability of befriending and other services to reduce loneliness in older people

Mapping has begun of what services are currently available in the City in order to identify gaps. There have also been discussions with some of the larger funders as a few organisations had been unsuccessful with bids for one to one work.

3.5 Carry out a needs analysis and pilot training for key staff and volunteers on reducing isolation and loneliness in older people - there is currently a tender out for this piece of work with a view to training being developed and piloted by the summer. This training would be beneficial for members.

3.6 Develop and test systematic referral pathways to connect older people to services that they need

Work has begun on this and a sub group has been established to understand the referral pathway for people experiencing loneliness and isolation, how agencies interact with them, how there can be better coordination of services, consistency and effective practice.

3.7	<p><u>Mapping Isolation and Loneliness Amongst Older People in Belfast</u></p> <p>In 2016 Belfast followed the approach taken by Gloucestershire County Council and the University of Kent, and commissioned Queen’s University Belfast to develop Isolation Maps. These maps show areas where older people may be more likely to experience isolation and loneliness. Previous research has suggested that an individual’s vulnerability to social isolation and loneliness may be associated with the following core risk factors: being aged 75 or older; living in single person households; being poorly educated; having a low household annual income; not having access to a car; and living in areas of higher social deprivation.</p>
3.8	<p>When these factors were compiled into an isolation index and mapped for Belfast, it appeared that older adults living within some of the most socially deprived neighbourhoods in inner city Belfast are at the greatest risk of becoming socially isolated. However, social isolation and loneliness are not just found in deprived, inner city neighbourhoods. It was found that there are vulnerable households located across the city, including those areas that have higher average household incomes and car-ownership levels.</p>
3.9	<p>The Fire Service have used these maps to target their free home fire safety check service and Age-friendly Belfast ensure events and activities accessible to these areas. Queens University are updating this work and will develop new maps within next few months.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Intergenerational Work</u></p> <p>The work under the Age-friendly Belfast Plan is mainly looking at older people, but loneliness is an issue for all ages.</p> <p>Linking Generations NI are a member of The Heathy Ageing Strategic Partnership and are working to establish a Belfast Intergenerational Network to support Integrational Work across the City. An information session will be held at Whiterock Community Centre on 10th April 2019.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Morning of Action on Loneliness, City Hall 17th June 2019</u></p> <p>The citywide group are going to host a Morning of Action on Loneliness to highlight as many solutions, programmes and facilities available to help and encourage people to connect, with a focus on older people while allowing for intergenerational input to ensure preventative work is featured. The event will strive to ensure negative stereotypes are not used and actively assist in de-stigmatising loneliness. Councillors will be invited to attend</p>

	<p>and asked to promote the event with constituents. Older Peoples voices will be present and active throughout via the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum, AgeNI, Age sector Platform and service users of the organisations involved. It is hoped to get good media coverage of this event.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>3.12 All work will be carried out within existing budgets of Age-friendly Belfast and the partners involved.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>3.13 This work is part of The Age-friendly Belfast Plan which has been equality and rural needs screened in line with the Council's agreed process</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None