

**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast
City Council**

26th January, 2021

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet remotely via Teams on Tuesday, 26th January, 2021 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. **Routine Matters**

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Declarations of Interest

2. **Belfast Youth Forum Agenda (Pages 1 - 4)**

- (a) Introduction and Purpose of Meeting
- (b) 'Any Use' Relationship & Sexuality Education (RSE) campaign (Pages 5 - 8)
- (c) 'Elephant in the Room' (EITR) Mental Health Campaign
- (d) Belfast Youth Forum - Recruitment Update
- (e) NCB Mental Health Charter for Children and Young People



Subject:	Belfast Youth Forum special Committee meeting
Date:	26 th January 2021
Reporting Officer:	Cate Taggart, Neighbourhood Service Manager, East Belfast
Contact Officer:	Grainne O'Hare, Community Development Officer,

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an agenda for the meeting between the Belfast Youth Forum (BYF) and P&C Committee which takes place on 26 th January 2021.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	There are no recommendations contained within this report. Members are asked to note the agenda items prior to the meeting.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Meeting Agenda</u>

3.1	<p>Youth Forum Campaigns</p> <p>BYF members are currently working on the following campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship & sexual health education (Any Use? Campaign); • Racism and diversity project; • Mental Health (Elephant in the Room campaign); • Poverty (Poverty: it's not a choice campaign);
3.2	<p>Item 1: Introductions and purpose of meeting</p> <p>-To discuss the following reports and their recommendations with Elected Members and representatives from PHA and Department of Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship & sexual health education (Any Use? Campaign); • Mental Health (Elephant in the Room campaign) – including an overview of the ‘Heads Up’ Mental Health Advocacy Toolkit. <p>-To provide an update on the current limited BYF recruitment drive which took place from November 2020 – January 2021 to fill the 10 vacant membership places.</p> <p>Item 2: ‘Any Use’ Relationship & Sexuality Education (RSE) campaign</p> <p>BYF will discuss the report findings and recommendations with Members and invited representatives with a view to establishing how Elected Members and invited representatives can support and help BYF to use these recommendations to bring about change. BYF will also discuss the potential replication of the research in other parts on Northern Ireland and provide an overview of their informal presentation to Education Committee in Stormont on 12th January 2021.</p> <p>Item 3: ‘Elephant in the Room’ (EITR) mental health campaign</p> <p>EITR group members, made up of representatives from Belfast Youth Forum (BYF) and Northern Ireland Youth Forum (NIYF), will update Members and invited representatives on the most recent progress of this campaign to date with a view to establishing how Elected Members and invited representatives can support and help the EITR group to use the recommendations within the EITR report to bring about change.</p> <p>An overview will also be provided on the creation and imminent launch of the ‘Heads Up’ mental health advocacy toolkit designed in partnership between BYF, NIYF and Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY). This toolkit has been designed to help and support young people to take action and campaign on local mental health issues</p> <p>Item 4: BYF Recruitment</p> <p>Members are asked to note that in January 2020 at the joint Youth Forum / People and Communities meeting, Members agreed to amend the BYF recruitment process to begin in September and end in October in line with the academic year. The previous timeframe was during April and May which conflicted with the exam season for BYF members.</p>

	<p>Members are also asked to note that at the People and Communities meeting in August 2020, members agreed to extend the current cohort of members' term for 1 year. This was due to the impact of Covid-19 and the limitations the environment presented for positive active engagement with young people, schools and service providers during this time.</p> <p>In response to Member's recommendations at People and Communities Committee in August 2020, it was agreed that any current vacant places within the BYF will be filled with the intention of using targeted recruitment to address any gaps in relation to communities which are currently underrepresented in the Forum.</p> <p>Following this, a limited recruitment drive has taken place throughout December 2020 and January 2021 to fill the 10 vacant places within the Youth Forum. Applications were open to everyone, however the recruitment drive was promoted in specific areas of Belfast and with specific groups which were under represented through various means such as social media, engagement with some elected members, engagement with EA Youth Service, promotion through existing area BCC Area Support staff and engagement with existing community contacts.</p> <p>A verbal update will be provided on the updated geographical breakdown of BYF membership.</p> <p>Item 5: NCB Mental health charter for children and young people National Children's Bureau have been working on the development of a children and young person's mental health charter. Belfast City Council have been involved in this as part of a project stakeholder group and Belfast Youth Forum have been referenced within it alongside NI Youth Forum, in relation to the Elephant in the Room report. This charter is due to be launched on 4th February. Further updates on the charter will presented to the Committee after publication.</p> <p>Item 6: Any Other Business</p>
3.3	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no financial or resource implications.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations implications. No rural needs assessment is needed.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices</p>
4.1	<p>N/A</p>

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Subject:	Response from Department of Health - Permanent Secretary re: Request to attend Committee
Date:	26th January, 2021
Reporting Officer:	Sara Steele, Democratic Services Officer
Contact Officer:	Sara Steele, Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To note the response from the DoH Permanent Secretary in response to an invitation to attend a meeting of the People and Communities Committee.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the response.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Committee will recall that at its meeting on 20th October it was agreed that letters be forwarded to the Permanent Secretaries of both the Department of Health and Department of Education seeking a joint meeting to discuss its “Any Use?” Relationship and Sexual Education Campaign report and its “Elephant in the Room” Mental Health Campaign.

3.2	It was agreed also that representatives of the Public Health Agency would be invited to the meeting.
3.3	A response has now been received from the Permanent Secretary, Richard Pengelly, a copy of which is attached.
3.4	Mr. Pengelly referred to the current pressures on the Health Service as a result of the ongoing pandemic and detailed that as a result the Department was currently focusing on a number of other urgent health issues and respectively declined the invitation to attend.
3.5	<p>He also noted that the Department of Health had already extensively engaged with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum on these matters and suggested that, as the Department did not directly commission Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE), it might be more appropriate for the report to be further discussed with the Public Health Agency, who currently commission RSE in two ways: training of teachers to deliver RSE; and funding of voluntary sector providers to deliver RSE in community settings.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.6	<p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.7	None associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Copy of response from the Permanent Secretary.

**From the Permanent Secretary
and HSC Chief Executive**



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Our ref: RP5661
SINV-0071-2020

Date: 25 January 2021

Dear Sara

Thank you for your letter dated 13 November 2020, inviting me to attend a joint meeting with the Council's People and Communities Committee and the Belfast Youth Forum, the Permanent Secretary of Department of Education, and representatives from the Public Health Agency, to discuss the 'Any Use?' Relationship and Sexual Education Campaign report and 'Elephant in the Room' mental health campaign.

As you may already be aware, I hosted a joint meeting with the Permanent Secretary of Department of Education, officials from the Public Health Agency (PHA) and members of Belfast Youth Forum on 1 August 2019 to discuss proposals stemming from the Elephant in the Room Report on young people's mental health. This was a very useful meeting to understand the issues being raised.

Following on from this meeting, the Northern Ireland Youth Forum gave a presentation on the Elephant in the Room campaign at the Executive Group on Mental Well-being, Emotional Resilience and Suicide Prevention meeting held on 29 July 2020 and that Ministers discussed the report and the recommendations contained within it. I understand that Ministers were very impressed with the work of all of the young people involved and also that they agreed, where possible, to support implementation of the recommendations made in the report.

There is much work being done within both Health and Education independently and collaboratively to challenge the culture of silence and negative stigma around mental health, developing new and positive language for mental health, and creating digital solutions to receive mental health information and support. Also, creating a curriculum programme for schools and colleges on mental health and wellbeing which, whilst led by Education, we in Health are keen to assist.

The PHA have been engaged with young people through the Facilitating Life and Resilience Education (FLARE) project. The young people involved identified similar issues to those raised in the *Elephant in the Room* Report including having a safe place to talk,

raising awareness of support services in other areas and increasing knowledge of mental illness and health issues and self-care.

FLARE's main aim is to support young people who are struggling with mental ill health, suicide ideation or previous suicide attempts. Young people are referred from various sources including social services, youth service, self-referral, schools, parents, guardians, CAMHS, PSNI, community groups.

Programme outcomes for young people include increased self-awareness and ability to manage emotions; increased understanding of the reason behind negative and suicidal thoughts; increased resilience and positive sense of wellbeing; improved interpersonal skills and sense of purpose.

I also note that at the Executive Group meeting on 29 July, the Minister for Communities asked for a meeting to be arranged with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and that it was suggested that the FLARE project should also be invited to participate given their similar interests.

I am also aware that the Youth Forum is involved in the PHA work on Young People's Covid messaging and I have been advised that PHA are open to further engagement with the forum around mental health. I understand that Olive Macleod, Interim Chief Executive and David Tumilty, BCC Lead from PHA have agreed to participate in the proposed meeting.

My Department does not directly commission Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE). It may be more appropriate for you to discuss this with the Public Health Agency, who currently commission RSE in two ways: training of teachers to deliver RSE; and funding of voluntary sector providers to deliver RSE in community settings.

Given that my Department has already extensively engaged with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum on these matters and also the priority being given by the Department to a number of urgent health issues, including the Coronavirus response we are not in a position to accept your kind invitation at this time. Thank you again for your interest in this area and I trust this provides a further update on the issues raised.

Yours sincerely



RICHARD PENGELLY
ACCOUNTING OFFICER