



Subject:	European Local Democracy Week – EurVoice 2017 Event
Date:	Friday, 18th August, 2017
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) is an annual event held each October. The overarching purpose of ELDW is to promote a better involvement of citizens in public life, enhance transparency of local government mechanisms and improve social cohesion, in particular among young people and disadvantaged groups.
1.2	For the past five years, the Council has organised and delivered ‘EurVoice’ events which have allowed pupils from Secondary Schools, members of the Council’s Youth Forum, representatives of the European Youth Parliament and participants from Community Groups in the City to interact with their local Councillors on issues affecting the youth of today. Following the success of EurVoice to date, it is felt that it would be worth organising another

1.3	engaging event for 2017, where both young people and Councillors could meet to discuss the relevant issues which face the young citizens of our City.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>Members are asked to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to the hosting of the EurVoice 2017 event as outlined in the report.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Launched in 2007 to foster citizen participation and promote democracy at the level closest to the citizens, the European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) celebrates its 10th anniversary this year and encourages local and regional authorities of Europe and their associations to organise participatory events to celebrate local democracy, as a shared value.</p>
3.2	<p>EurVoice is a unique community outreach programme designed to engage and empower young people. The purpose of EurVoice is to provide a platform and framework for young people to take ownership of their own opinions and place in society, to express their views to people in authority, and to discover their own importance in shaping the future. The nature of the event serves to influence and encourage the role young people could potentially have in local democracy decision-making.</p>
3.3	<p>These events have proven to be very successful and feedback from the Schools, Community Groups and from the Councillors has been very positive. Participants felt that last year's event was a diverse way to meet with other young people from across the city and get a sense of, and discuss, mutually important and relevant issues.</p>
3.4	<p>If approved, the EurVoice 2017 event will take place in the Great Hall in October, from 11.30 am to 3.30 p.m. and will target Belfast City Council schools and youth organisations.</p> <p>A series of activities are planned including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in a mock voting exercise; • Facilitated workshop on issues affecting young people, including decision-making skills, debate preparation and presenting their ideas to the Members for feedback; and • Finishing with a panel Q&A session with Members of Council <p>The participation of Elected Members is crucial to the success of the event to assist in</p>

3.5	<p>achieving the outlined aims as well as breaking down barriers between young citizens, the Council and its Members.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>A project steering group has been set up to organise the event comprising of officers from Democratic Services, Community Services and the European Unit as well as external organisations which include the European Commission Office of Northern Ireland and the European Youth Parliament.</p> <p>It is expected that the event will cost approximately £600 which will include MC and IT provision. Provision for the cost of the event has been made within the Chief Executive's Departmental revenue estimates.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
3.6	
3.7	
3.8	
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None