

DECISION-MAKER:	CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL		
SUBJECT:	CHILD FRIENDLY CITY - UPDATE		
DATE OF DECISION:	25 NOVEMBER 2021		
REPORT OF:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN AND LEARNING		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
None
BRIEF SUMMARY
Southampton City Council has been exploring the potential to become a Child Friendly City since 2017 following the launch of its Restorative Charter in November 2017. The initiative has had the support of both the current and previous administration which has incorporated the initiative into the new Corporate Plan for 2021 to 2025.
By working with Child Friendly Cities such as Leeds and Bristol, Southampton City Council has explored a number of options that can be achieved here in Southampton. This has included the possibility of seeking accreditation from UNICEF to join an international programme of Child Friendly Cities.
Responsibility for pursuing a Child Friendly City was absorbed into the new Stronger Communities Team in April 2020. This will be led by the Participation Team within Stronger Communities working collaboratively with Children’s and Learning Service, schools and early years settings.
On 21 st July 2021 the Corporate Plan for 2021 to 2025 was approved at full council which set the objective to ‘Achieve our ambition to become a UNICEF Child Friendly City by 2024/25’.
The Corporate Plan sets the following milestones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance onto accreditation programme by Autumn 2021 • Install first children’s mayor by May 2022 • New programmes of support and engagement involving children and young people by March 2022 • Rights of children enshrined in local policy making and scrutiny processes by 2024.

The ambition aligns well with our ambition to become UK City of Culture; the Children and Learning Service Improvement Plan (post-Ofsted Inspections in 2019 and 2021) and the refreshed Children and Young People's Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

	(i)	That the Panel considers and notes this report.
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REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1.	The Chair requested that the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel receives an update on Child Friendly Southampton.
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ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2.	Not Seeking Accreditation: Although this is not our preferred option, should Southampton be unsuccessful in gaining entry to the accreditation programme, the city is at liberty to declare Child Friendly status, pursuant to the same goals and objectives.
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DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3.	The Stronger Communities Team is currently working with UNICEF as an applicant city to join the programme. Success in joining the programme would mean Southampton becomes the first South Coast City in the UK to join the programme along with Aberdeen, Derry & Strabane, Cardiff, Barnet, Redbridge, and Liverpool. Southampton's ambition is to become the seventh city to join the programme.
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4.	<p>A number of local partners have stepped forward to support the expression of interest and will be the cities primary champions who will promote and launch the scheme. In addition, a number of stakeholders have expressed an interest in becoming ambassadors for the scheme. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southampton Football Club/Saints Foundation, • No Limits, • Solent NHS Trust, • GO! Southampton Business Improvement District, • John Hansard Gallery • The Mayflower Theatre Trust.
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5.	<p>An internal Executive Steering Group has been established, chaired by the Executive Director for Children and Learning, inclusive of representation from the following teams, who as internal stakeholders have been invested in supporting our ambition to become a Child Friendly City:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junior Neighbourhood Wardens (Housing) • Public Health (Tackling Childhood Obesity) • Cultural Services (City of Culture/Cultural Education Partnership) • Transport (Metamorphosis, Child Friendly Streets, Playing Out) • Urban Design and Planning • Children and Learning • Green City • Strategic Skills
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6.	UNICEF pre-requisites for joining the programme include investment in a dedicated role to lead the programme, supported by a clear political determination to support and achieve this ambition.
7.	Joining the programme will support us in achieving our vision for children and provides a clear framework to deliver improved outcomes for children. Southampton has a strong foundation upon which to build success with our Local Strategic Partnership, Southampton Connect, (representing all our key partners including business), demonstrating a commitment to support the child friendly ambition – this is articulated in the five-year Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Children and Young People’s Strategy currently out to consultation. The ambition is also a headline of Southampton City Council’s Corporate Plan 2021-25.
8.	<p>Our key priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hear the voices of children, families, and communities on an individual basis but also on all key decisions within the city. • To develop strong pathways for education, training and employment and post 16 education and learning pathways leading, to skilled and meaningful work in our growing economy. • To keep children safe, tackling domestic abuse, youth crime and all forms of exploitation. • To support young people with emotional and mental health issues and ensuring we provide environments where young people can talk and get the support they need. <p>To ensure that as a city of culture, children are at its core, and we continue to develop and build on our initiatives for children to engage in a range of cultural activities.</p>
9.	The UNICEF programme will support Southampton City Council and its partners through a three-stage process of Discovery, Development and Implementation.
10.	<p>A programme of Discovery and Development with UNICEF will start following the submission of Southampton’s expression of interest (EOI) and this is scheduled in November 2021. This will be the platform for a timetable of events over the next 12 months starting with:</p> <p>An initial meeting with UNICEF to review Southampton’s application involving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those involved in creating the EOI • Elected Members • Key stakeholders <p>A UNICEF Panel will meet to decide on Southampton’s inclusion on the programme as a candidate city (expected February 2022).</p> <p>If successful Southampton will be supported by UNICEF as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction meeting for Coordinator (assigned a UNICEF liaison) • A Discovery day involving outreach and data gathering / situation analysis) • A Survey with professionals • Focus groups with Children and Young People • Meetings with data team to look at current CYP data.

11.	<p>Southampton will be invited to select 6 badges for award that will form the basis of an action plan. The 6 badges should be chosen based on best evidence and will be chosen by the Cabinet.</p> <p>There are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory badges: – Culture / Communication / Co-operation and Leadership • Three selected from: – Safe and secure / Flourishing / Education and Learning / Participating / Child-Friendly services / Place / Family and Belonging / Heathy / Equal and Included / Innovation <p>The Action plan must be in place' for a minimum of 2 years before recognition by UNICEF is given.</p>
12.	<p>Other points to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst all Child Friendly activity is encouraged, UNICEF expect applicant cities to first focus on activity that will be recognised under the badge scheme. • There are currently no cities that have been given recognition but four are expected to be, by 2023. • We are exploring the potential to partner with other cities in the international network of accredited cities, including cities in Poland. • Contact has already been made with Cardiff and Barnet to support peer learning, with close connections maintained with other Child Friendly Cities: Leeds and Bristol.
13.	<p>Other key milestones that support our ambition include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The launch of Southampton's first Children's Mayor (begun) • The relaunch of Southampton's Youth Council involving representative groups of children and young people across the city.
14.	<p>A launch for Child Friendly City is not likely to be possible until after UNICEF has met to agree the city's inclusion on the programme; expected to be February 2022. Our ambition is also closely aligned to the city's bid to be the next UK City of Culture in 2025, which will place children at the heart of our programme, through the Southampton Cultural Education Partnership and the partnering of schools and a number of youth initiatives within the cultural sector.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Capital/Revenue</u>	
15.	<p>Accreditation to the programme is likely to be on a pro-rata basis determined by City size estimated to be £35,000 per annum which is within the allocated budget for the programme, confirmed with finance. A full time Child Friendly Project Officer has been appointed to steer the programme.</p>
<u>Property/Other</u>	
16.	None
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
<u>Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:</u>	
17.	None
<u>Other Legal Implications:</u>	

18.	The inclusion of, or reference to children's rights into Southampton City Council legal processes can only be understood in full once a successful applicant to the programme and gaps or areas of development can be identified by UNICEF.
19.	These are likely to require some review and internal adjustments once understood.
RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS	
20.	The proposals are included with the current Corporate Plan for 2021-2025. If not accepted to the programme the city can proceed as a self-declared Child Friendly City if it wishes, modelling areas such as Leeds, Hull and Bristol who have done so. A decision to continue will need to be taken at the time.
POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS	
21.	The process of ensuring that children's rights are embedded in local processes will require some further work to understand the implications within our constitutional and legal frameworks.

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	UNICEF UK CFC Participation Criteria

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