



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022/2026 - Public Consultation</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Siobhan Toland, Director City Services David Sales, Neighbourhood Services Manager
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sometime in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To update the Committee on the Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022-2026 and agree the Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan to go to public consultation.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022-2026 for public consultation in Autumn 2022.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	In 2012, the Council's All-Party Reference Group on Older People provided the initial leadership to explore Belfast becoming an Age Friendly City, and in May 2012, the Lord

Mayor signed a declaration committing Belfast to this process. HASP coordinated delivery of two Age Friendly Belfast Plans in 2014-2017 and 2018-2021.

3.2 The Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) coordinates the work of many organisations and agencies working with and for older people. HASP manages the development and implementation of the city's Age Friendly Plans on behalf of Belfast City Council and the wider Community Planning Partnership.

3.3 The draft plan is attached in Appendix 1, this will be issued for consultation in the Autumn as part of October Positive Ageing Month, with a launch in December 2022/January 2023 and submission to WHO. An accessible version of the final plan will also be made available.

#### Age Friendly Draft Plan 2022-2026

3.4 The plan will retain the vision *A city where older people live life to the full.*

3.5 Consultation has identified the following 4 strategic themes and associated actions;

#### **1. Infrastructure/Getting out and about**

- Develop a joined-up approach to engagement and co-design with older people on local and city centre developments, led by Greater Belfast Seniors Forum, the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) and the Department for Infrastructure
- Develop age friendly design principles, which can be used to inform new infrastructure developments, led by Age Friendly Network NI and Belfast City Council
- Review and improve access to seating and toilets, led by Belfast City Council, Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure
- Raise awareness and provide training for bus drivers on the needs of older people using their services, led by Age Partnership Belfast

#### **2. Social Connections**

- Support recovery of groups/programmes with older people led by Age Partnership Belfast, Belfast City Council and voluntary and community sector partners

- Coordinate an Age Friendly Belfast annual programme of events/activities, led by BCC Age Friendly Co-ordinator, supported by a range of city partners
- Develop local connection hubs and a city centre hub where older people can meet each other and access information, led by Greater Belfast Seniors Forum
- Develop dementia carers cafes in all 4 dementia friendly neighbourhoods, led by Dementia Friendly Neighbourhood groups and supported by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- Develop a recruitment drive to encourage older people to re-engage in volunteering, and to recruit new volunteers. Promote initiatives to manage and support older people's participation in volunteering, led by Volunteer Now

### **3. Health and Wellbeing**

- Work with Greater Belfast Seniors forum to link with GP representatives and multi-disciplinary teams to ensure that the voice of older people is heard in discussions on access to services led by Age Partnership Belfast
- Support 600-800 older people (most in need) to improve their mobility levels and to feel more connected and less lonely, led by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, supported by BHDU. (This is the older people's priority for the refreshed Belfast Agenda)
- Promote key messages and connect older people's programmes that seek to increase their strength and mobility, including fall prevention, led by Age NI and Public Health Agency
- Involve Older people in the development of the 'Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing' approach, led by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust

### **4. Financial Security/Cost of Living**

- Work with older people to provide information and support on financial security in a way that is easy to understand and navigate.
- Review and support the wider policy level work on food and fuel poverty

- Offer access to employment support and employment for those aged 50+, led by Belfast City Council Employability and Skills Team/Belfast Labour Market Partnership
- Promote and support the Age at Work approach to recruit, retain and retrain workers aged 50+, led by Business in the Community.

3.6

The plan is written in the context of recovery from Covid-19 and it includes some lessons learned from the Covid-19 response, which include:

- The Covid-19 response demonstrated at scale and pace, a whole-system approach to supporting vulnerable populations. The response tested new approaches to joint working across sectors at both the strategic / policy setting level and the operational / neighbourhood level. Whilst the scale and urgent timing of response is different, lessons from this joint working are needed to help the most vulnerable citizens in Belfast on an ongoing basis and particularly in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.
- Neighbourliness thrived during Covid-19 with many local services identifying and supporting older residents to a much greater extent than prior to the pandemic. Older people value the services and amenities in their local areas, they mostly feel safe there and they are often able to access all the goods and services they require. This desire to use local provision should inform how service providers engage and provide services for older people.
- During Covid-19 new approaches to befriending and connecting people developed and learning from these approaches have been shared through Age Friendly Belfast partners.
- Living with Covid-19 restrictions showed the resilience and adaptability of older people's groups. This included increased use of technology and moving to using outdoor spaces for meetings and events. The various methods of engaging should be considered when developing future services and programmes.
- Loneliness has always been a key concern for, and about, older people in the city, and this was exacerbated by Covid-19. This has placed a focus on mental health and wellbeing which should continue to be a priority.

	<p><u>Links to the Belfast Agenda</u></p>
3.7	<p>The new plan will operate over 4 years to align with Belfast Agenda, which includes 'Older People' as one of its cross-cutting themes.</p>
3.8	<p>The draft Belfast Agenda Review has potential to support the Age Friendly Belfast plan through some of the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connectivity, Sustainability and Active Travel - improve cycle and walking lanes and improve use of sustainable transport</li> <li>• Housing led Regeneration - increase affordable housing supply</li> <li>• Health Inequalities - promote, improve, and support mental health and emotional wellbeing, and increase levels of physical activity and reduce obesity</li> <li>• Future City Centre - facilitate a clean, green, safe, vibrant, and inclusive city centre</li> <li>• Inclusive Growth - better understand issues/drivers of those in poverty and develop action plans to address issues</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p>
3.9	<p>There is a small budget from Belfast City Council and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to deliver actions in the Age Friendly Plan. Funding has also been secured through Public Health Agency (PHA) to appoint an Age Friendly Co-ordinator until March 2025 in line with the other council areas and this officer will co-ordinate delivery of the plan.</p> <p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p>
3.10	<p>None – EQIAs and RAIAs have been completed</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Document Attached</b>
	Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022-2026