



Subject:	Youth Forum & Ur City 2 update
Date:	6 <sup>th</sup> March 2018
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director, City & Neighbourhood Services
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
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"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	To update the Committee on the most recent work of the Belfast Youth Forum, including recruitment for the new 2018-2020 Youth Forum, and to provide an update on 2017/18 Ur City 2 monies.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>note the content of this report highlighting the work of the Belfast Youth Forum and agree to the new phase of Youth Forum recruitment.</li></ul>

3.0	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	<p>This paper is an update on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Outline arrangements for Youth Forum 2018-20 recruitment plan;</li> <li>ii. the main activities of Council's Youth Forum (YF); and</li> <li>iii. funding awards under 'Ur City 2' programme 2017/18.</li> </ul>
3.2	<p><b>Youth Forum Recruitment</b></p> <p>Young people on the YF serve a 2-year term and in June the current 2016-18 cohort will end their term and a new cohort of young people will begin. Recruitment for the 2018-2020 YF will start on 26<sup>th</sup> February with an open application process which will last for four weeks and close on 26<sup>th</sup> March. Applicants will then be invited to a recruitment session in City Hall in April and will also take part in an interview with two outgoing YF members and a member of staff. A total of 40 places will be allocated to young people aged 13-18 (four from each of the DEA's).</p>
3.3	<p><b>Votes at 16 campaign</b></p> <p>In November 2017, Cllr O'Hara sponsored a Notion of Motion on behalf of the YF calling on Council to endorse voting rights for young people aged 16 and above and calling on the UK government to extend voting legislation to all 16 and 17 year olds in time for the next local government elections. The YF made a deputation at this meeting advocating voting rights for 16 and 17 year olds and the motion passed by an overwhelming majority. While already linking with the UK campaign, the YF want to start to build links with the official 'Votes at 16' campaign in the South. The YF is currently planning a trip to Dublin for April 2018 to meet young people working on the campaign in the South and to visit Seanad Eireann to meet with the Seanadoiri who are currently working on a Bill to legislate for votes at 16 in southern Ireland. The YF hope that by making these connections they can help to create a linked campaign working towards votes at 16 across all four jurisdictions.</p>
3.4	<p><b>Mental Health Campaign</b></p> <p>The YF, along with young people from the Children's Law Centre and NI Youth Forum, have formed a youth mental health steering group to run a joint mental health campaign called- '<b>Elephant in the Room.</b>' (EITR)</p>
3.5	<p><b>Background to campaign</b></p> <p>EITR is informed by the NI Young People's report to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: 'Our lives in our words.' This report represented the views and</p>

experiences of 900 children and young people (aged 7-17yrs) who participated in the research on the extent to which they were enjoying their rights. Under the theme of mental health the findings showed that:

- 27% of young people reported having a mental health concern
- Most young people felt uncomfortable seeking help due to stigma
- Only a third of those who reported having a mental health concern said they received help.

3.6 In July 2016, informed by evidence in the young people's report, the UN Committee recommended that the NI Government:

*“Rigorously invest in child and adolescent mental health services and develop strategies at national and devolved levels, with clear time frames, targets, measureable indicators, effective monitoring mechanisms and sufficient human, technical and financial resources...”*

(UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's Concluding Observations and Recommendations to the UK Government, July 2016; 60(b))

3.7 At a follow up UNCRC youth event in City Hall organised by our YF, Children's Law Centre and NI Youth Forum, 100 young people called for the UN Committee's recommendations on mental health to be fully implemented. This event gave young people on all three forums a clear mandate from their peers for further engagement in rights based campaign work on mental health issues. Consequently, the young people from each Forum began planning a regional, youth-led mental health campaign.

#### **Purpose of campaign**

3.8 Through their work outlined above, young people found there was an urgent need to name the 'elephant in the room' when it comes to mental health, namely:

- The ongoing stigma despite years of high profile campaigns;
- Lack of knowledge about where young people access information on mental health and how reliable this information is;
- Failure to adequately fund mental health services despite evidence of how big an issue it is.

3.9 As part of their campaign young people have designed their own questionnaire for 14-17 year olds which is running from January to March 2018. They will follow up this survey with in-depth focus groups with young people in Belfast, Newry and Derry throughout March 2018.

With the help of Ulster University, young people will then analyse the data and create a research report that they will launch in late June 2018. From September 2018 onwards, young people will begin to lobby decision makers on the recommendations in their report and will also run an awareness raising campaign to challenge mental health stigma.

#### **Intended outcomes of campaign**

3.10 By using the evidence gathered from their own peer research, the youth steering group are aiming to achieve the following outcomes, on behalf of all present and future generations of children and young people:

- **Change** public perceptions of mental health i.e. challenging the myths, supporting the facts and reducing the 'stigma'
- **Encourage/support** more young people to talk about mental health and by doing so increase the likelihood that they will seek help if and when they need it
- **Engage** with key decision makers at Departmental and Ministerial level on young people's recommendations for the change needed to improve mental health education programmes, young people's access to early intervention support, using evidence gathered from the survey, focus groups and conferences and the social media campaign
- **Advocate** for increased funding for CAMHs and make it more accessible to young people in line with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's 2016 recommendations to Government (see above).

3.11 As part of their mental health campaign the Youth Forum made a presentation on their work to the Belfast Safeguarding Panel in February 2018. This group includes representatives from GP services, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Education and CAMHS as well as Council and a range of other voluntary organisations including Barnardos, VOYPIC, NSPCC and Women's Aid. It is hoped that the findings of the mental health survey will influence the strategic direction of the work of the Safeguarding panel at a local level and help to improve young people's mental health services across the city.

#### **Poverty Campaign**

3.12 The YF launched its 'Poverty: It's not a choice' report in May 2017 and since that time the young people involved have been building allies and presenting their findings to organisations in the public, statutory and voluntary sector including to community planners at Belfast Agenda events and to the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. The YF has arranged a meeting with party leaders in City Hall on 5<sup>th</sup> March to engage with Members

around the recommendations in their report and to explore ways they can work together to push these forward and have them implemented by Council.

### **World Aids Day**

- 3.13 To mark World Aids Day on 29<sup>th</sup> November in City Hall the YF, in partnership with Positive Life NI, organised and ran a young people's event called 'Let's talk about HIV.' Over 80 young people attended and took part in youth-led workshops that included discussions on HIV/AIDS, safe sex and young people's views on the standard of sexual health education they receive. Young people then took part in a question and answer session with decision makers from political parties and the Northern Ireland's Children's Commissioner. Positive Life NI will use the information gathered by young people at the event to inform work on a regional sexual health strategy.

### **Nashville Mayors Youth Council**

- 3.14 In November 2017, members of the YF and the Mayor's Youth Council in Nashville held a meeting via Skype. The meeting was facilitated by Council staff and Brandon Hill, who is a member of staff on the Nashville Youth Council. The meeting was very positive and the agenda (as set by the young people) included
- A summary of both Forums/Councils;
  - Discussion of the work we are each currently involved in;
  - Lobbying and influencing decision makers
  - Representation of both groups
  - Discussion on shared issues including mental health and healthcare provision, policing, youth participation, poverty and votes at 16.

- 3.15 The groups also discussed how they can work together in the future and have committed to having another meeting in Spring 2018 to further this.

### **Ur City 2 Programme 2017/18**

- 3.16 The Ur City 2 programme involves a linked city initiative for children and young people which has been formulated and delivered in conjunction with the fourteen Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships (NRPs) in Belfast. Relatively modest amounts of funding of up to £5,000, are made available to each of the NRPs to enable them to give impetus to programmes or projects that have been identified as priorities within their action plans but for which funding is not otherwise secured. We have rolled out the 17/18 funding to all 14 NRPs and a total of £69,962 was awarded.

3.17

A summary of the current breakdown of grants follows:

**Greater Shankill Partnership - £5,000**

Money used to fund an education programme that will support the transition of P7 children from primary to secondary school and will then follow up with a personal development programme for these children. The programme will be delivered in partnership with Belfast Boys Model and Belfast Model School for Girls and will target children in the BT13 area working to reduce anxiety and increase their readiness to learn.

**East Belfast Community Development Agency - £4,980**

Money used to deliver ten developmental and outreach programmes to children and young people linked to health and well-being, promoting learning, community safety, improving the environment, children's rights, the arts, community pride and contributing to the community.

**Ashton Community Trust - £5,000**

Money used to deliver 9 area wide arts projects to children and young people linked to promoting young people's rights and to improving health and well-being. These arts projects will also help to increase creative skills and access to cultural activity, promoting learning, improving the image of the NRP area, the promotion of health and well-being, and the promotion of social cohesion and good relations.

**St. Oliver Plunkett F.C - £5,000**

Money will be used to deliver a series of community wide developmental programmes including Halloween and Christmas events, healthy living programmes, a soccer festival and the development of a community garden that will also be used as an outdoor classroom for local primary school children.

**Greater Village Regeneration Trust - £5,000**

Money will be used to deliver a number of community wide developmental projects to children and young people. These include health and well-being programmes (fitness classes and healthy eating) and mindfulness workshops.

**Ligoniel Improvement Association - £4982**

Money will be used to deliver to children and young people a variety of Halloween and Christmas themed events to promote intergenerational practice, community engagement and participation and healthy lifestyles. The projects will also tackle the isolation that children and young people from the community often feel as a result of living in an area on the

outskirts of Belfast.

**Upper Andersonstown Community Forum - £5,000**

Money will be used to deliver a range of activities linked to promoting health and well-being, and emotional resilience including boxing programme for boys and girls, a 'Cook It' programme in primary schools, swimming lessons, a couch to 5k programme and a music programme.

**Upper Springfield Resource Centre - £5,000**

Money will be used to deliver to children and young people a variety of Summer, Halloween and Christmas themed events to promote intergenerational practice, community engagement and participation, healthy lifestyles, and building civic pride and to combat social deprivation and isolation.

**Blackie River Community Group- £5,000**

The money will be used to fund a literacy programme for newcomer children for whom English is a second language as well as nursery school children at the early stages of reading. The money will also be used to fund after schools sports coaching for primary school children in order to reduce health inequalities and improve the physical, mental and emotional health of children.

**Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group- £5,000**

The money will be used to complete a youth led audit of existing youth services in the NRP area and to create a Youth Action plan and a framework for the establishment of an inner south youth forum.

**Ardoyne Youth Enterprises- £5,000**

The money will be used to fund a cross community Valentine's Day themed event that young people will plan and deliver in partnership with each other. Ten young people will also be trained in digital camera skills to film the event and edit and produce a film.

**Benview Community Centre- £5,000**

The money will be used to fund five youth development programmes in the area linked to promoting self-awareness, identity, reaching full potential, being healthy and skills and knowledge development.

**Colin Neighbourhood Partnership- £5,000**

	<p>The money will be used to deliver a cross community music programme called ‘Crescendo’ in two primary schools. The programme will be run in partnership with the Ulster Orchestra and will help promote community cohesion, community engagement and participation, healthy lifestyles, and building civic pride.</p> <p><b>Tullycarnet Neighbourhood Collective- £5,000</b></p> <p>The money will be used to deliver to children and young people a variety of Halloween and Christmas themed events, a youth engagement programme for young people currently not engaged in youth provision and a young people’s community newsletter that will all help promote active citizenship, learning, achieving and contributing positively to the community.</p> <p>Applications for the 2018 Ur City 2 monies are expected to open in June 2018.</p> <p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no resource implications at this time.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations implications to consider at this time.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	N/A