



<b>Subject:</b>	Family friendly update
<b>Date:</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> November 2015
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Cate Taggart, Community Development Manager ext 3525
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<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<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 or Summary of main Issues</b>
<b>1.1</b>	The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update on the 'Family Friendly' approach in the city. The paper provides the wider external context in which Council is working with its partners to further the family friendly agenda and includes an update on the Council's current programmes ( <b>Appendix 1</b> ) for families in the 2015/16 financial year and (budget dependent) further plans for the 2016/17 financial year.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b>2.1</b>	Members are asked to  - Note the content of the paper which sets out the programmed activity by Council and our partners primarily through the 'Family Friendly Initiative' to promote the needs of families in a world class city.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<b>Key Issues</b>
<b>3.1</b>	The initial notice of motion on supporting a 'Family Friendly' city centre agenda was discussed at Shadow Council (March 2015) followed by the City Growth and

Regeneration Committee (August 2015) where the following actions were agreed:

- Send a recognition letter to Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC);
- Prepare a list of current council programmes and investments with key partners such as the Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) which will support the benefits outlined in the motion and;
- For Council to incorporate the benefits from specific initiatives like child, family and age friendly into Council's future approach for city regeneration and investment and the associated policies, projects and places.
- Members also sought 'proposals for immediate improvements of family friendly spaces and programmes'.

### **Wider external Context**

3.2

As part of the Belfast Strategic Partnership, the Belfast Health Development Unit (BH DU) has developed a Family Friendly Initiative and established a sub-group to agree a supporting programme of activities sponsored through the Public Health Agency. The sub-group includes Council officers and other appropriate agencies. The Family Friendly Initiative traditionally had a programme of activity including 'Kids' space'; 'Acoustic picnics' and 'Movie Mornings' etc. The programmes will need reviewed to align to the new Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, to focus on outcomes for families and their needs to be a connected part of the city. The remaining programme for 2015/16 is summarised in **Appendix 1**.

3.3

In preparation for future programme design, the sub-group has agreed a pilot to evidence the needs of families across the city. This will consider what factors would influence a family in our neighbourhoods to connect to the city to ensure future programmes and spaces are aligned to identified family needs. It will focus firstly on Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and an update will be brought to Members in due course.

3.4

In preparation for future programme design, the sub-groups have also scheduled a 'PLACE & SPACE' outcomes based workshop to support this ongoing area of partnership work. This is to ensure any vision for family and child friendly city sits comfortably within our developing action plan in support of Council's ambitious City Centre Regeneration and Investment vision to be recognised as a world-class city centre.

### **Current programme of activity**

3.5	<p>The Council has a range of family focused projects, programmes, funding, events and activities year round within agreed revenue estimates and these are outlined in Appendix 1, alongside some activity sponsored by our partners. Activity which is planned for next year is also included. However this is budget dependent. This programme includes events for families at civic and community level.</p>
3.6	<p>The Civic events programme includes the Christmas Lights switch on at City Hall, the BBC Sports Personality of the Year and Outreach Programme, St Patrick Celebrations and Spring into Easter programme in March 2016. It is hoped the annual programme of civic events will include the Circuit of Ireland Rally along with favourites like the Belfast City Marathon; Belfast Titanic Maritime Festival and the Proms. Rounding off with the All Ireland Irish Dancing Championships.</p>
3.7	<p>At a community level our Tourism, Culture and Arts grant funding supports a range of family initiatives ranging from the Beat Initiative family friendly carnival, Belfast Community Circus school programme of family circus workshops, Cahoots NI for the children's theatre company and Cinemagic's screenings festival to engage young people. Wheelworks engages marginalised young people through a mobile creative hub and Young at Art provide the popular Belfast Children's Festival at the Waterfront and other city venues which are supported by the Council's Play team.</p>
3.8	<p>A range of family friendly activities are supported via our Council grant schemes. The small grant programme focus on sports, parks and general activities for children, young people and families throughout the city while our larger grant aid streams support the community and voluntary sector to deliver services, programmes and activities for families. Council's <i>Ur city 2</i> youth funding provides direct support to Neighbourhood Renewal areas to develop an outcomes based children and young people programme which supports a range of Halloween and other seasonal events. These activities are developed by young people for their families to enjoy.</p>
3.9	<p>Two key partners in providing a family friendly focus are BHDU through its Family Friendly Initiative and Belfast Healthy Cities. As already noted, activities in the pipeline for them include upcoming movie mornings, acoustic picnics and Kid's Space events some of which are supported financially through BHDU and Council.</p> <p>The Council also runs year-round programmes for the community either in our</p>

3.10	<p>community centres or through outreach programmes. For example the Play Service operates a play session from Donegall Pass for the residential population in the city centre. Some of our community centres are placed right on the periphery of the city centre and provide an annual programme of activity open to everyone.</p>
3.11	<p>The Family Friendly City vision is supported by the strategic development work underway in partnership through the Family Friendly Initiative of BHDU and Belfast Healthy Cities. It includes our own ambitions whether through the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy and the People and Communities committee Action Plan. We hope this will be supplemented by a range of individual proposals, for example, the 'Play, Space and Shared Space' which has been included in the draft PEACE IV Local Action Plan proposal. The vision is further supported through our various physical and public realm initiatives e.g. Investment Programme, Playground Improvement programme, Renewing the Routes, etc.</p>
3.12	<p><b>Outcomes focused programmes and services</b></p> <p>Since the Children and Young People (CYP) outcomes framework was agreed by Members last year, officers have developed bespoke training workshops in order to increase awareness and support service delivery across Council. This is to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people and their families are planned for and delivered as daily business. Community Services, Corporate HR and the Good Relations team have already completed the training and a workshop is planned for Property and Projects. The aim is to support council services to better understand how to design-in CYP (also family) outcomes into everyday business.</p>
3.13	<p>The new City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy sets out a road map of policies to guide city centre decision making. This provides an immediate opportunity to integrate the needs of families as related to the eight key policy areas and the identified projects and places. As the strategy develops and the social investment fund comes to fruition, there may be scope to look at some physical projects. The ongoing work of the Family Friendly Initiative can support and influence how best to engage families, identify and prioritise their needs. This might be particularly relevant for the priorities: <i>increasing the residential population, creating a green, walkable and cyclable centre, shared space and social impact and connecting 'to the city around'</i>.</p> <p><b>Finance and Resource Implications</b></p>

