



**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>The Declaration on Age-friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013</b>
<b>Date:</b>	24 May 2013
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<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Across the world, life expectancy is increasing as is the prevalence of chronic diseases and disabilities associated with ageing.
1.2	In Belfast around 16% of the population is over 60 and the number of people aged 85+ is increasing. Average life expectancy in the City for men is currently 73.9 and for women it is 79.8; this is the lowest in Northern Ireland. There are significant inequalities in the city and those living in more affluent areas can expect to live longer and enjoy better health in old age.
1.3	Across the world, cities have to develop their structures and services to meet the requirements of their aging populations. Belfast City Council has identified older people as a priority within its corporate plan and, in March 2012, the Council agreed that the Lord Mayor should sign the Age Friendly Cities and Communities Declaration (2011) committing Belfast to becoming a more Age-friendly City, thereby encouraging active, healthy aging. This was signed by the Lord Mayor in May 2012.
1.4	Belfast became a member of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Network of Age-friendly Cities in April 2013. The Council is currently collaborating through its role in the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership with voluntary and public sector organisations to develop a 3-year age friendly action plan for the City.
1.5	The All Party Reference Group on Older People oversees the work of the Council in this area.
1.6	As part of this process it is important that Belfast can learn and share experiences, good practice and work with other Age Friendly Cities in Europe.
1.7	It was agreed by this Committee on 19 April that the Chair of the Reference Group on Older People attends the EU Summit on Active and Healthy Aging summit in Dublin on 13-14 June 2013. The summit aims to provide a unique opportunity to set the agenda for an Age Friendly Europe at a time when the aging population is profoundly challenging fiscal sustainability.
1.8	On 19 April the Committee was informed that, as part of the EU Summit, the Lord Mayor, together with Lord Mayors from Cities across Europe, would be invited to sign a new Declaration on Age-friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013. It was also agreed by Committee that, subject to advice, the appropriate elected Member is given authority to sign the Declaration on behalf of the Council.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The copy of the Declaration on Age-friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013 which the Council has been invited to endorse is provided in Appendix A.
2.2	The aim of the Declaration is to solicit support for a range of actions that are broadly based on the eight domains identified by the WHO in its Global Age-friendly Cities Guide, including committing to participate in the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities.
2.3	It expresses the clear and strong commitment of political leaders of cities and communities to strengthen and champion action to make their communities more age-friendly and highlights the need for ongoing improvement across a range of interrelated domains of older people's lives. It commits signatories to undertake a continuous cycle of improvement through a planning process which will be supported by participation in the WHO's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities. Belfast is already well progressed on this.
2.4	The declaration:: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establishes the values and principles for action based on the listed existing WHO and EU policies etc. (See Appendix 2 for additional information on each)</li> <li>▪ Recognises the opportunities and challenges to meet the Age Friendly Agenda including the opportunity for the declaration to underpin a future co operation agreement forming an EU Covenant on Democratic Change. (See appendix 3 for further information on the proposed EU Covenant)</li> <li>▪ Outlines the commitments the Council would make by signing the Declaration. These are similar to the commitments already made by signing the 2011 Declaration. However the scope of key commitments extends to the benefit all were previously only to older people.</li> </ul>

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	The current Age-friendly programme will ensure all the commitments in the declaration are met without requiring additional resources.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
4.1	There are no relevant equality and good relations implications.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are asked to considered the Declaration and agree that the appropriate elected member is given authority to sign the Declaration on behalf of the Council.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	WHO - World Health Organisation E.U. European Union

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1. The Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013 Appendix 2. Summary of Documents and Policy Frameworks outlining Values and Principles of Action Appendix 3. Information on proposed EU Covenant on Demographic Change