

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
SUBJECT:	CHILD FRIENDLY CITY
DATE OF DECISION:	25 MARCH 2021
REPORT OF:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN AND LEARNING

<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

BRIEF SUMMARY

Southampton's vision has been to become a Child Friendly City since 2018. Southampton launched this ambition as part of its Year of the Child 2020, which although limited by the impact of the pandemic, continues to set the objectives that will help the city achieve Child Friendly status (whether self-declared or accredited). This paper sets out how the Child Friendly Vision is being developed and the Scrutiny Panel are invited to comment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	That progress be noted.
	(ii)	That a further briefing is scheduled.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	Southampton City Council is committed to be being a Child Friendly City by 2025 and it is an ambition that we have remained committed to, despite the pandemic. More so than ever we need a clear vision for our children and families within the city as we address the key challenges of poverty, equality and climate change.
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ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2.	Description	Pro's/Con's
	Self-Declared status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The aims of the project can be achieved without the UNICEF costs. There will be no formal acknowledgement of the city's status.

	Do nothing, defer or abandon ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Option has no resource implications • Resources will continue to deliver other statutory duties and BAU • Child Friendly is considered the preferred approach to improving outcomes for children by the Service and Cabinet Member.
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DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3.	<p>Child Friendly Cities such as Bristol, Leeds and Hull have proven to be cities that successfully bring everyone together, extend partnerships to local businesses, the voluntary, community and faith sectors; places of learning – schools, further education and universities and of course children and families themselves. There is a strong correlation with sustainable and greener planning, social justice and culture. Southampton’s approach has been to take a lead from Child Friendly Leeds, where the programme has been running since 2011. Our Values as a Child Friendly City have thus far been promoted as being to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be Inclusive – by becoming a participative city in which children experience meaningful engagement in the design, delivery and place shaping of Southampton. • Listen – by implementing a participation framework for children within Southampton City Council’s democratic processes within which consultation with children takes place. • Learn - by ensuring all strategy and policy are informed by the active engagement of children, with new strategic commitments expressed in child friendly terms that support children’s inclusion and participation in civic policy creation.
4.	<p>Several programmes of consultation and research are already planned and the city of Southampton is host to some innovative concepts such as ‘Metamorphosis’ (Play Streets), Connecting Cultures (University of Southampton including Cultural Services and Children’s Services), the Local Plan and Green City consultation and the inquiry into childhood obesity (Public Health). Southampton is connected to a range of experts who are predisposed to target their research to the city, including the University of Southampton and other Child Friendly experts already invested in activity such as Child Friendly Streets (Metamorphosis) with strong links into other European cities.</p>
5.	<p>Southampton has the potential to achieve accreditation as a Child Friendly City within five years. Accreditation would require the city to reframe local policy setting with regard to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, with particular reference to Article 12 (respect for the views of the child), thus ensuring that the rights of children are assessed as a protected characteristic. The accreditation team will help city leaders understand the implications and benefits of taking this approach.</p>
6.	<p>Several Child Friendly cities have opted to not seek accreditation but have become self-declared Child Friendly City’s such as Leeds and Hull. Others such as Bristol are active members of a European Network of Child Friendly cities.</p>

7.	However, Child Friendly Cities have been able to galvanise local action to include business investment in activity that is of benefit to children. Child Friendly status also catalyses funding bids that can bring in additional investment via charitable foundations or government funded programmes.		
8.	At present only seven local authorities have achieved UNICEF Accreditation, including Liverpool, with none in the South East and South West region of England. As a city with international aspirations there is a strong case for becoming the first city on the South Coast, aligning to the city's City of Culture bid and sustainability ambition.		
9.	Becoming an accredited Child Friendly City would commit Southampton to undertake a review of existing policy to ensure compliance with the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI) Framework, principally goals 1 and 2. The CFCI Framework sets out the standards and expectation for achieving accreditation and the evidence needed to become a Child Friendly City.		
Goal 1	Children's participation: Promoting children's active involvement in issues that affect them; listening to their views and taking them into consideration in decision-making processes	Core Components Child rights policy and legal frameworks at municipal level	
Goal 2	A child-friendly legal framework: Ensuring legislation, regulatory frameworks and procedures that consistently promote and protect the rights of all children.	Making child rights known and understood by adults and children	
https://downloads.unicef.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/UNCRC_summary-1_1.pdf?_ga=2.99864990.1233490428.1581959216-1323452066.1581959216			
10.	A number of service areas are supportive of plans to work towards a Child Friendly Southampton and have been expanding their participative initiatives to support children and young people; these include a number of high-level academic input from the University of Southampton (Metamorphosis) and University of Roehampton (Early Years). These are described below:		
Service Area Cultural Services	Participative Framework Connecting Cultures	Connected Strategies/Activity Cultural Education Partnership, City of Culture 2025	Lead Officers Carolyn Abel, Head of Service, SCC Claire Whitaker, City of Culture Bid Director Louise Coysh, University of Southampton

	Stronger Communities	Youth Council, Youth Forum, Children's Mayor Member of Youth Parliament	Participation Plan, active in sport and cultural education partnership Make Your Mark	Steve Smith, Head of Service, SCC Hayden Collins, SCC
	Children's Services	Pledge to Care, Experienced Children and Young People Inclusion Charter Restorative Charter	Bright Spots, Mind of My Own, Language that Cares Children in Care Council Chatter that Matters Working with Families Group	Phil Bullingham, Head of Service, SCC Sallie White, SCC Pippa Cook, SEND Strategic Review Manager Stuart Webb, Service Manager
	Green City and Infrastructure	Green City Youth Assembly, Play Streets	Green City Plan, Metamorphosis Green City Plan	Pete Boustred, Head of Service, SCC Neil Tuck. SCC Carolyn Ireland, SCC Alan Wong, University of Southampton
	Planning & Economic Development	City Vision consultation with children	Local Plan	Paul Barton, Head of Service, SCC Helen Owens, Engagement Specialist

11. The benefits of further investment in accreditation are not all financial and include the following outputs:
- Better coordination of engagement resources
 - Strengthened partnership resource, inclusive of child and young people focused activity,
 - Increased business engagement with contributions of both in kind and cashable resource, albeit not necessarily secured as revenue
 - Consistent engagement with partnership activity such as CEP, public health initiatives, with schools
 - Leaner capacity to respond to and deliver short time programmes such as Euro 2021
 - Achievement of goal one and two as part of the CFCI framework.

12. The programme of activity will begin in April 2021 with the accreditation process likely to begin as soon as lockdown restrictions are lifted (summer 2021).

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

13. Accreditation requires a financial investment of up to 30K per year, for five years (a total of £150k), which includes membership fees and internal budgets. The

	<p>final amount is dependent on city population size. This investment would ensure Southampton receives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 days of support from the UNICEF team – this is broken down into 20 days behind the scenes project support and 10 days per year visiting the city (annually over five years). • This includes stakeholder engagement, partnership workshops and audit of local participation processes and procedures. • Membership covers the cost of the programme, which is not profit-making. • Official accreditation from an external organisation to fully confirm our status – this is a journey which an independent board will judge whether we have been successful. • A dedicated officer to help push and liaise Southampton’s programme. <p>This budget has been agreed. An additional £5k per annum has also been agreed for publicity and events.</p>
14.	<p>Additionally, the Executive Management Team have agreed a dedicated internal resource (costing £47k per year; £237.5k total) who will act as a single point of contact. They will assist with the coordination of activity, ensure information is cascaded throughout stakeholder networks and act as a catalyst to galvanise cross sector interest (including from business) in the Child Friendly programme. This person would work directly with the Executive Director of Children’s and Learning, Senior Leadership Team and service areas supporting child friendly activities such as the Cultural Education Partnership, Participation Team and Active Transport. The Stronger Communities Service is recruiting two young people as apprentices, to support participation, who are expected to be able to engage in this area of work, ensuring young people’s perspectives are embedded within our cross-service activity.</p>
15.	<p>The total cost of the project per annum is £84.3k for 5 years.</p>
<p><u>Property/Other</u></p>	
16.	<p>None at this stage</p>
<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>	
<p><u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u></p>	
17.	<p>S.111 Local Government Act 1972</p>
<p><u>Other Legal Implications:</u></p>	
18.	<p>None</p>
<p>RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS</p>	
19.	<p>The primary risks are largely reputational in terms of not progressing with an ambition that has been set as a political priority for the local authority. The risks are mitigated by the support that has been agreed by the Council’s Executive Management Team.</p>
<p>POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS</p>	
20.	<p>The Corporate Plan 2020 sets out the following regarding the wellbeing of children in the city:</p>

<p>“Working with partners to deliver the ambitions set out in the five-year Health and Wellbeing Strategy, this area looks at wellbeing across the city, with a focus on adults and children’s social care, education and public health. We work closely with partners to help safeguard vulnerable people across the city. We are focused on delivering strong customer experience across the Adults and Children & Families services. We want Southampton to be a city that is recognised for its proactive approach to preventing problems and intervening early, as well being a ‘Child Friendly City’ where children and young people have great opportunities and an aspiration to achieve. We want our residents to have the information and support they need to lead safe, active, healthy lives and to be able to live independently for longer.”</p>

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	All
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	None

Documents in Members’ Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out?	No
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Data Protection Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out?	No
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Other Background Documents

Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None