



Subject:	Response from Department of Health - Permanent Secretary re: Request to attend Committee
Date:	26th January, 2021
Reporting Officer:	Sara Steele, Democratic Services Officer
Contact Officer:	Sara Steele, Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime 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 note the response from the DoH Permanent Secretary in response to an invitation to attend a meeting of the People and Communities Committee.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the response.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Committee will recall that at its meeting on 20th October it was agreed that letters be forwarded to the Permanent Secretaries of both the Department of Health and Department of Education seeking a joint meeting to discuss its “Any Use?” Relationship and Sexual Education Campaign report and its “Elephant in the Room” Mental Health Campaign.

3.2	It was agreed also that representatives of the Public Health Agency would be invited to the meeting.
3.3	A response has now been received from the Permanent Secretary, Richard Pengelly, a copy of which is attached.
3.4	Mr. Pengelly referred to the current pressures on the Health Service as a result of the ongoing pandemic and detailed that as a result the Department was currently focusing on a number of other urgent health issues and respectively declined the invitation to attend.
3.5	<p>He also noted that the Department of Health had already extensively engaged with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum on these matters and suggested that, as the Department did not directly commission Relationship and Sexual Education (RSE), it might be more appropriate for the report to be further discussed with the Public Health Agency, who currently commission RSE in two ways: training of teachers to deliver RSE; and funding of voluntary sector providers to deliver RSE in community settings.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.6	<p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p>
3.7	None associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Copy of response from the Permanent Secretary.