



Subject:	Motion: Voting Rights for 16 Year Olds
Date:	19th January, 2018
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager, ext. 6314
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider a response which has been received on behalf of the Secretary of State and the Minister for Constitutional Reform in relation to the Council's Motion on Voting Rights for 16 Year Olds.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the response and take any such action as may be determined.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> The Council, at its meeting on 1st November, passed the following motion on Voting Rights for 16 Year Olds, which had been proposed by Councillor O'Hara and seconded by Councillor Nic Biorna:

	<p>"This Council calls upon the British Government and the Secretary of State to bring forward legislation to extend the right to vote to everyone aged 16 or over, in time for the 2019 Local Government elections and for all future Assembly and Westminster elections and any referenda."</p>
3.2	<p>A response has now been received from Lord Duncan of Springbank, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, who is responsible for elections policy in Northern Ireland. A copy of that correspondence is attached.</p>
3.3	<p>Lord Duncan states that the Government recognises and highly values the contribution which young people make to society. However, he points out that, of those countries within the European Union, only Austria had lowered its voting age to 16 years for national elections and that most democracies consider 18 to be the appropriate age to enfranchise young people. He confirms that the UK Government continues to hold the view that 18 years is the age at which most young people are likely to be sufficiently politically aware, mature and independent to decide who should represent them and concludes by thanking the Council for its interest in this issue.</p>
	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.4	<p>None</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.5	<p>None</p>
4.0	<p>Document Attached</p>
	<p>Response from Lord Duncan, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland</p>