



**Belfast
City Council**

**Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties
Annual Progress Report 2016-17**

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Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/council/equality/equality-about.aspx>

Signature:



This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2016 and March 2017

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

1 In 2016-17, please provide examples of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

Information on the key policy/service delivery developments we have made in 2016/2017 are as follows:

Belfast Agenda – Public Consultation

Building on the feedback received from the public and stakeholders during the Belfast Conversation in 2015, the council and its community planning partners developed the draft Belfast Agenda, the city's first community plan.

The public consultation on the draft Belfast Agenda, was launched on 15th December 2016 and ran for 18 weeks until 20th April 2017. The consultation length was initially to be 12 weeks but was extended to allow additional time, to take account of any impact caused by the calling of the NI Assembly election and to align with the Local Development Plan Preferred Options Paper (which was out for consultation at the same time). Council members wanted to ensure the general public were given sufficient time to participate in the consultation process, given the significant scope of the Community Plan.

During this period, nearly 300 responses were received, including 92 from organisations and around 90 from young people via the Council's Youth Forum.

Consultation methods included:

- A series of public consultation briefing events across the city
- Targeted meetings/workshops with key stakeholders and interest groups,

including with key groups across section 75 categories

- Online consultation questionnaire via Citizen Space portal on Council website
- Social media, via Facebook, Twitter etc.

The consultation design specifically considered stakeholders who might be less likely to make their voices heard. We sought to identify and meet with representative groups and organisations who had the trust, and direct relationship, with these 'seldom heard' stakeholders. We aimed to support and help these organisations to facilitate their own engagement sessions with their groups or service users, to ensure a broader input into consultation responses.

Examples included engagement with older people via the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership, women via the Women's Resource Development Agency, ethnic minority groups via the Lower Ormeau Residents Action group (Community Cohesion Project), carers organisations and the Youth Forum etc.

This activity is helping inform the development of an additional workstream in the Belfast Agenda which will consider the extent to which data is available, and can be used to measure the effective addressing of inequalities, within a range of communities across Belfast.

In total over 700 people were directly engaged at meetings, briefings and information sessions during this consultation period. Analysis of the feedback from respondents is ongoing and it is expected that the final Belfast Agenda will be published in the autumn period.

Belfast Planning Service - Local Development Plan

We have completed the documents to support the work on the first stages of the new Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP) including the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and formal timetable for developing the plan. Following approval of both documents by the Department of Communities we developed the Preferred Options Paper (POP) which was published for formal consultation in early 2017.

The published POP provided the basis for consulting on a series of options for

dealing with key issues in the plan area. It outlined the vision, objectives and key planning issues affecting the city as well as possible approaches to new development and planned growth. We are therefore reaching the end of the first formal stage in developing the new Belfast LDP.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) was carried out on the draft POP alongside the initial work on the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The EQIA report sets out how we intend to promote equality of opportunity throughout the LDP process. The issues identified in the EQIA will act as a guide to develop engagement, consultations and reports, to shape equality screening going forward.

Integrated Tourism Framework

The Belfast Integrated Tourism Strategy 2015-2020 sets out priorities and activities to help us double the value of tourism to £870 million per year by 2020.

The strategy has been developed following extensive consultation with tourism partners and stakeholders. It aims to focus everyone's efforts around priority issues. The improvements that it suggests will be delivered in partnership with all organisations that have an interest in increasing tourism into the city.

The main improvements identified are:

- to enhance the city's reputation through better marketing, access to the city, improved services for all visitors and better events that will be accessible and appeal to many
- to strengthen the tourism sector through quality assurance, training and by developing new products and experiences for visitors.

The Strategy is committed to developing a city that welcomes visitors and is easily accessible to all. We ensure that promotion of the city is delivered through multiple platforms to reach all inclusive of S75 groups. Any activity or product experience developed will go through a full equality screening exercise and examples of this have included events such as the Twilight Market at St George's and city animation

programmes. This was a good example of mainstreaming and designing appropriate services to meet the needs of different people representative of the S75 groups, by working collaboratively.

Neighbourhood Renewal

This cross government strategy is directly targeted at the 10% of wards in NI that experience the highest level of deprivation, 15 of which are in the Belfast area. The strategy operates through locally based community/ statutory partnerships which develop and implement a thematic action plan to target need. Our officers sit on these partnerships supporting the work of sub groups and ensuring alignment with council programmes and services at a local level.

Employability and Skills

A low skills level among the city's working-age residents is one of key challenges facing Belfast and without a focused and coordinated effort with our key partners this issue is set to continue. To ensure skills are matched to market needs, an Employability and Skills Framework for 2015-2025 was developed by the Economic Development Unit. Linked to the Belfast Agenda, the Employability and Skills Framework supports the need for specific, targeted interventions to ensure residents – especially those far from the labour market, have the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to apply for and secure employment. This Framework places a particular emphasis on ways we can help to improve the skills and employability of working age citizens especially in certain groupings; younger people, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities.

The Economic Development Unit has embedded diversity into project development. We developed a number of initiatives to increase residents' ability to access employment and self-employment, improve the local skills provision and increase employers' responsiveness to creating jobs - especially among those groups who experience highest levels of disadvantage.

Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 aims to address slavery and trafficking in the twenty-first century and as part of this requires some organisations to produce a slavery and human trafficking statement for each financial year.

Section 54 of the Act, called the 'Transparency in Supply Chains' clause, requires these organisations to set out what they have done to ensure there is no modern slavery in its supply chains or any part of its business. If an organisation has taken no steps to do this, their statement should say so.

Shared City Partnership:

In the past year the previously named Good Relations Partnership underwent a review, one of the outcomes being that it changed its name to reflect its current broad remit, to the Shared City Partnership. Under this new title the group continued to meet monthly to direct the work of the Good Relations Unit and also agreed to hold a minimum of 3 meetings a year outside of the City Hall as part of its ongoing review.

The Partnership hosted a Shared City Forum at Girdwood Community Hub on 14th June 2016. The event was opened by the Deputy Lord Mayor Councillor Campbell with a keynote address given by the Partnership Chair, Councillor Kyle. 102 people attended the event which included presentations on the work of the Shared City Partnership and how good relations issues are influencing the development of a Community Plan for Belfast (the Belfast Agenda) as well as a presentation on the work of the NI Life and Times Survey. This event included facilitated sessions to help develop good relations outcomes for the city and examine how city partners can effectively work with local communities to maximise impact through greater engagement and involvement in the design of interventions. This will also assist in the development of the PEACE IV Action Plan for Belfast.

Key findings and feedback from the forum include

- 74% of attendees felt that the Forum had increased their knowledge of the

Shared City Partnership and the context in which it operates by quite a bit or completely, with the remainder saying it had increased their knowledge a little.

- 100% of attendees felt that their experience of the workshop sessions was useful or would have some impact upon their own work.
- 90% of attendees stated that they would definitely attend similar events in the future.

The findings from the workshops were used to inform the ongoing development of the Belfast Agenda and in support of the Council's pending PEACE IV application.

Good Relations Audit:

The Good Relations Unit undertook its 3 yearly independent audit of Good Relations need within Belfast City Council during the last year. The findings and recommendations of the audit identify key areas of work to be included in a Belfast City Council Good Relations Action Plan for 2017 – 2018.

This audit included a review of existing and emerging policy such as Together; Building a United Community (T;BUC) and the Programme for Government. Belfast City Council is leading the development of a community plan for Belfast, 'The Belfast Agenda' and this also informed the content of the audit and action plan.

The audit was conducted between October 2016 and February 2017 and included an online survey as well as focus groups and a large scale event.

One of the recommendations of the audit was that Council should seek to promote the range of work to support good relations that takes place across the city. In line with this the Good Relations Unit has produced an information booklet and short film; these can be viewed at www.belfastcity.gov.uk/goodrelations

Social Clauses

We work with all council contracts to ensure social clauses are implemented and are

directly aligned to the priorities of the Council as contained within the Belfast Agenda and the existing social clause policy.

Overall, the implementation of social clauses across council contracts, has resulted in the creation of over 160 jobs ring-fenced for long-term unemployed or apprentices and third level students. One example of this is the Leisure Transformation Programme (LTP) which provides an insight into the delivery of social responsibility. Using social clauses in LTP, we have engaged with the contractor to agree the delivery plan for economic and social regeneration activities. This outlines the KPIs and measurable medium and long term outcomes for social, economic, employment, environmental and community improvements, which will be monitored through a contract management regime.

To support the contractor to maximise the impact for Belfast, council initiatives are utilised to support the delivery of social clause such as Meet the Buyer events, the delivery of Go-2-Tender in partnership with InterTradeIreland, Go Social, Planning for Growth and the delivery of Construction Employment Academies.

Central Grants Unit

Following an independent review of the Council's various grants processes, a Central Grants Unit (CGU) was established. In 2016-17, the CGU has continued to enhance the co-ordination and management of the Council's various grant processes by providing greater consistency across all levels of the process and developing clear and transparent governance and accountability. The two key works strands for CGU have been to centralise grants and the subsequent introduction of a grants management system, both of which have been equality screened.

The benefits of grants centralisation include:

- wider promotion of the grants allowing groups to plan their project activity and apply for multiple grants in one process
- provision of guidance and other document in all formats where requested, including minority languages

- providing road shows in neutral, DDA compliant venues with interpreters (language & sign) where required to offer advice and support.

CGU are able to assist grant awarding units by collating S75 monitoring information on both the delivery groups and the beneficiaries to assist with programme evaluation. CGU is working towards assisting units to analyse this information to ensure equitable access to Council grants.

EU and International Relations Unit

Belfast City Council published its second International Relations Framework in November 2016, which covers the period 2016-2021. The purpose of the framework is to position the city on an international stage as a competitive location to start and grow a business and to live, work, visit, trade and invest in.

It sets out targets for each of the three identified primary market segments: trade and investment, tourism, and education and learning. The framework's primary markets are tourists, international students and international businesses who do not normally or currently reside in Belfast. However, it does have an indirect impact on Belfast's residents in terms of contribution to economic growth and creation of a welcoming, vibrant and diverse city.

In delivering the framework, the Council works with city stakeholders to create favourable conditions in which there will be an increase in foreign direct investment; an increased number of international students; and increased tourism spend and works with these stakeholders in implementing initiatives contained in this strategy. Ultimately the end beneficiaries of this work are Belfast ratepayers and citizens.

In undertaking its international work, Belfast City Council is mindful to increase access to opportunity to those who may not normally avail of the same. Examples include:

- free tickets for local schools and youth groups to the Friendship Four ice hockey tournament, targeting those who have not previously experienced a game
- inclusion of young people from marginalised communities in outreach events

– through partnership working with local agencies and the Belfast Youth Forum

- ensuring inward mission itineraries provide visitors with an accurate and veritable experience of the city – via geographic spread of project visits, promotion of agencies who are addressing social, health and economic need, providing timely and accurate information in presentations and delegate packs
- investigating how barriers to employment, skills development and business start-up can be augmented– mindful of how other cities have addressed preventative measures

City Hall exhibition

The Equality and Diversity Unit engaged with disability groups in relation to accessibility and inclusivity of the City Hall exhibition.

Awards

Belfast City Council was re-accredited with the gold award for our workplace charter on domestic violence in 2016.

In 2017, we were highly commended at Legal Island's Equality and Diversity awards. We were also shortlisted for the Business in the Community Health and Wellbeing award.

Staff Networks

In 2016, the Equality and Diversity Network (EDN) was established. This cross-departmental network will champion and steer the organisation's strategy on all matters relating to diversity and equality in service delivery and employment. It will also monitor departmental actions in their progress in mainstreaming diversity and equality in all activity.

During 2016, the staff networks continued to grow and both the LGB&T and disability staff networks invited carers, allies or supporters of people with disabilities to join the networks. The groups have benefitted from hearing from a number of guest speakers and from attending a variety of training sessions.

A Race Equality Sub- Group of the Equality and Diversity Network was established in early 2017 with an initial aim of refreshing the race equality action plan for 2017-2018. The group will continue to contribute to mainstreaming equality and diversity by addressing the needs of people from different race and ethnic backgrounds following the implementation of the plan.

All staff networks groups feed into the development of the equality and diversity action plans.

2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/ measures in 2016-17 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).

Please see below for examples of outcomes and the impact of Belfast City Council's equality action plans during the period of 2016/2017

Our current Equality Action Plan was scheduled to cover the period from October 2015 to September 2016, however a request was submitted to ECNI for permission to extend to end of March 2017 to allow for alignment with the community plan, scheduled to commence 1 April 2017. Permission was granted as the extension should result in an improved Plan.

The Equality Action Plan provides an overarching framework to support the delivery of other diversity action plans which provide a more detailed breakdown of what we will do. To acknowledge the increased linkages with other plans the Equality Action Plan will be incorporated into an Equality and Diversity Framework, which will be in place from 2017.

Listed below are examples of activity and the associated outcomes relevant to the

current Equality Action Plan. Examples are allocated as appropriate to the headings provided under section 2 of this Annual Report.

2.1 STRATEGY, POLICY, IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES: Impacting on the organisation as a whole:

International Women's Day 2017:

Since 2013 Council has supported events to mark International Women's Day on an ongoing basis. In 2017 the main community event was a rally on 4th March 2017 focused upon the theme 'Peace, Solidarity and Sustenance'. The event was delivered in partnership with *Women's Information Northern Ireland* who delivered a series of programme activities, including workshops and lectures, under the title 'Reclaim the Agenda'.

The theme of the council's internal staff event was titled 'Be Bold for Change'. Female staff had the opportunity to hear from a range of inspiring speakers and to put questions to a guest panel.

Staff also had the opportunity to hear from both mentors and mentees who participated in the pilot mentoring programme that was developed for Women's Network Group member.

International Men's Day

We held our third International Men's Day event in November 2016. The event was attended by council staff and community groups. The event focused on health inequalities and physical activity. Attendees were able to avail of a range of advice and information from Sustrans, Active Belfast, Conservation Volunteers, GLL, Walk in your Community, IFA and BCC Leisure Development.

Employability and Skills projects

We continue to match fund employability and skills projects across the city. During the period 2016/2017 the council funded the following employability and skills projects:

1. LEMIS Partnership - LEMIS+ Belfast Works project
2. Shankill Women's Centre- Education, Employment and Training Project
3. Women's TEC- Supporting People – Empowering Communities Project
4. Women in Business- The Connect Programme
5. Springboard- Jobworks Project
6. Workforce- Path 2 Employment Project
7. Lenadoon Community Forum – Training for Employment Project

The programmes provide a wide range of support including into work support, employability skills, mentoring, work placements, site visits and training up to level two. The programmes aim to help those furthest from the labour market to overcome the barriers they face to fulfilling their potential. The outcomes of the projects are geared towards progression into employment, self-employment and/or further training.

This year over 3,000 residents have accessed the projects of which approximately 630 of those have entered employment/self-employment. In addition, more than 450 qualifications have been supported.

Employability Pathway Model

We are working to develop a Council led employability pathway model providing a full programme of support and intervention which would take key client groups from a place where they are not job ready to gaining employment in jobs which have been identified through close work with employers across a range of sectors. The

model focuses upon an employer led approach with interventions specifically designed to equip participants with the specific skills required by a specific employer/industry.

Construction Employment Academies

Construction Employment Academies are employer led and triggered in advance of recruitment for upcoming vacancies and within this year we have initial capacity for 100 people to complete the academy.

To deliver these we utilise employability provision across the city to prepare a pipeline of long-term unemployed through outreach animation, mentoring to remove barriers to employment, job matching, better-off calculations, employability skills development etc.

Construction Employment Academies will be delivered on a 'modular' basis where participants can access elements that are relevant to the role they wish to apply for and can include site visit and company orientation, training in CSR, banksman, working at heights, first aid, abrasive wheels, health & safety in the workplace, interview techniques etc. Following this council organise interview days and jobs roadshows in conjunction with employers.

Hospitality Employment Academy (HEA)

This pilot project was developed in recognition of the expected employment growth in the hospitality sector arising from the investment in the Waterfront Hall and scale of hotel developments taking place in the city began in Autumn 2016. The final cohort is currently finishing their accredited course.

In partnership with Belfast Met, Lemis+ Belfast works Project and People 1st approximately 100 unemployed residents were supported to develop the accredited entry level skills, took part in site visits and received a guaranteed interview with an employer with open jobs. The programme also facilitated an industry specific job fair in the Europa, with over 10 employers attending and 104 unemployed people attending.

Go Social

Go Social is a programme of support for new and emerging social enterprises and cooperatives in Belfast. The aim of this programme is to increase the number of social enterprises across the city of Belfast, by stimulating early stage social enterprise activity and supporting the creation of new social enterprises/cooperatives. The programme engages new social entrepreneurs and those third sector organisations who have the potential to develop a social enterprise or cooperative.

Through the programme participants are supported to develop new social enterprise/cooperative business ideas through Social Spark events, tailored workshops, specialist one-to-one mentoring, networking and showcasing opportunities.

The programme launched in June 2016 and the first cohort of the 3 year programme is now complete. 30 participants completed the programme with 8 now operating as new social enterprises or cooperatives as a direct outcome. The second cohort is now underway.

Go for It

Go for It is a business start-up programme aimed at helping individuals get their business idea off the ground. This is a regional programme delivered by all of the local councils for anyone in NI aged 16+ and serious about starting their own business.

Through the programme, participants work with a business advisor to develop their business plan and have the opportunity to attend workshops and network with like-minded people. Promotion for this programme is looked after regionally by Derry and Strabane District Council, however we maximize this with our own local promotion. Through this promotion we ensure that we cover all groups in the city to include under-represented groups.

In the last financial year, 501 people started a business as a result of the programme, creating a total of 380 jobs. The current programme will come to an end this summer, however the new, revised programme is out for procurement at the minute and aims to be operational in August 2017.

Start by doing

This is an enterprise outreach initiative designed to create a culture of enterprise and stimulate the levels of entrepreneurial activity across Belfast. It provides participants with the opportunity to develop innovative business ideas, develop the skills required to start a business and engage with real life entrepreneurs. It assists our city residents including underrepresented groups as identified in research (students/graduates, younger people not in employment, education or training, people from ethnic minorities and people with disabilities and females). To date, 72 individuals have participated in the programme

Belfast Enterprise Academy

This is a pre-enterprise support programme designed to assist young full-time degree level students in Belfast to explore business ideas and creativity, gain best practice from existing innovative businesses and develop business skills and ideas. Participants from this programme can move to the business start up stage and access other programmes of support through Belfast City Council's pipeline or other providers. To date the programme has supported 25 participants representing 21 businesses.

2.2 COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION AND ENGAGEMENT ISSUES: Impacting on levels of interaction among and between staff and customers of the Council:

Policy on consultation and engagement

We have continued to improve our approach to consultation and engagement. In August 2016 the council procured a new on-line consultation platform and central repository that has enabled us to adopt a more open, transparent and user friendly approach to consultation whilst also improving our central coordination and quality.

Following this we commissioned the Consultation Institute to deliver further training for employees and also for councillors to reinforce best practice principles and

practice. This investment will help ensure that council and officers have the tools, skills and knowledge necessary for involving people and ensuring all people can have their say in ways that are meaningful and fit for purpose. Improving access and equality of opportunity are inherent within these approaches.

In January 2017, we repeated our regular resident survey, a representative sample of 1500 residents across the city, which is used to help inform progress and performance improvement.

Development management with regards planning applications

In the last year, we have determined planning applications which involved neighbour notification and advertisement in the local press in line with our procedures. Major applications and some larger scale local applications are determined by the Planning Committee; this is a public arena and allows local people to express their opinion on planning proposals to the council.

We provide a Duty Planner service to provide planning advice to the general public and customers. The service operates between 9am and 5pm each weekday. The Duty Planner can be contacted by telephone or in person at the council offices in the city centre.

External/ Internal Communications

We have published 4 articles in our City Matters magazine (which is distributed bi-monthly to all our residents homes) which specifically highlighted and promoted equality in relation to those with a disability. In addition a number of these articles promoted and signposted residents to the availability of services to potentially aid those with a disability eg Disabled Go website; JAM Card initiative.

We also included a dedicated Seniors page in City Matters and ensure that all our Age-Friendly Belfast events welcome people with disabilities.

We have produced a minimum of 2 targeted information leaflets, for example including communication around Waste Management and Cleansing Services and about events held in our Parks.

We have continued to promote accessible toilet access through both our leaflets and via our website. Currently 12 out of our 14 public toilets are fully accessible to people with disabilities and we operate the Radar National Key Scheme, managed by our Waste Management Service. We have also input any new changing facilities onto the Changing Places Toilet Map.

We continue to strive towards meeting the W3C standards and this has involved us developing our website pages (both internal and external) to make them interactive and available on any device.

We have introduced BrowseAloud to help those with a sight impairment to utilise our website and we have different sized texts available for users on each web page. In addition BrowseAloud has been installed on our dedicated Zoo website.

We have introduced templates to pages so that these are print friendly

Videos on our web pages/uploaded to our YouTube are increasingly featuring subtitles and is something we are continuing to focus on and develop.

Internally we have continued to develop our internal web for staff and update it on a regular basis and ensure it is used to the best possible effect to reinforce key messages around equality and diversity. For example we developed a video as part of the team brief promoting the council's staff Disability Network.

In addition we developed a dedicated page for Disability and other diversity related issues with accompanying links to relevant council policies and information, including a dedicated page for Health and Wellbeing for staff.

We have also recently carried out an audit of our list of providers of alternative formats for the council and updated accordingly. We used this audit as an opportunity to republicise our Big Word translation service across departments and updated details and codes in line with our new organisational structure and personnel.

Belfast Job Fair

On the 21st February this year in partnership with the Department for Communities, Council held the Belfast Jobs Fair. The event was held in the Europa with almost

1,500 people attending over the full day. There were 76 employers in attendance including the council's Corporate HR department promoting jobs within council. The employers all had open job vacancies with almost 400 open job vacancies advertised on the day. The post programme evaluation found 99% of employers reported as being either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the event. This showcases the council's dedication to work with employers and the Department for Communities to support employers to access the pool of talent Belfast has to offer, as well as supporting residents of the city to access opportunities.

Syrian Programme

BCC has been involved in the planning and operational aspects of the Vulnerable Person's Relocation Scheme, which is a UK government led scheme that will settle up to 20,000 Syrian Refugees in the UK, since it started in December 2015. With partners across the city we have been involved / funded a number of initiatives to support those that have been settled in Belfast through the scheme.

Through this scheme it was evident that a number of the Syrian refugees who settled in Belfast were interested in or had the potential to start up their own business. Therefore in partnership with Bryson, a tailored programme of support was developed to enable them to overcome the barriers they had to starting a business in Belfast and support them to take positive steps towards starting up in business. This included a number of tailored workshops covering topics such as knowing the local market, sales and marketing, operations, resources and legalities as well as specialist one to one mentoring with the support of an interpreter.

The initiative has supported 17 Syrian Refugees from the Belfast City Council area and as a result of the programme, 5 new businesses will be created. Whilst the number of new businesses created as a result of the programme is excellent the wider benefits for the participants as a result of the programme has been much greater.

Business attitudinal survey and employer survey

The procurement process to commission an organisation to complete a business attitudinal survey covering 600 local businesses commenced during the last year (

April 2016/ March 2017). This survey aims to gather information on the current situation of Belfast businesses in terms of their turnover, staff numbers and growth projections however it will also provide a business health overview of the city, highlighting current and future strengths and weaknesses to economic and social resilience. This survey will help us to identify gaps in the market and inform future support provision for ourselves and our stakeholders within the city.

In June we commissioned BMG Research Ltd to survey 450 employers in the city. The businesses sampled will represent the business make up of large, medium and small employers from across all sectors and areas of the city. The purpose of this research is to better understand the key challenges facing local employers in accessing skilled labour, the current and future skills needs, and the effectiveness of recruitment practices and mechanisms for employer engagement with a focus on recruiting young people and those furthest from the labour market. By focusing on the employer experiences of employability, recruitment and skills in the city we aim to establish clear and robust data to ensure that interventions and actions under the Employability and Skills framework and Belfast Agenda are developed to support employers as well as those seeking jobs.

Removing Barriers: Making Services Inclusive

This event was planned and delivered by the Equality and Diversity Unit and attracted over 90 attendees, with a large representation of disability advocacy groups and a large percentage of disabled guests and speakers.

Through this event, Belfast City Council built on their commitment to promote a positive attitude towards those with a disability through their creation of a video with individuals with varying disabilities talking about what makes an event good and enjoyable for them.

This video is now available for all staff to see/use on the Council's Interlink and will now be used as part of the Council's Disability Awareness training for staff. Belfast City Council used this event to communicate its commitment to the Equality Commission's Every Customer Counts initiative. In addition Belfast City Council signed the Age-Friendly Belfast Charter

As a result of the success of the above event and the interest generated in making

events as accessible as possible to all, the equality and diversity team have now:

- launched a programme of meetings with departments to complete specific event guides/templates for the upcoming year to ensure that good practice is embedded throughout the council both in terms of internal processes/procedures and in the delivery of services/promotion of positive attitudes towards those with a disability.
- Officers will then complete these completed guides and recommended improvements will be saved and shared on a central database managed by the Equality and Diversity team and will be made available to any member of staff to look at/use to embed best practice and continually develop/improve services for those with a disability
- set up a project team to look at taking forward the JAM card initiative throughout the council, focusing on front-line staff delivering services/ dealing with the public and those staff involved in consultation and engagement
- agreed to ensure that any videos/information communicated in this way is reviewed to see if it should include the use of captions

Outreach projects

BCC are supporting employability outreach projects that use sport as a channel to engage with young people. Both programmes are early interventions and are as follows:

Sports Changes Life through their Honour Roll Programme has engaged with 78 young people to date (14-16 years old) who are at risk of leaving education or in need of additional support, motivation or guidance. Young people's personal development is supported and they are encouraged to realise importance of education.

eHoops is a multi-disciplinary, sport-based engagement programme which has supported 30 young people in disadvantaged areas to develop skills to support employability. Through this programme they receive mentoring and support to overcome barriers, and most participants will receive CPPD from Ulster University.

Delivered over 24 weeks this programme will include multi-disciplinary sports activities and personal and professional development sessions.

Active Communities Network has run a wide range of sport activities to engage with 250 young people across the city who are or at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). From these sessions 36 young people have been identified and have been receiving mentoring support – supporting them to overcome specific barriers to employment. Young people will receive training and support to develop employability skills, and will be supported to access work-placement and/or employment opportunities.

Tourism, Culture and Arts - Cultural Framework for Belfast

The Cultural Framework for Belfast sets out the council's objectives in supporting arts and heritage in the city. It was published in October 2012 following a full EQIA and public consultation. Equality and quality are two of the core values of the framework, reflected in our vision that everyone should have access to high-quality arts.

In 2016/17 the Cultural Framework Action Plan 2016 – 2020 was approved and year one action plan implemented. The plan was developed following a significant programme of sector engagement. As part of the consultations, feedback was obtained from a range of cultural organisations representing the interests of S75 groups. This identified a number of new initiatives and programmes focussed on promoting equality and good relations which includes a bid for the Peace IV programme.

Under the Inspiring communities theme – one of four framework themes – we have prioritised work engaging children, young people, older people and seldom heard communities. Seldom heard communities include minority ethnic communities; disabled people; and communities in areas of multiple deprivations and in areas of high levels of religious and political segregation. In 2016-17 we invested £233,127 into supporting projects that would support our inspiring communities theme, some of which were through the Community Festivals Fund part funded by the

Department for Communities.

To promote awareness of our funding, in conjunction with the Central Grants Unit, we hold funding clinics in community venues across the city and advertise our funding widely via local papers and networks such as Community Arts Partnership. Applications for funding are assessed against the four themes of the Cultural Framework. If a group is applying for funding for Inspiring communities, they must demonstrate how they will meaningfully target priority and/or seldom heard groups, which include Section 75 groups, or their application will not be considered for funding.

Our funding supports a wide range of arts organisations and arts activities targeting a range of beneficiaries, including Outburst Queer Arts Festival, Belfast Mela, Samhain and Diwali, Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich, Arts for All, Belfast Children's Festival, Arts and Disability Forum and Bounce! Disability Arts Festival.

In 2016-17 we delivered the last of 7 big, bold and ambitious Creative and Cultural Belfast projects. Alongside the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, we invested £900,000 with the aim to give everyone in Belfast the opportunity to take part in high-quality culture inspired by our rich heritage. The criteria for this fund prioritised the target groups such as people and communities at risk of social exclusion as identified under the Inspiring Communities theme with a particular focus on good relations. The seven projects included:

- Belfast Carnival Village
- The Belfast Opera
- The Farset Project
- The Belfast Tempest
- BabyDay
- Draw Down the Walls 2015
- Nine Nights

Overall, the 7 projects delivered 1,076 activities across the city which attracted an audience of 102,626 and engaged 9,478 participants. All applicants for funding and

all funding recipients have to complete a S75 monitoring form based on makeup of organisation and target beneficiaries.

The Cultural Framework for Belfast included a commitment to “produce a fit-for-purpose monitoring and evaluation framework”. Primary research carried out, Art affects: Evidencing the impact of the arts, was completed in 2014 and during 2016-17 we continued to gather evidence from funded organisations to help begin to map participants’ experience of culture and arts in the city. This recognises that many organisations in the city already strive to provide equitable access to the arts and provides a framework to further evidence the extent and impact of access and inclusion.

Belfast Festival of Learning

Following the launch in 2015 of Belfast Strategic Partnership’s (BSP) “Belfast a Learning City” strategy, Belfast’s first week-long Festival of Learning was launched in March 2016. This event aimed to engage Belfast citizens of all ages and community backgrounds with a variety of learning opportunities. As part of the Festival of Learning, Economic Development hosted the Belfast Skills Fair at St. George’s Market. The event attracted over 1,000 attendees to sample a wide range of formal and non-formal learning opportunities available in the city with demonstrations and activities including job search, archery, cookery, circus skills, Hawaiian dancing, boxing and origami! The event also included demonstrations of different world cultures including Syria, Nigeria, India and Romania.

Building Control

Council officers have continued to work closely with officials from the Department of Social Development and the Department for Infrastructure in preparing for the introduction of the Licensing of Pavement Cafes Act 2014, which came into operation on 1st October 2016, for pavement cafes across Belfast.

Work is continuing regarding the preparation of guidance documentation for applicants. We are aware that cafes may have a negative impact on the mobility and

accessibility of people with disabilities across the city. Officers have engaged extensively with representatives of the disabled community and older people, including Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), The Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC), Shop Mobility, Guide Dogs for the Blind to ensure their equality in terms of mobility and accessibility is fully considered in the determination of Pavement Cafes. Officers have also taken part in 'walk arounds' with representatives of the disabled community to learn from them about their concerns first hand regarding the issues they face in using footpaths in Belfast. Officers have also engaged with the Council's Consultative Forum.

We continue to enforce the accessibility standards required by Part R of the Building Regulations (NI) and undertook enforcement action on a developer to make sure that four newly built houses met these standards.

Markets Unit

As part of the Northern Ireland Year of Food and Drink 2016 initiative and Council's Food and Drink Plan 2016, a series of food tourism initiatives were organised to showcase the city, create awareness of Belfast as a food and drink destination, and animate the city while contributing to the economy. One of the showcase initiatives was the Twilight Market series at St George's which primarily focused on food, by championing local produce and supporting street food development. In addition to the food and drink stalls, there were a number of non-food stalls showcasing craft and other local produce.

Council worked with an event management company which was supporting the delivery of the event to ensure it was an accessible and inclusive event, open to all. One of the key tasks was the development and implementation of an accessible events action plan, supported by the Council's Inclusive Events Guide to consider and put in place a full range of actions to accommodate full participation of all attendees in the event.

Examples of this include: consideration of layout to ensure there was sufficient

space, access points, seating areas, quiet space and dedicated drop off point; an early family focused session and associated activity and demonstrations programme; contracted event marshals who were trained on how to provide an inclusive customer facing service for people of all abilities; and guided assistance if required and facilities for assistance dogs. The Twilight Market event series was subject to a full equality screening and the Twilight Market was visited by the Equality and Diversity Officer's Disability Stakeholder group in May with feedback folded into future event planning.

The feedback from both visitors and traders at the events has been extremely positive. The events have had a significant social media profile reaching over 1 million Facebook users and 200,000 Twitter users. The success of the Twilight Market has been recognised with the event winning the 2015 Tourism NI award for Innovation and St George's was named the Best Market 2016 at the annual Observer Food Monthly Awards.

Events Unit

The Council's City Events Unit continues to deliver a diverse and varied events programme across the calendar year for Belfast citizens and visitors. All the cultural content of the programme is representative of the city, with opportunities for groups from across Belfast to be involved regardless of age, gender, race or ability. The annual events schedule is open to all, with the vast majority of the events free to attend, while providing a profile for a cross section of groups to take part and thus encouraging positive good relations.

A good example of this is Belfast's 2017 St Patrick's Day Parade that had representatives from a range of cultural, ethnic and mix-ability organisations; the Parade theme was 'Belfast'- representational of all facets of the Belfast population and was 'colourful, vibrant and creative' accounting for the changing and ever diverse make-up of the city to be reflected through carnival floats and parade participants.

Content of the annual events allows for cross sections of the community to engage

with one another; the activities are planned to allow for intergenerational, religious and gender integration as opposed to specifically targeting one or other group; an example of this is the Lord Mayors Day, where the theme was 'Putting Citizens First'.

Events that promote the two main cultures of Northern Ireland are supported as the city has hosted the UK Pipeband Championships and the All Ireland Irish Dance Championships in the last nine months. Both events welcome all Section 75 groups and are an opportunity to show how the two main cultures contribute to the tourism of the city through bespoke world class events.

All the events are delivered to comply with DDA guidance and reflected in the facilities onsite including the use of sign language interpreters who are engaged for events like the Christmas Light Switch-on. In addition the new terms and conditions recommend that those attending events are aware of the Councils desire to create shared spaces and to respect this through their behaviours.

Urban Development Unit

Over the last financial year, the Belfast Bike Share (BBS) was finalised and launched on 27 April 2015. As part of the project development and service delivery considerations of the project over the period 2016/2017, a number of actions contributed to promoting equality of opportunity. One such action included holding meetings with inner city communities at the planning design stage in order to secure their input at an early stage. As a result of these meetings, Council took on board community input and altered where the location of the docking stations would be. At that time, Council also spoke to the community about the pricing structure for the bikes and were advised that it was crucial that it was affordable. Again, the BBS took on these suggestions and the pricing structure of £20/year, which reflects community concerns.

The BBS Stakeholder Group was involved in all stages of the project, from the design to the implementation of the project and membership and included Disability Action, Guide Dogs and IMTAC. As part of the overall engagement and planning, BCC conducted on site surveys with the Stakeholder Group to address access issues. Additionally, consultation in relation to the Bradbury Place docking stations

were carried out with the Blind Centre on the Lisburn Road to ensure there would be no concern about the location of the docking stations and potential obstruction of the footpath.

Social clauses were built into the contract and our operator employed local people, which enhanced skills and provided a positive economic impact locally. In order to target an under-represented group the initial branding of the scheme was a figure of a woman on a bicycle. The Council funded Sustrans to offer free on-road cycle training (National Standards Training) for new or returning cyclists in the run up to the launch of the scheme. This accredited training was to build confidence and skills to enable people to cycle in the city and join the Belfast Bikes scheme. Over 2 months 236 people were trained over 70% were women, mostly all novice cyclists.

Promotional events were held at the Easter Fair and in St George's Market as a means to target a wide population. Additionally, events were held at BMC and QUB and in particular there was an event in the Markets Community Centre in an effort to address the needs of the neighbourhood and S75 groups. Outreach work was also carried out with a group of female seniors who enjoyed cycling lessons on a Belfast Bikes at Corpus Christi College. This was part of Cycling Ireland's Bike For Life course run by NI -

<https://www.facebook.com/belfastbikescheme/posts/209836426032607> and Members of Downe University of the Third Age (U3A) took part in a series of free demonstration and training events - <http://downeu3a.org/belfast-bikes-2/>

Significantly, the Belfast Bike Share targets a large population of the city that do not own a car and a positive consequence of the scheme have been requests to expand into a number of areas of high deprivation and segregation, i.e. Lower Shankill, Lower Oldpark and Falls.

3 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES: Impacting on levels of understanding among our own staff

Staff training 16/17

Course Title	Nos. trained
Diversity for employees	258
Diversity for managers and supervisors	41
Diversity e-learning- employees and managers	44
Disability Awareness for employees	83
Disability Awareness for managers and supervisors	10
Provide emotional health and well being awareness training for staff and council volunteers	21
Provide training for managers in managing stress and mental health	27
Mental Health, dyslexia and learning disability awareness	11

In addition to the above dementia awareness sessions have been run in Community Services and Environmental Health and 4 officers have been trained to deliver these 2 hour sessions going forward.

Also 11 members of staff attended a 6 week lunchtime sign language training session which was expertly delivered by a member of staff who is deaf and these individuals have been added to the database we created containing details of staff who have sign language skills.

GLL (the Strategic Operating Partner of our leisure centres) have developed a disability awareness training programme for all their swim coaches and continue to work closely with organisations such as Jigsaw and Nemo to ensure service users' needs are met when swimming in the centres.

Corporate training on equal opportunities, diversity, disability etc. will continue to be reviewed, updated and rolled out. Also, we will continue to identify and target awareness raising sessions on specific areas of disability

Pilot mentoring programme

Following the successful delivery and evaluation of the pilot mentoring programme

for female employees, we will roll out another programme to other female and male employees.

Two of the mentees have subsequently gained promotion, and they have attributed that success in part to participating in the mentoring programme.

Women Leaders Programme (WLP)

Following Local Government Reform (LGR) we refreshed the previous WLP, being cognisant of the increased roles and responsibilities of elected members, post LGR, and the ever changing political landscape. There is now increased emphasis on being a 'leader of leaders' and 'planning for the future' to be more aligned to the council's newly developed elected member Knowledge and Skills Framework and associated revised PDP process. The 'new' programme, launched in March 2017, with 13 elected member and officer participants is nearing the end of its delivery. The aim of the WLP programme is to facilitate participants in increasing their self-awareness of their personal leadership styles and put plans in place to maximise their respective political and managerial leadership effectiveness focusing on the following common key areas:

- Women in leadership roles;
- Personal leadership-qualities and style;
- Building a network of support;
- Inclusive leadership;
- Developing and supporting others;
- Planning for progression; and
- Gender awareness and its impact on organisational culture and community planning.

Anecdotal feedback from participants suggests the WLP, continues to be successful in facilitating participants to:

- Gain awareness of their distinctive strengths and styles;
- Maximise their leadership effectiveness;
- Increase personal resilience;
- Create a personal vision and goals to achieve it ;
- Assist in further developing an inclusive culture of respect for difference; and
- Build networks across and beyond Council

Data collection and analysis

The council will continue to monitor its workforce and applicant pool in relation to the Section 75 categories, and where trends or potential issues are identified, develop suitable plans in consultation with the Equality Commission to seek to address any such matters in a fair and effective way.

Following information received from ECNI and benchmarking with ACAS's diversity form, we have drafted a staff survey on equality and diversity and a voluntary monitoring exercise, and included a question on identifying as transgender. It is anticipated that the survey will be conducted in late summer/ early autumn. Consideration will also be given to including this question on our applicant monitoring form going forward.

4. REPRESENTATION ISSUES: Impacting on people seeking to use our services

Under Representation Research

We are working with UU Economic Policy Centre to identify under-represented groups within the city to inform those we need to focus on whilst also comparing this with other NI council areas and comparative UK cities.

Previously we have focused on groups such as females, NEETs, people with a disability and students however we recognised that research needed to be undertaken to scope if these groups were still as under-represented as previously identified and if there were any other groups that we had not considered.

We also needed the research to inform where we should ensure support provision is targeted and allow us to compare our progress. Whilst we are still awaiting the written report, the results to date show that we are behind our comparative cities across the board.

There seems to be no particular groups that need attention over another but rather all groups need more support and guidance to start their own business. Therefore we are going to procure work for an Enterprise project for under-represented groups to try to combat this and help us to raise our position in comparison with our comparative cities. We expect this research to be complete before the end of June which means we can commission the work and the project will hopefully be operational by September 2017.

Grant Aid Programme 2016-17

Community Services has strived to ensure equal access of opportunity to all groups in Belfast. Working with the Central Grants Unit grant workshops are advertised openly in papers, sector bulletins, and via our website. Information sessions are also held in various shared, DDA compliant locations ensuring all areas of the city were covered.

Disability Advisory Panel

The Equality and Diversity Unit set up the council's first Disability Advisory Panel. This panel is made up of 7 individuals' with a range of disabilities and their purpose is to:

- advise, guide and support the council to respond better to the needs of people with a disability
- help Belfast City Council identify priorities in offering accessible and inclusive

services and facilities

The first project they are advising on is the Tropical ravine Restoration Project at Botanic Gardens.

DisabledGo

During 2016/2017 the Equality and Diversity Unit met with representatives from DisabledGo and facilitated a focus group to gather feedback about improvements to make and how to promote/use their services to better effect.

As a result of the above the council updated details regarding Belfast buildings/facilities and included an additional 25 and have agreed to run a volunteer/work experience day and included the promotion of this service/website via its Interlink and external City Matters publication. Disabled Go services are also linked into Age Friendly Belfast to ensure the City Centre is accessible for older people.

Travellers

Belfast City Council's service support and work with the Traveller community over the past 12 months falls within four broad work streams;

Direct Service Provision.

BCC's Traveller Liaison Officer continues to work directly with traveller families on issues such as housing, education, health and welfare, dealing directly with council services and other providers to ensure that the issues raised by individuals, families and community are firstly communicated to the appropriate body, articulated and solutions implemented. This tends to be intervention work and broad in scope e.g. dealing with dog licences through to families being intimidated out of their homes. Each intervention contributes to developing relationships and building trust between the officer, the traveller families and community and is very much core to creating the conditions which will underpin future service provision and the active participation of travellers.

Capacity Building

We continue to deliver capacity support to the community through various training, mentoring and coaching programmes. Our goal is to help the community develop their capacity to identify and articulate their needs, develop, co-design and co-deliver services and lobby for resources. There remains a reliance on agencies to support travellers rather than travellers taking control for their own provision, a situation we wish to change over the medium term.

Advocacy and Political Lobbying

We support travellers to find their voice and speak for themselves, through facilitated workshops, action research projects and discussions. Council offers a facilitation/broker role connecting travellers to decision makers and agencies providing them with practical support- e.g. report writing, presentations and venues.

Interagency Working

The issues raised by travellers in relation to health, education, housing and employment are both multifaceted and deep-seeded requiring the active involvement of providers delivering services collaboratively with sufficient resources. Belfast City Council and been working closely with a range of agencies to develop an interagency approach to meeting the needs of travellers. This year, following extensive discussions, a Governance Proposal, partnership and delivery model has been agreed. It is hoped that over the following months the proposal will be formally adopted by all the key agencies.

Girdwood Community Hub

Council lead on the community engagement programme at this iconic peace and reconciliation centre in North Belfast working with local community partners to maximise and ensure the full benefits of the project are realised by the local communities. This involves supporting the relevant sub groups. Community management of the youth space is potentially a pilot for the aspiration for community management of the wider hub and pitch and Council continue to support capacity building of Girdwood Community Trust (GCT) who are due to submit a formal management proposal to Council officers for assessment and full Council for a

decision.

Prior to a community management contract being in place Community Services continue to support the Youth Space Working Group (YSWG) in the development of a youth based activity plan that is largely delivered within the youth space. The programme is collaborative involving local community youth providers and GLL, funded by BCC and the Executive Office. Activities include arts, IT and sports and encourages access to other services within the hub. BCC Good Relations unit lead on the Shared Space and Programming (SS&PG) work through a working group with Community Services and Girdwood Community forum representation. The SS&PG agree and deliver an annual shared space and activity action plan. The plan identifies training needs, programmed activity and a series of themed shared space events”.

Children & Young People Unit – Play Service

Belfast City Council Play Service delivers a varied programme of play to children throughout Belfast both within our centres and also on an outreach basis. The programme includes after-schools provision for children from the Roma, Indian and Chinese communities as well as a weekly play club for children from the Traveller community.

Our summer schemes are accessible to all and a number of the children attending our schemes and after-school services would be diagnosed with a learning disability or have behavioural issues. When required additional resources have been put in place to equip staff to support and assist children with such difficulties to ensure they can engage in council programmes.

Specialist play sessions continue to be delivered on a Saturday afternoon once per month to children attending the polish school. The service has also sought to engage with newcomer families and during the past year play service staff delivered play programmes for mothers and toddlers attending the Belfast Islamic Centre and initiated a weekly after-schools service in one of the Women’s Aid hostels in the city. The service has also linked with other agencies that deliver early intervention

programmes for families and the play team provided programmes in hostels for homeless families and for groups run by Homestart.

During the past year the staff team received training in digital media and delivered a 6 session pilot digital animation play programme. Around 10 children from all parts of the city came together to design, create and animate their play character. The programme gave the children an opportunity to meet others from different backgrounds and work together on a project which looked at how they liked to spend their free time and where they liked to play in Belfast.

Children attending two of the after-schools services had an opportunity to have their voices heard as part of the consultation on the Belfast Agenda and shared their views as to what they would like to have in the city.

Youth Forum

The 2016-2018 Youth Forum is made up of 40 young people representing the council's ten electoral areas and new extended boundary. The members come from an assortment of religions, abilities, socio-economic backgrounds and cultures across Belfast.

To ensure the forum is representative of all young people in Belfast, 10 places were ring fenced for applicants from minority section 75 groups such as ethnic minorities, young people with disabilities and Traveller background. The recruitment process aimed to access 'seldom heard' young people through work with partners such as Include Youth, VOYPIC and alternative education projects.

As part of the induction programme, the forum members received training from the Participation and Practice of Rights Project around using human rights instruments to create change at a grassroots level.

The Youth Forum is working on the following projects:

Poverty

As part of this campaign, our young people designed & facilitated a youth-led piece of research into young people's views on poverty in Belfast. Forum members facilitated 7 focus groups with young people aged 11-18 in each part of

Belfast (NSE&W) throughout April and May 2016 and a total of 68 young people took part. The aim of this research was to find out:

- How young people view poverty in the city;
- What they think it means to be living in poverty;
- How they think poverty impacts children and young people, families and their communities; and
- What actions they think government could take to end poverty.

Our young people then analysed the data and created a research report called 'Poverty: It's not a choice'. The report contains 9 key actions for local government in relation to poverty. Recognising the intergenerational nature of poverty, our young people also partnered up with the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum to create an awareness raising video about poverty in Belfast also called 'Poverty: It's not a choice.'

'What you say matter' young people's conference

In 2015 our Youth Forum helped CLC to gather the views of 900 young people from NI on the changes needed to improve their lives. These views were turned into a report called 'Our Lives in Our Words,' which was presented to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva. In June 2016, based on the findings in the young people's report, the UN Committee told the Government what it needed to do in order to ensure all young people are happy, healthy and achieve their goals in life. Their recommendations reflected the young people's report which highlighted a need for:

- Better mental health provision for young people;
- An end to discrimination against young people in community life and leisure experiences;
- An improved knowledge and understanding of Rights;
- Greater levels of meaningful participation from young people in decision making both at community and government level.

Our youth forum wanted to bring young people together to discuss what each of the themes above meant to them and to tell each of our youth forums what they would like us to campaign for on their behalf. Therefore, in partnership with NI Youth Forum & Children's Law Centre, they organised and ran a conference in City Hall called 'What you say matters' in October 2016 which was attended by over 100 young people. They carried out youth led workshops on the day around each theme and got young people to form questions on each for the panel discussion taking place that afternoon with key decision makers.

The decision makers who came to City Hall to take part were:

- Barry McElduff MLA- Chair of the Education Committee
- ACC Stephen Martin- Assistant Chief Constable, PSNI
- Andrew Dawson- Head of Mental Health & Capacity Unit, Dept. of Health

Some of the key issues from the day that emerged from young people were:

- Police stop and search powers
- Inadequate mental health provision for young people
- Votes at 16
- Mental health issues caused by exam stress at school
- Need for more 'youth-friendly' spaces for young people in their cities, towns and communities
- Sexual Health education

Some outcomes from the conference are:

- A delegation from all 3 Forums met with Junior Minister Megan Fearon to ask key questions around mental health provision for young people.
- All 3 Forums have committed to continue our partnership working, particularly around a mental health campaign.

Belfast Agenda & Local Development Plan

The Youth Forum worked with the Community Planning and Local Development Plan teams in Belfast City Council to design young people's consultations for both and took these into their schools and youth groups to facilitate with their peers.

Super connected communities

The Super Connected Communities programme has continued to grow in 2016/17. Providing opportunities for individuals and communities to access a range of IT focused solutions which contribute to addressing digital exclusion.

Over the past 12 months we have developed and initiated a range of programmes which target the seldom heard people in our community. These included:

Community hubs: The development of 14 static IT hubs in Council's community centres along with the development of a digital outreach project (60 tablets) which travels across the city making the most of Belfast wifi. The key areas of focus of the project are digital inclusion; literacy and skills development; generally engaging people in the community, teaching them how to surf, email and learn skills to support their work ambitions.

Compared to traditional IT access venues, such as Libraries NI basic internet community courses, the project has succeeded in attracting harder to reach individuals and greater numbers. In one year the pilot supported 450 new online users and engaged over 700 people generally in the project and ran a highly successful "Techcamp Belfast" in partnership with the US State department.

Partnership Development: Key to the success of the project is networking and raising awareness with a range of internal and external providers to secure courses, classes and ongoing commitment. To date initiatives have been developed with partners from IGNITE, Barclays Digital Eagles, GO ON NI, DEL, US Consulate, Engage with Age, Digital Services, Business in the Community, Digital Services, Economic Development, Good Relations, Culture and Tourism and Age Friendly Belfast, The Nerve Centre, Film On and NI Screen. Partnership development allows us to take on opportunities, build on the taster sessions and meet centre user

group demand by providing free courses from our partners to new 'on liners'.

Buy in has been secured from other public & private organisations such as DFP, other BCC departments, the IT industry and the traditional community sector. These arrangements demonstrate a willingness to work together, build collective data and create digital platforms as a channel to achieve a better way of doing business with our citizens.

The outreach project is proving very popular and has enabled wider scope in the community through wifi enabled folds, sheltered housing, church groups and various clubs. It has also allowed us to facilitate groups that don't normally engage in council led community projects most recently an Indian community group with 20 of its members who speak little English completing a 5 week get online course.

Belfast City Council is moving towards facilitating more creative IT programmes with young people in mind. The project Officer is currently working with Business in the Community on introducing a 'Time to Code' programme in after schools which will be rolled out across community centres with this facility.

Focus is currently on the recently installed multimedia hub at Girdwood with the utilisation of new technology including 3D printer and IMacs which support exciting new creative programmes such as Coding Clubs for afterschool and youth groups along with a Saturday 'Making IT' club. These skills are not taught in classrooms and young people and older people will get the opportunity to experience digital fabrication in a unique environment. An advice facility for parents on how to keep their children safe online will also be available.

Free 3 week bite size courses. We are running these across the 14 Community IT Hubs. Tuition is delivered via IT volunteers who are supplied through Business in the Community, providing £3,000 of in-kind resources.

Intergenerational digital project. Linking Generations funded 4 intergenerational projects which were delivered at 4 of our IT Hubs across the city. This was the first time that local secondary school pupils teamed up with older people to train them on using tablets with the view that the participants will continue to use the IT hubs.

Free Pilot: Coding for Older people. Working in partnership with Go Beserk

(based at Stranmillis College) we arranged for a group of “Silver Surfers” to participate in a two day training course in coding, using primary school aged training material. Go Beserk are delivering the programme on a voluntary basis.

Economic Development. Various organisations are using the IT Hubs for digital employability skills. For example, Barnardos - IT training for mothers, Victim Support NI - Online testing and Victims & Survivors - Online testing.

Waste Management

Waste Management picked up 12 platinum “Loo of the Year” Awards for public conveniences across the city. (This is an increase of 2 from the previous year and 100% of our entries achieved this award!) These awards, run by the British Toilet Association, assess premises on their male, female and accessible toilets. Our premises have baby changing facilities in the male, female and unisex toilets. Our automatic toilets have information provision in various languages.

Age-friendly Belfast 2016/17

Belfast was the first city in Northern Ireland to join into the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Belfast City Council is working with the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership to make Belfast a city where older people can live life to the full.

Through the Belfast Agenda, Council is committed to supporting an Age-friendly Belfast, to ensure the needs of older people in the city are met. Currently 19% of the people in Belfast are aged 60+ and this figure is expected to rise to over 33% by 2050.

Consultation and engagement with older people has identified their needs as:

- addressing social isolation;
- infrastructure (walkability, signage, seating and toilets);
- transport and accessibility;
- access to suitable housing; and
- tackling poverty.

The first Age-friendly Plan 2014-2017 is currently being evaluated and a new three year plan is being developed in consultation with older people and relevant stakeholders to cover the period 2018-2021.

Our vision is that Belfast will be a city where older people live life to the full

There are 3 key themes;

- Age-friendly Image - creating a positive view of ageing
- Age-friendly Lives – reducing life inequalities and isolation
- Age-friendly Neighbourhoods - creating friendly places to live in

For each theme commitment has been secured, from key stakeholders, to deliver specific projects to improve the age-friendliness of Belfast.

It includes a wide range of projects the Council is delivering targeted at older people to reduce isolation and encourage healthy, active ageing, examples include, Prepared Events, Positive Ageing Month, tea dances in the Ulster Hall, Age-friendly Belfast Convention in City Hall and a range of active aging events in Community Centres, Leisure centres and Parks across the City.

Specific age-friendly Belfast work 16/17

We had a Living Life to the Full advertising campaign is on be billboards, buses, bus stops radio and newspapers. This is to show the positive contribution that older people play in the City.

The Age-Friendly Belfast Volunteer Awards in December 2016 were a resounding success with double the number of nominations from last year and the introduction of 5 award categories.

The Age-friendly Belfast charter now has over 30 businesses signed up, including BCC, BHSCT, Translink, Bank of Ireland, QFT and Marks and Spencers.

A third Age-friendly calendar was developed and 5000 copies have been distributed. A successful intergenerational project on Poverty with the Greater Belfast

Seniors and BCC Youth Forum was held. Positive Ageing Month 2016 in October saw 200 events enjoyed by 10000 people, with two Be Prepared events taking place in May and October in the City Hal. Over 600 older people attended each event.

Regular tea dances were held, including on St Patricks Day and a 75th Anniversary of the US troop's tea dance in the Ulster Hall and at Christmas Tea Dances in 15 community centre across the city. (The Age-friendly Belfast profile is on the NINIS website <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Home.aspx>.)

Good Relations Unit

Good Relations Grant Aid Fund:

The Good Relations Unit provides support to a range of organisations across the city in their work to address issues of sectarianism and racism and promote better relationships within and between communities. In total 160 projects were supported to a total value of £363,631.

The funds administered by the Good Relations Unit include two tranches of a small grants programme, a Saint Patrick's Day Celebration Fund and Summer Intervention Fund.

Summer Intervention Fund 2016:

Council administers the Summer intervention Fund on behalf of the Executive Office (TEO). 31 groups were recommended for funding in 2016 with a total allocation of £75,335.00.

The Council also undertook an evaluation of the Council's current Planned Intervention Funding Programme 2016/17.

The final report and appendices submitted in early 2017 offered a review of the current Summer Intervention Funding methodology, programme management, administration and outcomes. It also reviewed linkages with other parallel summer intervention programmes together with a summary of key findings and

recommendations. These recommendations will inform delivery of the 2018 approach.

Decade of Centenaries Events:

As part of the commemoration of the decade of key historical moments that shaped the history of Northern Ireland and Ireland a century ago, the Good Relations Unit organised a series of events during the 2016-17 period. These included:

The Easter Rising, Context, Events, the Belfast Connection and a Unionist Perspective: This event held on 11th April 2016 featured Dr Éamon Phoenix who delivered an exploration of the Easter Rising, looking at the context of the events in Dublin on Easter week in 1916. With particular focus on Belfast, the evening examined the significant Belfast connection with the Rising, the key personalities involved and the impact that the Rising had on the politics of Belfast in its aftermath. The event was held in City Hall was attended by over 200 people.

Reflections on 1916

Held on Wednesday 25.05.2016 - 28 attendees. This event provided information on key events in 1916 and how they are remembered and of significance to Belfast. Presentations by Dr. Eamon Phoenix and Jason Burke linked with exhibition at east wing, City Hall.

Key Women of the 1916 Rising

This event, held on 22nd September 2016 featured a presentation and facilitated discussion with Dr. Marie Coleman, QUB, who lead an exploration of the lives of four significant women who were heavily involved in the 1916 rising. The event also included music provided by Padhraic Mulholland and an art display on the women of the Easter rising which was presented by artist Micheál Gallagher. Also on display was a quilt created by Tar Anall's 50+ women's group on the women of 1916. The event concluded with the presentation of two short plays produced by Kabosh Theatre celebrating the political contributions of Winifred

Carney and Elizabeth Corr. Held in the Banqueting Hall, City Hall this event was attended by 150 people.

Life in Belfast during 1916 discussion and Screening of the film The Battle of the Somme film event held on October 25th 2016 in the Banqueting Hall, City Hall together with a background discussion provided by historian Philip Orr.

Decade of Centenaries Conference held on 03.11.2016 in the Great Hall, City Hall:

This conference brought together key stakeholders, communities, policy makers, statutory partners, Elected Members, academics and community relations practitioners to look at how we can "bow to the past, but not be bound by it". The conference took place as we draw the 1916 commemorations to a close, reflecting on the 1916 commemorations and how we can use this year to go forward as we navigate our way through the remainder of the Decade. The programme included an opening address by Lord Mayor of Belfast, Alderman Brian Kingston; 'The Prodder' a one-act play by Tina Noonan based on the writers great uncle, an Irish Veteran and amputee, who survived the Somme. It is set in a bar in Lismore, Co. Waterford circa 1964; Roundtable discussions and participant feedback.

36th Ulster Memorial Division Association funding award to facilitate and host Decade of Centenaries events during 2016-17

In September 2016 the Good Relations Unit received a request from the Unionist Centenary Committee for an award of funding towards a memorial event in the Ulster Hall in November 2016 and production of a publication reference the anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele. The funding award helped facilitate logistical and staging support, the artist fees for drama and musical performers at the *Somme Centenary Concert* as well as promotional and printing costs for publications linked to the concert. Publication: In addition the funding award provided support for a series of research workshops, facilitated historical discussions and research undertaken in preparation of a memorial information publication of the Battle of Passchendaele.

Winifred Carney and George McBride: Event held on 15.03.2017 at the Reception Hall, City Hall including a talk and discussion by Allison Murphy on the unlikely union and marriage of a Belfast Unionist who fought on the Somme and a catholic republican and feminist who stormed Dublin's GPO in 1916 – 60 attendees.

In addition a major exhibition '**Reflections on 1916**' was launched in March 2016 and will run in the City Hall from 8 March 2016 – 31 August 2016.

Community Relations and Cultural Awareness Week: The week ran from 19 – 25 September 2016 and is a high profile initiative supporting the Together: Building a United Community strategy which provides the opportunity to celebrate all aspects of our culture and heritage, promote cultural diversity and tackle sectarianism and racism.

The theme for 2016 was Building the Future Together and the Good Relations Unit Programme delivered five events to mark the week. This included a large scale event to mark International Day of Peace on 21st September which was held in City Hall. Youth4peace ambassadors who represent Northern Ireland at peacebuilding youth events all around the world were heavily involved in the delivery of the event.

Parades and Protests

As part of our work on key Good Relations issues, we commissioned Island Pamphlets to develop a pamphlet on issues relating to parades and protests. The pamphlet sought the views of ordinary residents from the minority ethnic, youth, faith, older people and women's sectors on the topic, which was compiled into a pamphlet and launched at the City Hall.

Holocaust Memorial Day 2016

Holocaust Memorial Day is an internationally recognised event which seeks to honour and remember the victims and survivors of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides in other countries across the world. The event is held annually on 27th January, as that was the date on which the Auschwitz-

Birkenau extermination camp had been liberated. The theme for the 2017 events was 'How can life go on'.

The Unit marked Holocaust Memorial Day through an awareness raising events. As part of the Good Relations Diversity City programme a visit to Belfast Jewish synagogue took place on January 25th – the event included a monologue presentation of 'Farm Girl' by Jane Coyle to help widen the context of the visit and to help participants to consider the impact of the Holocaust on victims and survivors.

Mural removal / replacement scheme

The Council made available up to £20,000 from its Good Relations Action Plan to help communities replace murals in their local area. Successful projects had to demonstrate projects which wider community involvement in the project and link to T:BUC priorities of improving attitudes amongst children and young people, creating safe and shared communities, promoting positive cultural expression and promoting good relations within communities. Four groups received support through this scheme in 2016/17.

Shared Space at Girdwood

The Girdwood Community Hub Forum established a Shared Space and Programming working group in August 2015 to develop and agree a shared space approach that will inform the programming of all areas of the Girdwood Community Hub. The key objectives of the Shared Space and Programming working group are to:

Agree the establishment of a small group of stakeholders, with Belfast City Council, to oversee the development of the shared space approach and GCH programme

Consult with wider stakeholders through an engagement process which is agreed

Report back to the Girdwood Forum on progress

Develop a communication protocol to ensure that the development process and

the plan is appropriately communicated to all stakeholders

Build in a monitoring process to measure and adjust the delivery of the shared space plan

Belfast City Council Good Relations Unit is facilitating the Shared Space and Programming working group. The group is composed of three nominated community representatives and representatives from BMC, GLL and BCC.

The Shared Space and Programming Group delivered a very successful 2016 summer programme in association with the local community organisations: this included the Girdwood Community Cup, which, due to the success of the event, the group has endorsed as an annual event for the Hub. A further highlight was the very well-attended performance of a hard-hitting theatre piece, 'Those that we pass on the street', delivered by Kabosh Theatre Company and with a community-led facilitated conversation following the performance: this play was complemented with an exhibition on 'Everyday Objects' associated with the Troubles and delivered in association with Healing through Remembering.

The Shared Space group also organised a community event "Spring into Girdwood" on Saturday 25 March 2017. The event was an opportunity to celebrate and mark the first 12 months of operation and the programme included a range of activities to cater for all ages ranges such as: Circus skills, inflatables, petting farm, junior football tournament, arts and crafts, performance acts, free BBQ, climbing wall, kiddies amusement rides, photobooth, music entertainment, playbus, a dedicated youth zone and go karts.

Interfaces

Council drew down funding from the Department of Justice (total of £14,962) to support ongoing work focused on the transformation of interfaces in the city. The funding covered the following:

procurement of an independent consultant to provide technical assistance regarding the Black Mountain Shared Space Project and its application for funding to SEUPB (PIV):

Workshop held with Shared City Partnership to inform the design of a Council

Interfaces Programme for the city. Desired outcomes for the workshop were:

The Shared City Partnership will take forward the outcomes of the workshop into its discussions re: the Belfast Agenda and the Local development Plan for the city. The Council has established an Interfaces Internal Officer Group to develop Council priorities based on service delivery demands on interface sites.

Both Good Relations and Summer Intervention funding streams continue to support ongoing delivery of good relations and intervention programmes at local interfaces.

Funding was also awarded to five groups in interface areas to enable them to hold small-scale cross-community Christmas events aimed at promoting Good Relations.

Diverse City Programme 2016-17

In May 2015, the Partnership approved a series of monthly diversity awareness initiatives, which commenced in September 2015. The purpose of these was to build on previous interventions to address hate crime, providing participants with an opportunity to meet and engage with representatives from other faiths, ethnic and political backgrounds. Information on current and ongoing events can be found at: <http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/events/Event-55261.aspx>

During the year 2016-17 the programme included:

Asylum and Refugee Awareness Training: With 15 attendees, this workshop introduced participants to the factors from around the world that generate refugees. It also included an introduction to the basic elements of the asylum process and asylum support in the local context provided by Edith Shillue.

Small Worlds: With 19 attendees, this event introduced a taste of the diversity that exists in Belfast and provided an opportunity for participants to chat with people from different backgrounds and other parts of the world, hear their stories and ask questions.

Refugee Awareness Training: With 24 attendees, this workshop introduced participants to the factors from around the world that generate refugees. It also

included an introduction to the basic elements of the asylum process and asylum support in the local context.

Visit to Belfast Islamic Centre: As part of this visit the 32 attendees were able to view the Mosque, hear about the history of the Muslim community in Belfast, as well as learning about Islam. In a question and answer session, facilitated by the centre staff, the attendees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and observe prayer before having a lunch on site.

Diverse City – Living Library Event at City Hall: The Living Library is similar to a normal library, except the books are people and you can talk to them for 20 minutes. All of the living books are from a wide range of backgrounds with different life experiences.

Small Worlds Workshop: With 37 attendees, this event introduced a taste of the diversity that exists in Belfast and provided an opportunity for participants to chat with people from different backgrounds and other parts of the world, hear their stories and ask questions.

Diverse City – Visit to Clifton Street Orange Hall: This visit to Clifton Street Orange Hall gave the 32 participants an insight into the history and traditions of the Orange Order and the artefacts that add to the story of the institution. A tour of the 130 year building was also included.

Diverse City – Asylum and Refugee Workshop: This interactive asylum and refugee awareness workshop introduced the 28 participants to the factors from around the world that generate refugees. It also included an introduction to the basic elements of the asylum process and asylum support in the local context.

Diverse City – Refugee Awareness & Arabic Culture Information Session: Two sessions were held on 29.11.2016 and 19.01.2017 and were attended by 80 attendees. This interactive session offered an introduction to Refugee awareness and Arabic Culture introducing participants to the factors from around the world that generate refugees. This also included an introduction to the basic elements of the asylum process and asylum support in the local context. *The Law Centre N.I.* and *South Belfast Roundtable on Racism* also

provided an overview of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.

Diverse City – Traveller Awareness Training: The 28 attendees were provided information about travellers in Northern Ireland and enable participants to understand their culture, language and way of life.

Diverse City – Introduction into Sexual Orientation and Gender: This workshop enabled the 22 participants to understand sexual orientation and gender issues and provided an understanding of the ways prejudice and discrimination can be directed towards people of differing sexual orientations. It also provided tips for improving service delivery and support for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender people.

Visit to Somerton Road Synagogue This visit was held on 25.01.2017 and the visit and workshop to the Jewish Synagogue allowed the 60 participants to understand the history, heritage and cultural practice of the Jewish community followed by a tour of the Synagogue. This event was held in the week of International Holocaust Memorial Day.

ROMA Awareness Workshop – This workshop was held on 17.02.2017, with a total of 48 attendees. The Roma workshop enabled participants to understand the history, heritage and cultural practice of people from the Roma community in Belfast and raise awareness of how to engage with Roma people and their families.

Seachtain ná Gaeilge Event - This event was held on 15.03.2017 as part of the GRU Diverse City Programme facilitated by An Droichead. It featured music, dance, drama and talks and was attended by 30 attendees.

Visit to Belfast Islamic Centre –This visit was held on 23.03.2017 and had 35 participants. As part of this visit attendees were able to view the Mosque, hear about the history of the Muslim community in Belfast, as well as learning about Islam. In a question and answer session, facilitated by the centre staff, the attendees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and observe prayer before having a lunch on site.

Presentations to Shared City Partnership:

The following groups and community organisations made presentations to the Shared City Partnership during the 2016/17 year:

Forum for Cities in Transition

East Belfast Mission

Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and tradition

Belfast Youth Forum

Suffolk Lenadoon Interface Group

Community Relations in Schools

Urban Villages

Bonfire Programme

The Bonfire Programme was delivered under the theme of Cultural Expression as part of the Good Relations Action Plan. 39 groups took part in the programme which aimed to support communities in the positive celebration of their cultural heritage through better bonfire management on 11th July, and support communities to provide alternate activities to bonfires on 8th August.

All activities and events funded through the programme had to meet at least one of the following; increase community involvement in activities that promote the positive celebration of cultural heritage; decrease reports of community safety issues at bonfire sites; use a range of ways to celebrate cultural heritage (this can include using beacons or other forms of celebration using different forms of art and deliver activities to reduce the likelihood of young people getting involved in August bonfires).

There was a 40% increase in the number of bonfire beacons rather than traditional bonfires used in the 2016 programme and 88% of July bonfire sites linked to the programme did not burn tyres.

Schools intervention programme in schools to actively promote diversity and challenge issues of stereotypes, bias and harassment:

During 2016-17 the Good Relations Unit engaged *Community Relations in Schools (CRIS)* to assist in the Council in the development and delivery of an intervention programme in schools to actively promote diversity and challenge issues of stereotypes, bias and harassment.

The CRIS Unity Project was delivered between February 2016 and March 2017 in eight post-primary schools across the City of Belfast. The project was a highly effective programme that supported young people to influence positive shifts in culture through the safe challenging of degrading and derogatory language and behaviour.

The project supported peer leaders to investigate their own roles in challenging bullying language and behaviour with a focus on homophobia, sectarianism, racism, body image and disability. The Unity Project uses 'real language' that young people see and hear in and around school, to enable them to explore their own roles as change makers.

Eight Post-Primary schools from North, South, East and West Belfast took part in the Unity Project.

18 Student Leader Workshops took place – which meant every Young Person in Year 10 at each school took part in the project.

181 young people (aged 13/14) took part in 16 Climate Assessments over a period of eight weeks.

10 young people in each school formed a Unity Team and attended two conferences as well as delivering a school-based legacy project

14 adults took part in accredited personal and professional development, focusing on the Unity Project rationale and activities.

73% of participating Young People said they had learnt something new or interesting through taking part in the Project.

Key Positive Outcomes of CRIS Unity Project include:

- The profile of the Unity Project and the importance of anti-bias and resilience work in schools has been raised.
- School staff have been trained in techniques and approaches that they can use in school.
- Young people in the schools' Unity Teams have been equipped with leadership skills and have explored how they can positively affect school culture.
- Every young person in Year 10 in the participating schools has had a positive experience and the chance to explore their own capacity as a *changemaker*.
- Resources, particularly focusing on Migrant Awareness have been created and disseminated.
- Detailed research has flowed from the Climate Assessment process and the feedback from SLWs, which can be used to inform future interventions.

Cultural Orientation and Cultural Competence Programme

As part of the Good Relations Action Plan, the Good Relations has commissioned the Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre to develop and deliver a Cultural Orientation and Cultural Competence Programme. The program aims to support new communities by providing them with practical and accurate information that will give them confidence and independence in starting their new lives and support host communities by providing them with the opportunity to enhance their intercultural competence and awareness.

Transgender Inclusion

In November 2016, the council hosted its second Transgender Day of Remembrance aimed at raising awareness of the threat of violence faced and the persistence of prejudice felt by the transgender community. This event is part of our annual programme of events.

At this event, we launched our draft Gender Identity Protocol and have since held a focus group with a range of appropriate groups as part of the consultation process. We will continue to work towards finalising and implementing this protocol.

Inclusion of unemployed

The council will continue to work with partner organisations to develop and implement pre-employment training programmes and work experience for the long-term unemployed and other relevant initiatives.

The Human Resources team is continuing to develop the community outreach initiatives. We have a wide network of organisations across the city with which we work. The council has established an accessible 'council job facility which will assist applicants in completing application forms.

The council continues to deliver tailored community outreach sessions to meet the needs of the organisation/ audience. During the period 2016/2017 we have:

- delivered 19 mock interview sessions with schools, colleges, universities and disability organisations (two of which were for Special Educational Needs Schools (SEN) and disability organisations),
- attended 27 careers fairs and employability talks including community events. These included one careers fair for special needs students, two employability talks for disability organisations, one

employability talk to NIACRO clients, one employability talk for Women in Business and sponsorship of and attendance at an IT360 event aimed at young female students

We continue to provide reasonable adjustments, where appropriate for both staff and service users. For example, we provided a sign language interpreter for a participant on one of the pre recruitment training programme.

- 3** Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

x Yes ☐ No (go to Q.4) ☐ Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples

Five relevant screenings undertaken over the period April 2016 to March 2017, were as follows:

The Twilight Markets Event Series – Following a one day pilot in 2015, this is a new event series of Twilight Markets held in the afternoon and evening which will aim to showcase local food and drink at St George's Market intended to raise the profile of quality regional food and drink. The anticipated popularity of the event, which could attract over 15,000 visitors in the course of a single evening, indicates the importance of promoting the inclusivity and accessibility of the event.

The application of the Equality Scheme, specifically through the screening process resulted in changes to processes, with the following equality mitigation actions highlighted during the screening processes:

- To support the planning for this event, an Inclusive Events Action Plan was developed to identify key actions and plans that would be put in place in advance of and throughout the event to support the full and active attendance and participation of disabled people in the event and therefore in public life. This action plan was supported by a communication plan to ensure full dissemination of all information
- This is primarily a food and drink market, in order to consider religious observance such as Ramadan and Jewish dietary law, the programming of the stalls participating will actively consider a broad range of health and religiously observant food provision including vegetarian and gluten free options.
- Additionally, the event is held outside of religious days.
- Food offer and the stalls represented at the market will have something to offer all ethnic groups with a range of international cuisines and dishes represented.

- The Twilight Market event will be open and accessible to all ages. However, due to alcohol licensing restrictions, the event will be limited to over 18's after 9pm. To mitigate the impact of this legislative requirement, the operational hours of the event have been extended on day two of the market to start at lunchtime. This will allow easier access for young people to the event. The activities and programme scheduling reflects this with a number of child friendly activities and entertainments planned for Day 2 afternoon to ensure a family friendly event.
- In addition as indicated in the Inclusive Events Action Plan, to ensure that all age ranges are able to enjoy the event, there are a number of seating areas placed around the market to accommodate older people, young families and anyone with mobility issues that may require additional seating. There is also a quiet seating area set aside where noise levels will be reduced and no crowding

The Soccer Grass Pitch Allocation – This policy was put forward primarily to align dual allocation processes that were in place with the introduction of Local Government Reform which resulted in an increase in the number of teams and pitches in the Council area and address the general under-usage of pitches identified within the previous season and receipt of competing requests for recently upgraded facilities.

The application of the Equality Scheme, specifically through the screening process resulted in changes to processes, with the following equality mitigation actions highlighted during the screening processes:

- led to the inclusion of under- represented people (including those with a disability) in the process of pitch allocation using a new bespoke assessment matrix. We have built in and weighted the need to integrate opportunities for disabled people and underrepresented groups in the player development / sports development plans.

- Assessing the good practice standards of the club / league via Clubmark also acts as a tool to measure positive attitudes and practice. In this case where the governing body expects disability awareness and training to be in place this will be a requisite of Clubmark.

The Linen Quarter Development – The regeneration of this area is a key project within the city centre strategy. The aim is to improve the quality of public realm, streetscape and architecture within the area so that it matches the standards of other leading European cities. The analysis also includes a number of key proposals:

- introduce new public spaces
- redefine streets and promote a different street hierarchy
- retain and build on the area's important building stock

The application of the Equality Scheme, specifically through the screening process resulted in changes to processes, with the following equality mitigation actions highlighted during the screening processes:

- the development of a changed policy which sets a minimum kerb height of 60 mm
- changes to surfacing and design requirements;
- comments related to general parking and accessible parking were forwarded to DRD which led to this development project accepting the minimum requirements as set out in the DRD design standards.

Bereavement Policy - An important part of our responsibility is to make sure that our cemeteries, graveyards and burial grounds are safe places to work in and for the public to visit and this policy sets out our approach to the safe erection and management of memorials in our cemeteries.

Through the application of the Equality Scheme, specifically through the screening process,

it is our belief that several of the proposed actions will provide opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious beliefs, political opinions and racial groups, in that we now have a consistent approach to all our users and the policies will introduce clear terms and conditions

GLL Pricing Structure – Belfast City Council, as part of the Leisure Transformation Programme (LTP), is currently delivering a major renewal of its leisure facilities and services. Therefore GLL have revised the Council's existing leisure scale of charges to develop a competitive membership and pricing architecture that will offer more choice for customers including membership packages that offer value for money.

The aim of this review is to develop and agree a new competitive membership and pricing architecture in order to;

- Increase business growth
- Improve customer retention
- Encourage and target non-users and underrepresented groups
- Increase opportunities and flexibility of access for all customers

The application of the Equality Scheme, specifically through the screening process resulted in changes to processes, with the following equality mitigation actions highlighted during the screening processes:

- Provide concessionary rates for certain groups, i.e. those for whom price is true barrier to participation. Evidence stemming from focus groups with young people and older people during the consultation process indicated that price can be a barrier to participation for them. This was also raised by swimming clubs as part of the discussions around out of hours use of swimming pools. Evidence from the older people focus group also indicated that there should be greater flexibility in pricing structures. In considering the review of the membership architecture BCC and GLL is mindful of the need to include concessionary rates for juniors and over 60's and improve the pricing flexibility. Evidence from the 2010 Sport and Physical Activity Survey (SAPAS) indicates that participation in sport in Belfast is below the Northern Ireland average, identifying disabled people as being significantly under-

represented. Findings stemming from the disability focus group during the consultation process indicated that they felt cost is a barrier to participation by disabled people, particularly those people in receipt of Disability Living Allowance.

- Due to the above, where appropriate a person with a disability in receipt of Means tested benefit will be eligible to avail of the concessionary membership; a new better inclusive membership has been introduced by GLL at a cost of £19.95 allowing disabled people cheaper access to all centre's across Belfast and in all cases, if a person with a disability requires a carer to attend with them, the carer will be admitted free.

Two EQIA's were conducted throughout the 2016/2017 period. These were in relation to the:

- **Belfast Agenda** – The Belfast Agenda, Belfast's 1st Community Plan is Belfast's key strategic plan for the future and has been produced via the Community Planning process led by Belfast City Council. It is a shared plan, owned by the full range of statutory Community Planning Partner organisations (not just Belfast City Council) with input from NI Departments, and other key city organisations in the business, further and higher education, and community & voluntary sectors.

We conducted a number of consultations over an extended period of time using various methods. A copy of the plan and questionnaire can be accessed by following the link below. www.belfastcity.gov.uk/belfastagenda

We also consulted on an EQIA for the Belfast Agenda and a copy of this can be found by clicking on the following link; [Equality Impact Assessment](#) (EQIA).

LDP - LDPs guide the future use of land in their respective areas and inform a developers, members of the general public, communities, government, public bodies, representative organisations and other interests of the policy framework unless other material. A council must prepare a local development plan in consultation with consultation bodies and the public. As the development of the LDP is a five year process it was agreed internally to divide the EQIA LDP into three phases namely:

- First phase EQIA LDP -Preferred Options Paper at a strategic level
- Second phase EQIA LDP- Plan Strategy (PS)
- Third phase EQIA LDP -LDP Local Policies Plan (LPP)

The first phase was undertaken during this reporting period.

3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples

For examples and details please see section 3 above

3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? *(tick all that apply)*

☒ As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy *(please give details):*

☐ As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise *(please give details):*

☐ As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact *(please give details)*

☐ Other *(please specify and give details):*

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes, organisation wide

☒ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Recruitment has been limited due to the on-going organisational restructuring following Local Government Reform, however Section 75 duties were integrated into job descriptions where appropriate, predominantly in senior positions with responsibility for large resources and in key leadership positions. This has included the roles of Interim Director of City Centre Development and Head of Human Resources. Specifically the following duties reflect this in the Head of Human Resources under the title HR Policy development and implementation

- Ensure the strategic development, coordination and implementation of relevant policies to support the organisation in actively promoting equality and diversity.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes, organisation wide

☐ Yes, some departments/jobs

☐ No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment

☐ No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done

☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 introduced a duty on council to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions. The council therefore has a statutory obligation (at the beginning of every year) to publish an

Improvement Plan setting out the Council's Improvement Objectives. The Northern Ireland Audit Office will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this duty and will undertake an examination of the planning process the council uses to derive their improvement objectives.

The Improvement Plan is included as part of the council's corporate plan and are directly aligned to, and cascade from the council's priorities as informed by the wide reaching consultation process which informed the Belfast Agenda.

6 In the 2016-17 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? *(tick all that apply)*

- ☒ Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- ☐ Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- ☐ Yes, in some departments/jobs
- ☐ No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- ☐ No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2016-17 report
- ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Belfast City Council has used the engagement from the Belfast Agenda to help inform the development of its corporate plan. Specific workshops were held with Elected Members, which built on the findings from the Belfast Conversation, to develop an interim corporate plan aligned to the emerging issues identified to date. As it is a community plan the delivery of the Belfast Agenda will be done through partnership with our partners, S75 statutory duties will be fully integrated into the Agenda as a whole and the Council's own objectives.

Equality action plans/measures

- 7** Within the 2016-17 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of (NEED UPDATED INFO)

Actions
completed:

5

Actions
ongoing:

19

Actions to
commence:

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

- 8** Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2016-17 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

As the Equality Action Plan for 15-16 was extended the majority of the Actions included have been revised and are now incorporated into the new Equality and Diversity Framework. For example the action to 'Establish staff forums to improve engagement, communication, networking and support for staff' is ongoing with a revised approach to develop networks focusing on race.

- 9** In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2016-17 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- ☒ Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- ☐ Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- ☒ Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- ☐ Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10** Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: *(tick one box only)*

×☒ All the time

Sometimes

☐ Never

- 11** Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2016-17 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

Our City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, published in September 2015, identified car parking as a major issue for Belfast city centre and recommended that we work with the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) to develop and implement a strategy for car parking for Belfast.

IN 2016/17 we commissioned consultants to help us develop a car parking strategy and action plan for Belfast. Our draft vision for this strategy is to offer “sufficient, high quality and appropriately located parking which supports economic development and regeneration within the city by balancing the requirements of residents, businesses, commuters and visitors”

In developing this draft strategy we had already engaged with key stakeholders including local communities, disability groups and business and retail groups. Details of this engagement was included in a screening report which was issued along with the other consultation documents and further information to inform a later screening was gathered.

12 In the 2016-17 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: *(tick all that apply)*

- ☒ Face to face meetings
- ☒ Focus groups
- ☒ Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing
- ☒ Questionnaires
- ☒ Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation
- ☒ Internet discussions
- ☒ Telephone consultations
- ☒ Other *(please specify)*:

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories

The implementation of the Consultation Hub, which provides information of all of our current consultations and the opportunity to complete an online questionnaire, has proven popular, as it gives a 'one stop shop' for potential consultees. We have used the Hub to enhance communication also, with details of events and focus groups provided. The equality monitoring report which accompanies the online questionnaire has seen an increase in numbers across all Section 75 categories.

- 13** Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Our Equality Consultative Forum presents two key opportunities in the year for consultees to participate in the development of Council policies.

- 14** Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

[]

- 15** Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year *(as recorded in screening reports)*

8

- 16** Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2016-17:

5

Policy consultations conducted with **screening** assessment presented.

2

Policy consultations conducted **with an equality impact assessment** (EQIA) presented.

0

Consultations for an **EQIA** alone.

- 17** Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

There was an EQIA conducted on local development plan.

There was an EQIA conducted on Belfast Agenda (Community Planning)

A range of consultation methods were employed for both of the above EQIA's, including: the Consultation Hub; a range of focus groups; staff consultations; information in City Matters; website and circulation to the council's equality list.

In relation to the equality screening assessments each report highlights the consultation methodology.

- 18** Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes x No concerns were raised ☐ No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

No concerns were raised

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes x No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2016-17 reporting period? *(tick one box only)*

x Yes ☐ No, already taken place
☐ No, scheduled to take place at a later date ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details:

This work is on-going

- 21** In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? *(tick one box only)*

☐ Yes X No ☐ Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

- 22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2016-17 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Please see Part A section 3 for further details

- 23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

With an increased focus on economic development the monitoring of data and the design of appropriate intervention to address economic inequalities has been central. For example:

Active Communities Network has run a wide range of sport activities to engage with 250 young people across the city who are or at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). From these sessions 36 young people have been identified and have been receiving mentoring support – supporting them to overcome specific barriers to employment. Young people will receive training and support to develop employability skills, and will be supported to access work-placement and/or employment opportunities

The Consultation Hub has developed Belfast City Council's capacity to increase monitoring data.

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2016-17, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Please see section 3 in the main body of report for details and part B section 2b for further details.

- 25** Please provide any examples of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives

Please see section 3 in the main body of the report and part B section 2b for further details.

Following the training benefits include:

- Better informed staff
- Improved communication
- Improved understanding of process
- A more consistent organisational approach

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2016-17, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

Monitoring of our how we communicate with the people of Belfast have resulted in actions and improvements in ensuring public access to information and services, this includes:

Website

- Adhere to the Plain English campaign and have the website assessed annually
- Follow W3C standards accessibility guidelines
- Browse Aloud tool
- Google translate
- Text size tool
- Accessibility policy/statement -
<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/about/Accessibility.aspx>
- Alt text on images
- Use accessibility tool – Siteimprove
- Follow the guidelines for RNIB

All of our City Matters content adheres to Plain English guidelines, which is accessed annually, with each Seniors' section printed in slightly larger font. We also seek to include a wide range of images which reflect the diversity of Belfast.

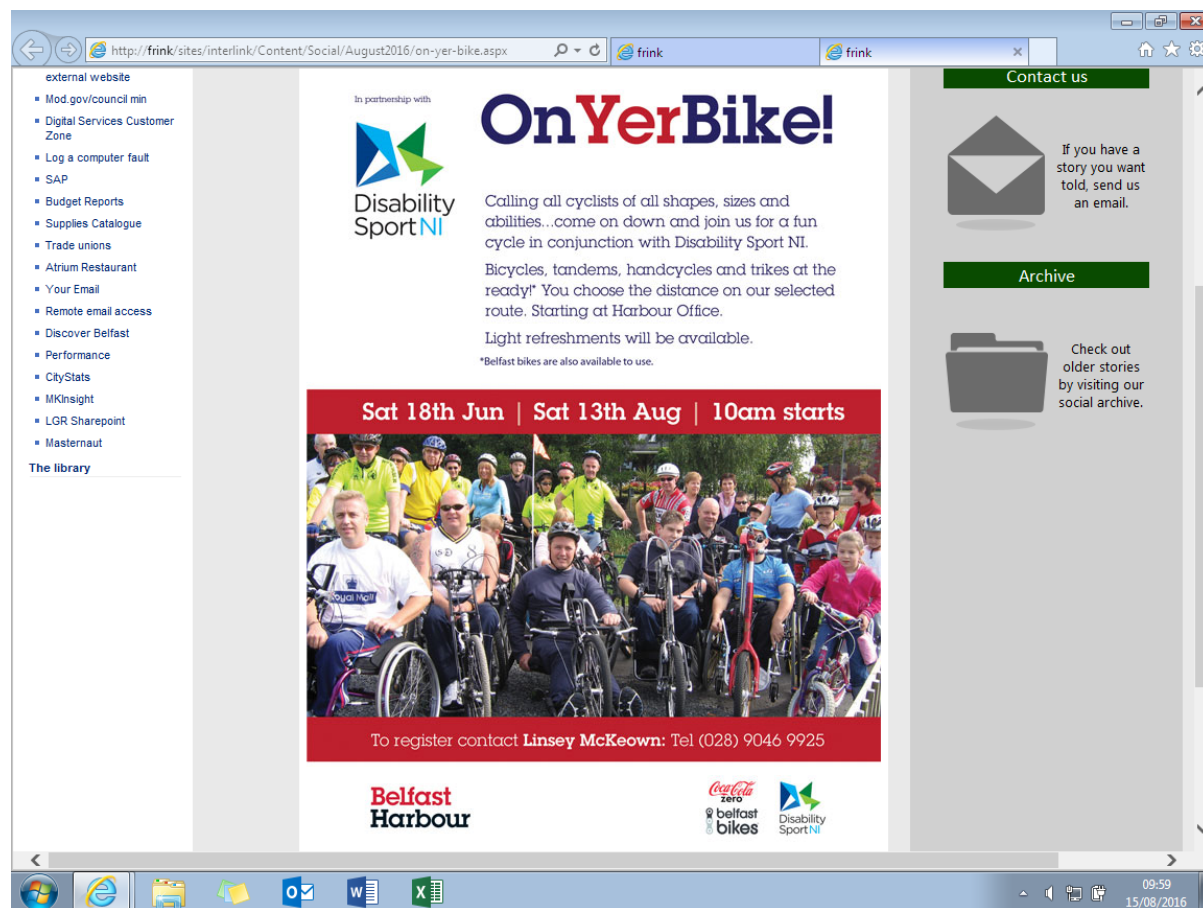
City Matters is sent out as an audio CD to all those who are registered blind in Belfast. It is also available in Braille, larger text and Daisy.

We also promote the use of plain English and accessibility in our publications and signage. We promote in-house training in Plain English for staff through internal communications.

Publications are available in other formats and languages on request. Dedicated web pages are created for key events or information including Peace IV, Decade of

Centenaries, Age friendly older volunteer awards and ladies boxing classes.

We promote the diversity of our city through social media, examples of such as outlined below:



http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/News/News-69975.aspx

frink frink Magnificent Mela ...

Text Size A A Accessibility | Cookies | Contact us Search

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Belfast City Council

Pay, apply, book, report, request

Council **News** Jobs Events Leisure Tourism and venues Bins and recycling Community Building control and environment Business A-Z

Magnificent Mela Marks A Decade of Diversity

Magnificent Mela Marks A Decade of Diversity

5 Aug 2016

For the tenth dazzling year in succession the great big beautiful world is set to descend on Belfast's Botanic Gardens as the city revels in its annual Belfast Mela.

On the afternoon of Sunday 28 August the park will be transformed into an exotic festival of global identities; a showcase of the culture and cuisine of a wealth of nations.




To mark ten years of celebrating shared cultures, there will be an entertainment bonus this year, with the addition of two performances under canvas of the Indian classic tale, 'The Phantom Queen' on Saturday 27 August.

A special 'Voices Of Mela' photographic and film exhibition will also be staged at The Ulster Museum capturing ten years of Mela moments, uncovering some of the stories of Northern Ireland's ethnic communities, and exploring the significance of Mela within Northern Ireland's cultural landscape.

The programme launch for what promises to be the most ambitious Mela Festival yet is taking place in the Palm House in Botanic Gardens, where the very first Mela took place ten years ago.

Reflecting on a decade of celebrating diversity, Nisha Tandon, founder and Executive Director of pioneering ethnic arts organisation, said:

"Ten years ago ArtsEkta's founding members had a creative vision for staging the most inclusive festival that Northern Ireland had ever seen."



http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/News/News-69867.aspx

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Young people launch their Manifesto for Belfast in 2016

Young people launch their Manifesto for Belfast in 2016

2 Aug 2016

A group of young people from Belfast have helped create a 'Manifesto' for the city in 2016 which sets out a vision with peace, equality and human rights at its heart.


They were taking part in a project that was part of the council's Decade of Centenaries programme and run in partnership with the Participation and the Practice of Rights (PPR), the Golden Thread Gallery and the Creative Works Cooperative.

The Decade of Centenaries Programme examined how events of 100 years ago shaped the history of the city with documents like the Ulster Covenant and the Declaration 1918 and the Proclamation of the Republic 1916 developed. Through the 8 week project, the young people were asked "What would your Covenant or Proclamation look like in Belfast 2016?"

The 12 to 17 year-olds from Ligoniel Youth Project, Divis Youth Project, Mountain Hill Youth Club and Belfast Youth Forum have now produced a work called the 'Manifesto for You' - a short film which will be shown on a TV screen in the front foyer of Belfast City Hall all this week.

The young people looked at issues impacting them today and also examined other historically significant examples of speeches and writing which were intended to bring about social change. Their Manifesto outlines beliefs in equality, investment in society, education and health and "a time to stop labelling and start living".

Councillor John Kyle, Chair of the council's Shared City Partnership, joined project members to launch 'Manifesto for You' at City Hall today.






1 December 2016

Refugee awareness and Arabic culture information session

Over the past year a number of Syrian families have been resettled in Northern Ireland as part of the UK Government's participation in the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation (VPR) scheme.



If you're interested in hearing how the VPR scheme operates and understanding more about refugee and asylum issues in Northern Ireland, the Consortium supporting the resettlement of families in NI has organised an information session in partnership with the council.


Date: 19 January 2017
Time: 9.30am - 4pm
Venue: details about the Belfast city centre venue will be provided following registration.

This awareness session will cover an introduction to asylum and refugee issues in the UK and NI in particular. It will provide a general awareness of Islamic and Arab culture and factual information about how the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme works. It will allow participants the opportunity to hear directly from Refugees and Asylum Seekers living in Belfast.

Registration is essential - to register please contact goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk or call 9027 0663


Have your say...

Contact us



If you have a story you want told, send us an email.

Archive



Check out older stories by visiting our news archive.

10 January 2017

Lunch-time sign language class



Colleagues are invited to sign up for a lunch-time sign language class starting on **Friday 20 January**.

Running for six weeks the 30 mins session will teach the basics in British Sign Language (BSL) and for those already with some skill, the opportunity to practice.

Paul Stewart from Equality and Diversity who is taking the class said, "Since joining the council I've meet a lot of people who have expressed an interest in learning sign language or practicing what they've already been taught. I teach BSL at Belfast Met but appreciate that the home, work schedule of most people is really hectic these days. So we opted for a 30 minutes class over lunch-time - long enough to learn new skills but short enough that it fits neatly into the working day."

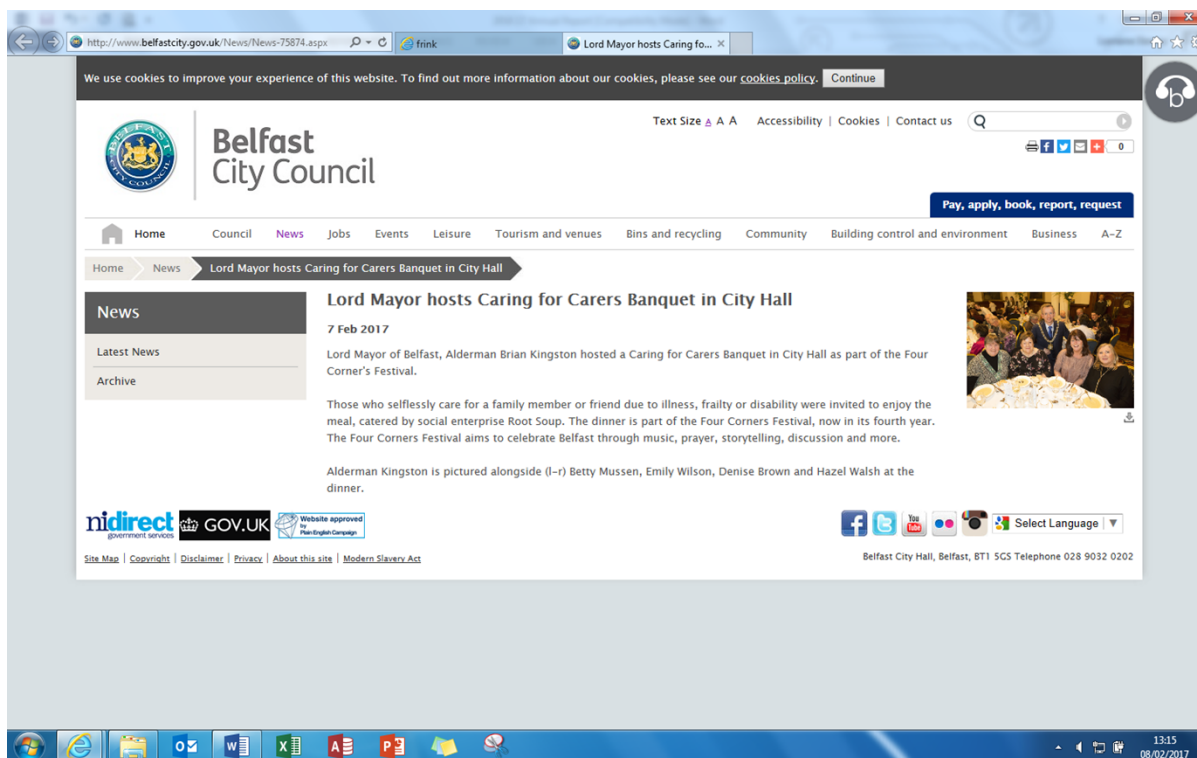
Have your say...

Contact us

If you have a story you want told, send us an email.

Archive

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Further copies of publications and specific articles relating to the promotion of equality and diversity will gladly be supplied on request.

Employability

Following the success of the council's three year Investment Programme (2012-2015),

monitoring demonstrated the need for this work and we continue to work effectively with government departments, agencies and the private sector to support employability and skills development and provide job opportunities across all council departments. HR/OD and the council's Economic Initiatives Unit work together to help deliver particular aspects of the Belfast Employability and Skills Strategy and the Belfast Agenda. In 2016/2017 we:

- delivered 159 job opportunities through public advertisement and provided 150 work experience placements (target of 150). These include placements for young people through Young Persons Employment Initiative (YPEI), students from a range of educational establishments, people with disabilities, NEETS and other young students, the long term unemployed, and others who face other barriers to work.
- delivered two ring fenced temporary cleansing/ recycling operative posts to the long term unemployed/ economically inactive and a pre- employment programme for 24 long term unemployed / economically inactive participants to help them apply for the two ring fenced posts
- We continued to work closely with the Equality Commission, DEL and their employability contractors, and our Economic Initiatives Unit on our project to ring fence posts to the long term unemployed. The 24 places on the pre-recruitment training programmes were allocated to training providers representing all areas of the city.

- The council's employability agenda was showcased at an ICTU seminar, 'Achieving Decent Work for people with Disabilities' in November 2016.
- Our pre-employment and training programme, along with our other outreach work was showcased to other local councils at a Local Government Staff Commission event in January 2017.

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

27 How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2016-17?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

Section 3: Looking Forward

28 Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

Approved by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in 2015, due for review 2020.

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? *(please provide details)*

The application of our Equality Scheme arrangements will contribute to addressing these inequalities and removing barriers through training, screening and consultation.

Equality Scheme commitments will be further promoted through the main initiatives planned in the coming year to ensure the authority improves outcomes in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations for individuals from the nine categories covered by Section 75

- Finalise and implement the Gender Identity Guidance document and roll out appropriate training
- Evaluate actions from 2016/2017 and evaluate responses from the staff survey to identify and implement how the strategy is to be taken forward
- Women's Steering Group will continue to oversee the development, implementation, monitoring and review of the Gender Action Plan
- Deliver the year three actions on the Gender, LGB&T, Race and Disability Action Plans
- Roll out a mentoring programme to both females and males
- Deliver a further Women Leaders Programme

- Agree and implement the revised Good and Harmonious Working Environment Policy
- Continue training and communication exercise following the launch of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Workplace Policy
- Ongoing training and development around equality, diversity and good relations issues
- Identify and target specific disability awareness training e.g. autism; deaf awareness; interviewing skills for people with social communication difference
- International Women's Day and International Men's Day events
- Host a transgender event
- Ongoing activity to become a more open and diverse workplace environment as part of our commitment to the Rainbow Project's Diversity Champions Programme
- Conduct staff survey on equality and diversity and voluntary monitoring exercise
- LGB&T staff network, with full agreement from Elected Members, to participate for the first time in Belfast Pride Parade in August 2017
- Pilot Interviewing Skills for People with Social Communication Difference training
- Support Syrian Refugees through outreach activity

- Continue to engage with employability partners and increase engagement with under-represented groups in relation to outreach activity
- Continue working on the revision of our competency framework which will encompass equality and diversity as an area
- Work with OCN to explore the possibility of gaining accreditation for pre recruitment training modules
- Completing the Inclusive Communications Guide.
- Updating the Equality Toolkit
- Completion of the Equality and Diversity Framework and associated Action Plan
- Mainstreaming of the Inclusive Events Guide
- Mainstreaming of the Every Customer Counts initiative and JAM Card
- Review of accessibility at the Zoo

- Review of screening procedures and associated processes
- Engagement with the Disability Advisory Panel
- Delivery of specialist equality training

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next (2016-17) reporting period? *(please tick any that apply)*

- x Employment
- x Goods, facilities and services
- ☐ Legislative changes
- x Organisational changes/ new functions
- ☐ Nothing specific, more of the same
- ☐ Other (please state):

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

17

Fully achieved

4

Partially achieved

6

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

Level	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs ⁱ	Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ
National ⁱⁱⁱ			
Regional ^{iv}			
Local ^v			

All our work is at a Belfast level.

However we impact at many levels by promoting excellence in equality; sharing good practice and promoting leadership.

Please see attached the Updated status of the Disability Action plan (DDO) indicating fully achieved

2(b)

	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Diversity e- learning programme completed Diversity Training Disability Training Bespoke Training	Diversity training for: employees- 258 staff Managers/ supervisors- 41 Diversity e-learning- 44 Disability awareness for: employees- 83 Managers /supervisors -10 Bespoke training- mental health, dyslexia, learning disability- 11 employees and 4 officers trained to deliver 2 hour dementia awareness sessions	Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively.
2	Deliver equality/good relations screening training and include section related to DDO duties	2 sessions Equality/Good Relations screening training delivered and include DDO duties included in ongoing roll out	Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively.

3	Include Disability related information in Staff E-Briefings, Staff Newsletters/Magazines, staff	4 Disability related information circulated in Staff E-Briefings, Staff Newsletters/Magazines Video produced as part of the Council's team brief promoting the staff Disability Network	Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively.
4	Provide emotional health and well being awareness training for staff and council volunteers	21 people trained	Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitude Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively.
5	Provide training for managers in managing stress and mental health issues	11 people trained	Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively.
6	Develop a dedicated health and wellbeing page on Interlink (internal)	Dedicated page been developed and is updated regularly	Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively.

7	Develop shared bulletin board to post disability related material	A bulletin board has been developed and is updated on a regular basis	<p>Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes</p> <p>Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively</p>
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2(c) What Positive attitudes action measures in the area of Communications were achieved in this reporting period?

	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	<p>Provide information to disabled people on aspects of Council services which specifically affect them through:</p> <p>Minimum of 4 articles per year in City Matters</p> <p>Minimum of 2 targeted information leaflets per year</p> <p>Accessible information on the Council website</p>	<p>Over 4 articles printed in City Matters</p> <p>Over 2 targeted information leaflets around Waste Management and Cleansing Services and events held in our Parks</p> <p>Waste received 3 requests for tactile plaques</p> <p>Continually work towards meeting W3C standards for our council website and have installed Browse Aloud onto Zoo website</p> <p>Include a Seniors page in City Matters</p>	<p>Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes</p> <p>Increased awareness of issues related to disabled people and improved service delivery</p>

2	Consult and engage with the sector as part of the “Belfast Conversation” to help shape the emerging Belfast Agenda – a single long-term strategic plan for the city	<p>We have continued to improve our approach to consultation and engagement and improving access and equality of opportunity are inherent within these approaches.</p> <p>During the consultation period for the draft Belfast Agenda we ran targeted meetings/workshops and interest groups, including with key groups across section 75 categories</p> <p>We sought to identify and meet with representative groups and organisations who had the trust, and direct relationships with these “seldom heard” stakeholders. We aimed to support and help these organisations to facilitate their own engagement sessions with their groups or service users, to ensure a broader input into consultation responses</p>	<p>Increased awareness of issues related to disabled people and improved service delivery</p> <p>Addressing needs and issues of disabled employees</p>
3	Develop key issues paper for Council departments on disability related issues and provide an annual update	Completed	Increased awareness of issues related to disabled people and improved service delivery

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to ‘encourage others’ to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Review membership of consultative forum and increase representation of disabled people	Completed. We will continue to review membership every two years	New members across all section 75 groups including representation from disabled groups

2	Arrange a minimum of 2 Forum meetings per year and additional meetings as required	Completed. The forum will now meet going forward three times a year.	New members across all section 75 groups including representation from disabled groups
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2 (e) Please outline any additional action measures that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

	Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures)	Outputs	Outcomes / Impact
1	Submit Annual Progress Report to Disability Access Group, Consultative Forum, Corporate Management Team, Joint Consultative Negotiating Committee, Good Relations Partnership, Strategic Policy & Resources Committee , and the council	Completed. The Good Relations Partnership has been replaced with the Shared City Partnership. Equality and Diversity is now located in legal Services CX. They not report to the Shared City Partnership any longer.	Improved awareness of disability activity and progress within council
2	Disabled people are provided with appropriate support to enhance employability and obtain employment	1careers fair attended and two employability talks provided 2 mock interview sessions delivered	Encourage participation and employability
3	Identify opportunities to ring fence certain posts to long-term unemployed, including those with a disability and ensure any pre-recruitment and training programme caters for any reasonable adjustments	One pre-recruitment training programmes delivered – 3 ring fenced temporary recycling operative posts. Nine disability organisations were involved in the pre-recruitment programmes. 6 people with disabilities participated in the programme and one was recommended for appointment	Encouraging participation in terms of employability

4	Establish a forum/ support network for disabled employees to feed into future action planning	<p>Forum established and developed to include those members of staff who have disabled members of family and those who are carers.</p> <p>In addition a number of guest speakers have been invited eg Rare Disease Partnership; Advice NI; Cedar Foundation; Sustrans</p>	<p>Addressing needs and issues of disabled employees</p> <p>Encouraging participation and developing positive attitudes</p>
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5	Facilitate a biennial event on a current theme linked to Council priorities	<p>Completed. Event held called removing Barriers: Making Services Inclusive.</p> <p>The event attracted over 90 attendees with a large representation of disability advocacy groups and a large percentage of disabled guests and speakers.</p> <p>Belfast City Council used this event to communicate its commitment to the Equality Commissions Every Customer Counts initiative</p> <p>As a result of the success of the above event and the interest generated in making events as accessible to all the equality and diversity team have now launched a programme of meetings with departments to complete specific event guides/templates for the upcoming year to ensure that good practice is embedded throughout the council both in terms of internal processes/procedures and in the delivery of services/promotion of positive attitudes towards those with a disability</p>	<p>Increased awareness of issues related to disabled people and improved service delivery</p> <p>Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes</p> <p>Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively.</p>
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3. Please outline what action measures have been partly achieved as follows:

	Action Measures partly achieved	Milestones / Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Reasons not fully achieved
1	Update list of providers of alternative formats annually	<p>Audit carried out and updated list is being finalised.</p> <p>Awaiting final details in relation to Big Word representatives and appropriate cost codes across the new organisational structure</p>	<p>Managers and staff are aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to disability issues and have the knowledge and skills to carry these out effectively.</p> <p>Encourage participation and employability</p>	Due to organisational re-structuring and movement of personnel it has taken longer to gather and agree the final data
2	Facilitate 3 employees to learn and use sign language each year	<p>Unfortunately due to resource constraints we were not able to find and release staff to attend the full training course.</p> <p>However we did facilitate 11 members of staff attending a 6 week lunchtime sign language training session which was delivered by a member of the Equality and Diversity Unit who is deaf.</p>	<p>Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes</p>	Unfortunately due to resource constraints we were not able to find and release staff to attend the full training course

3	Create a database of staff who have sign language skills and update when required	This database has been created however unfortunately due to reason above in point 2 we have not been able to add to with fully trained members of staff	Positive attitudes towards disabled people and challenging negative attitudes	Unfortunately due to resource constraints we were not able to find and release staff to attend the full training course and were therefore unable to update the database with new members
4	Provide at least 30 work experience placements to disabled people	24 work placements completed successfully	Increased effective and meaningful public involvement of disabled people	Due to on-going organisational re-structuring and movement of key personnel it was difficult to organise the full quota of placements

4. Please outline what action measures have not been achieved and the reasons why?



	Action Measures not met	Reasons
1	Provide support for managers and employees in completing PDP process by reviewing the PDP form to help identify and record specific needs for disabled employees	A consultation is currently underway with staff and Trade Unions about including this is PDP form but has not yet been finalised or subsequently rolled out
2	Deliver at least two outreach opportunities each year for people with disabilities to engage with / participate in public life	Unfortunately during 2016 this has not been possible due to resourcing constraints.
3	Facilitate site visits to promote the council as an attractive employer	Whilst site visits were promoted through employability talks no requests were received in 2016/2017

4	Review the need to provide equality and diversity/ good relations module as part of development activity for managers	This will be considered as part of the new competency framework for managers which is underway
5	Ensure all managers are aware of the provisions of the Attendance Policy which allow for special consideration of disability issues	This is on-going as we need to gather further data as to how this message will be reinforced on a consistent basis across the council
6	Ensure consistent approach to collating and monitoring reasonable adjustments in relation to absence management	This is on-going as we need to gather more specific data as to how many requests are made and how many accepted and what reasonable adjustments were made

5. What monitoring tools have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

The council is currently reviewing all monitoring information. A monitoring system for Section 75 categories including disability has improved across a range of council departments. Updates are included in the annual report.

(a) Qualitative

The introduction of the Council's Disability Strategy has improved our mechanisms to record and monitor activity related to improving services to disabled people. The Action Plan associated with the Disability Strategy combines DDA and DDO actions.

(b) Quantitative

6 Milestones – Please outline what part progress has been made towards the particular measures; even if full output or outcomes/ impact have not been achieved

PART B

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any revisions to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any additional steps to meet the disability duties which were not outlined in your original disability action plan / any other changes?

Please delete: No

If yes please outline below:

	Revised/Additional Action Measures	Performance Indicator	Timescale
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

7. Do you intend to make any further revisions to your plan in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action?
Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.