



Subject:	Belfast Child – Seamless Pathway Model for Children & Families
Date:	22 May 2026
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty Brian Carr, Portfolio Manager Michelle McParland, Portfolio & Programme Co-ordinator

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes ☐ No ☒
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.	
Insert number	
1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime	
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 paper is to submit for the consideration of Members the 'Belfast Child' Strategy document for formal endorsement, following its consideration at the Community Planning Partnership on 16 April 2026.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: i. note the work undertaken by the Belfast Area Outcomes Group to develop 'Belfast Child' blueprint under the auspices of the Belfast Agenda commitments. ii. note that the Community Planning Partnership considered the Belfast Child document on 16 April 2026, and requested that individual partner organisations seek endorsement through their respective governance and decision-making processes. iii. note the next steps for the development of an associated action plan, to be brought back to the Partnership in due course; and iv. consider and agree that Council endorses the 'Belfast Child' blueprint, in principle, with any specific resource considerations emerging from the action plan relating to the Council brought back for members consideration and approval. v. agree that the Chief Executive (or a nominee) attend the proposed launch event.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Members will be aware of the importance given within the Belfast Agenda to supporting our children and young people to reach their full potential and achieve the best educational outcomes and life chances possible. As part of the associated 4-year implementation plan, there is a commitment to “design a seamless developmental pathway” for children and create a joint resourced delivery model” for children aged 0-8 years.
3.2	In line with this commitment, the Belfast Area Outcomes Group (convened by the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust) has led the development of the ' Belfast Child ' pathway framework ' which is attached at Appendix 1 . This blueprint sets out a citywide vision to ensure that every child aged 0-8 years in Belfast can benefit from a seamless developmental journey. It's built on a shared commitment to a whole-child, whole-family, and whole-community model, which creates support networks where families, communities, and services all play a crucial role.
3.3	This document shares the story of how a vision has been collaboratively designed, drawing on the wisdom of experts and the vast experience of Belfast's community and government partners. Ultimately, this document provides a clear roadmap for how partners will work together to create an environment where every child in Belfast can truly thrive. The shared vision is that every child in the city is supported to realise their full potential through a clear commitment by agencies and services in Belfast to align, connect and collaborate around families. This collaborative approach aims to deliver the best possible outcomes for children.
3.4	The Belfast Child is intentionally ambitious. It seeks to build an integrated, city-wide support ecosystem capable of providing timely and effective intervention beginning at pre-conception and continuing until at least age eight. This represents the first stage of a journey that will, over

	time, extend to all children and young people under 18, aligning with the Belfast Agenda's 2035 vision.
3.5	At the Community Planning Partnership meeting on 16 April 2026, the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust presented the final draft of the Belfast Child document for the consideration of the CPP. Members will note that there was broad support for the Belfast Child framework and the ambitions contained therein including Belfast becoming a 'Child Friendly City'. It was acknowledged however, that further work still remained to create a supporting implementation/action plan as well as the need for individual partner organisations to seek endorsement through their respective governance and decision making processes of the Belfast Child framework.
3.6	Within this context, correspondence from the Chief Executive of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust has been received by the Chief Executive (attached an Appendix 2), requesting that the Council consider the 'Belfast Child' document, with a view to supporting its endorsement. It outlines the opportunity presented to create important foundations for Belfast's development as a truly child friendly city and represents a significant opportunity to strengthen partnership delivery under the Belfast Agenda. The correspondence also requests the possible involvement of the Chief Executive in the future launch of the 'Belfast Child' document.
	<u>Next steps</u>
3.7	It is understood that the next steps for the Belfast Area Outcomes Group is to engage with partners to consider key actions and potential lead partners in the development of an action plan with clear resource considerations set out. It would be the intention that the emerging draft action plan would be brought back to the Community Planning Partnership for consideration in due course. Any proposals which relate to the Council would be subject to direct engagement and be subject to established governance and decision-making processes.
3.8	Members are asked to consider endorsing the Belfast Child Strategy Document, in principle, with any specific resource commitments emerging from the action planning process to be brought back for members consideration in due course.
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.9	There are no immediate financial or human resource implications arising directly from this report. Resource implications will be understood and considered following the development of a detailed action plan, which will provide assurance around the delivery of the Belfast Child Strategy.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.10	The Belfast Child document has a strong focus on equality and inclusion. It explicitly recognises the need to support high-risk and vulnerable groups and promotes a preventative,

	whole system approach that will have positive equality and good relations impacts across the city. Any Equality Impact Assessment would be carried out by BHSCT who are the lead for this work. There are no rural needs implications.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: Belfast Child Strategy Document Appendix 2: Letter from BHCST to Council seeking endorsement