

## **Appendix 1: Outline of existing activities and investment by Council towards realising the benefits from a child/ family friendly city**

Children and young people has been a corporate priority for Members over the last 10 years. This being recently confirmed in December 14 when elected members endorsed our draft CYP outcomes approach which is currently being tested across council services. A progress report is planned for the People and Communities Committee September 2015 in line with our agreed vision that 'we want all Belfast's Children and Young People to reach their potential and to know that Belfast is the place to be to do just that.'

To ensure a co-ordinated approach, council is a key partner in the Belfast Outcomes group which is part of the regional infrastructure for Children and Young People Strategic Partnership with a primary focus on achieving positive outcomes for CYP including environmental wellbeing. Council is also an active partner in the city level partnership namely Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) which has among its priorities a focus on child friendly, family and also age friendly city.

- BSP identified family friendly (and age friendly) as key priorities and are currently co-funded by Council in partnership with PHA and BHSCT. The CYP manager and other council officers e.g. Environmental health service staff, are represented on the Family Friendly sub group which is planning its priorities for the next year and is keen to follow Council's new outcomes approach on children and young people services.
- There is a one year Service Level Agreement and investment for 2015-16 with Belfast Healthy Cities primarily for them to support programmes and projects aligned to the corporate Belfast Agenda and the Belfast Strategic partnership. The Council, through the Lord Mayors office, also supported the application for the re-designation of Belfast under Phase vi of the World Health Organisation's European Healthy Cities Network (2014-2019). There is support at BHC board level from 2 senior managers and 4 officers at operational level as part of the WHO delivery plan with the CYP manager reflecting CYP needs at the Child Friendly task and finish sub group.
- Regionally Council is represented on a Play and Leisure Forum, all of which have overlapping interests in either children and young people and space or place.
- At a neighbourhood level, historically Council has led or participated in local estate based strategies; renewal plans and more recently local area working all of which supports activity and provides resources for a more child/ family friendly city.

In Council's response to BHC 'Shaping healthier places for children – a call to action' (June 15) our commitment, leadership, policy direction and action were all reinforced along with a desire for collaboration among all partners who have a role to play in shaping an all age friendly city

particularly key projects in the pipeline as part of the city centre regeneration and investment plan. This provides real opportunity and focus for additional efforts in actively engaging children and young people in the city centre regeneration.

There is a range of current activity, resources and opportunities being developed which are directly linked to supporting both child friendly and family friendly city. The following is an illustrative list but is not exhaustive:

- The Investment Programme and Playground Improvement programme reflects the commitment by council in developing physical play provision.
- Belfast Bikes has been a positive investment in affordable access throughout the city centre hopefully attractive to families... renewing the routes also contributing greatly to appealing to families, communities and individual young people to make their way into the city;
- Council's dedicated Play service operates 'Come and play' which is an investment in supporting children to explore the outdoors through play. Playboard also operates a Street Play model and all share similar principles to BHC's 'kid's spaces'. Conversations have begun on how the Play service can meet any needs or gaps identified for child or family friendly in particular to support the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Plan stated objective to encourage CYP and families into the heart of the city.
- The Play team expertise, alongside the research work of Playboard and others, has influenced the recent Peace IV proposal: this recognises that play is the first opportunity in a child's life to realise their potential and interact with others. CYP unit has applied an outcomes approach to the development of the idea that through a child's eyes 'everything is a play opportunity'.
- The current Youth Forum is ending its first year and has participated in a range of training and support, networked with umbrella youth organisations before agreeing their priority areas of work for the rest of their term. The 3 campaign areas which they have prioritised are Child poverty; Youth homelessness (sofa surfing) and a shared space in the city centre. Working with partner organisations, such as the Simon community, NIHE, NCB, CINI, NICCY, etc, the unique nature of this work is that the young people are learning how to carry out research and develop policy to inform and influence elected Members and are acting as city leaders - articulating the voice of children and young people in order to influence the future shape of the city.
- There is a community safety led app for the city which is incorporating a Youth Forum proposal of identifying youth friendly sites, shops and space in the city centre
- We are continuing to identify and build relationships with new partners such as Global shapers. This organisation works with young influencers and other entrepreneurial and enterprising young person/ adult groups who are keen to lead the way in influencing city centre regeneration and business investment from a young person/ adult perspective. Given this is

often a key target group for many models of city living, this approach reflects a need to engage a wider age range to fully inform a child/ family/ all age friendly city model.

- Council continues to manage a healthy and vibrant city events programme, our Parks and Leisure programme of events and activities alongside neighbourhood programmes in our community centres and our summer play programme.
- Council invests in Belfast City Centre Management to derive a safe and thriving city centre. They are also an active player in Belfast Healthy Cities and BSP's family friendly initiative.
- The City Centre Regeneration and Investment Plan, the Investment Programme, Sports Development Strategy, Age Friendly action plan and also the Lord Mayor's Annual programme all promote the benefits recorded in the notice of motion.