



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
Subject:	Intersectoral working for improving the health and wellbeing of older people living in Belfast.
Date:	20 th June 2008
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Relevant Background Information

Northern Ireland has an increasing number of older people. Belfast has the lowest life expectancy for men and women in the EHSSB area and in Northern Ireland. Belfast City Council through its recent Corporate Plans has given commitment to improving the health, safety and wellbeing of older people in the City.

In 2006 Belfast Healthy Cities developed a Healthy Ageing InterAction Plan in partnership with agencies working in the EHSSB area. One of the key actions outlined in the InterAction plan was the establishment of a strategic multi agency group within each new Trust/ Council area that would develop collaborative approaches to addressing issues affecting older people; build capacity to strengthen engagement of older people and provide a mechanism to ensure older people can effectively influence the setting of priorities and development of services. In Belfast a Strategic Intersectoral Healthy Ageing Partnership is being established to take this work forward.

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (November 2007) approved the Councils proposed approach to improving the health and wellbeing of the older people living in the City, which incorporated a strategic medium to long term plan covering four areas, namely Intersectoral Working, Citizenship, Improving Council Services and Advocacy.

Whilst work is progressing well in all of these areas this report is specifically about the intersectoral work and establishing a Strategic Healthy Ageing Partnership.

Key Issues

The aim of the Partnership is to improve the health and wellbeing of older people living in Belfast through a coordinated and joined up approach to the planning and delivery of services in the key areas that impact on older people.

The partnership will link into the Council's All Party Political Reference Group for Older People, re-established in October 2007. The partnership will also make connections with the Older People's Advocate which was recently advertised by OFMDFM and the Ageing in an Inclusive Society representative within OFMDFM.

A workshop was held in March 2008, Chaired by Councillor Diane Dodds, supported by Atlantic Philanthropies and other partners and attended by senior public sector representatives and older people to help identify the priorities for the work of the partnership. The following four priorities were identified:

- Joined up information and advice
- Community Capacity building
- Combating Social Isolation
- Home services/ Care and repair

The purpose of the partnership is to develop and agree an overall programme of work and success indicators with partners including the age sector that facilitates a multi agency, integrated approach to the planning of services *initially* under the four priority areas mentioned above.

Within this framework the partnership will:

- Ensure that the voice of older people is heard and has an input into the planning of services provided by the partner agencies. The intersectoral partnership is committed to developing older people's representation with existing age sector forums and voluntary partners as an integral part of the Intersectoral Partnership
- Establish mechanisms that will provide linkages between older peoples' partnerships/groups and statutory organisations working with older people
- Provide a coordinated interagency and or single agency response to issues and services directly affecting older people at a local level
- Identify and seek to replicate good practice across the city with the statutory and age sector
- Commission and review research on matters affecting older people (via partner organisations)
- Provide strategic input into the Council's reference group for older people
- Be a focal point for intersectoral information and communication
- Act as a congruent between the local and strategic level *within* partner organisations to influence change & develop innovative projects that will benefit older people
- Provide a vehicle for the monitoring of the delivery of actions as outlined in the Healthy Ageing InterAction plan (2006-2009) and be accountable to the cross party political reference group in Belfast City Council for the delivery of actions within the InterAction Plan that member organizations within the partnership have responsibility for. Older peoples consortia/partnerships will also be kept informed of progress on action within the Healthy Ageing InterAction plan (*A mid way review report was*

completed and circulated December 2007)

- Exchange information and respond to developments/regional policy that will affect older people
- Link with community planning groups when they become established
- Commit to jointly identifying key aims and shared ownership of outcomes with age sector stakeholders and older people through intersectoral engagement

Membership will initially consist of representatives from Belfast City Council; Belfast Trust; Eastern Health and Social Services Board, NIHE; Belfast Healthy Cities, Transport; Age Concern and Help the Aged and chairs of Engage with Age and North and West Belfast Healthy Ageing Consortia.

Representatives from other organisations will be invited to participate and become members as appropriate.

The EHSSB has given a financial commitment to jointly fund with the Council a full time post over 3 years to coordinate and support the work of the partnership. This post has been given an indicative grade of PO3 grade (£31,516-£34,290). In addition the Board has also given commitment to part fund an administrative support post with an indicative grade of Scale 4 (£16,536-£18,430). The possibility of a jointly funded post was brought to the attention of this Committee in the November 2007 report.

If approval is granted by this Committee the Council will appoint the posts on behalf of the Partnership and line management will be provided through the Environmental Health Service.

Resource Implications

Financial

The main resource requirement will be one half of the employee costs over a three year period for both a co-ordinator post and an administrative support post. The cost to the Council would be approximately £25,000 per year for three years. However, given the fact that it is unlikely that postholders would be recruited until the Autumn, the cost to the Council for this financial year would be in the region of £12,500.

This cost has not been explicitly included in the Revenue Estimates for 2008/2009 but could be included in the estimates for future years.

Human Resources

The posts of Older Peoples Co-ordinator and Administrative Support Officer would be appointed by the Council. .

Recommendations

Committee is asked to agree:

1. The Council's role in establishing a Strategic Healthy Ageing Partnership;

2. To the appointment of an Older Peoples Co-ordinator and an Administrative Support Officer for a three year period; and
3. To provide the finance to fund half the costs of these posts for a three year period.

Key to Abbreviations

EHSSB – Eastern Health and Social Services Board

OFMDFM – Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister