

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 29 February 2024

Report Title

Children’s Capital of Culture 2025 – Young Producer Programme

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Officer Approving Submission of the Report

Polly Hamilton, Assistant Director, Culture, Sport & Tourism

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

In 2025 Rotherham will become the world’s first Children’s Capital of Culture. Children’s Capital of Culture is a title bestowed upon Rotherham by its children and young people. It was devised by them as a way to change the narrative about their hometown and create positive opportunities for children and young people across the borough.

The initiative has resulted in the creation of employment and training opportunities in the cultural and creative industries and health and wellbeing programmes that have supported children and young people from 2022 onwards, before culminating in a year-long festival in 2025 that will celebrate the talent and creativity of young people in Rotherham.

This report details the progress and impacts made to date regarding the Children’s Capital of Culture 2025 traineeship programme, and makes recommendations for additional investment in the flagship Young Producer Programme.

Recommendations

1. That the progress to date is noted.

2. That the proposed route for awarding funding to organisations who will host trainees, for the purpose of covering the costs associated with each placement, is approved.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Equalities Impact Screening & Assessment (Part A & Part B)
Appendix 2 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

N/A

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Name of Committee – [Click here to enter a date.](#)

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Children’s Capital of Culture 2025 – Traineeship Programme

1. Background

- 1.1 In 2025 Rotherham will become the world’s first Children’s Capital of Culture. Children’s Capital of Culture is a title bestowed upon Rotherham by its children and young people. It was devised by them as a way to change the narrative about their hometown and create positive opportunities for children and young people across the borough.
- 1.2 The initiative has resulted in the creation of employment and training opportunities in the cultural and creative industries and health and wellbeing programmes that have supported children and young people from 2022 onwards, before culminating in a year-long festival in 2025 that will celebrate the talent and creativity of young people in Rotherham.
- 1.3 The initiative will be facilitated by the Council but delivered by a partnership of cultural organisations who will co-produce a year-long celebration of Rotherham with children and young people from across the borough.

2. Key Issues

2.1 Programme Delivery and Impact to Date

- 2.1.1 The delivery of the Children’s Capital of Culture initiative is split into four chapters:
 - Chapter 1: Starting the Conversation, delivered from August 2021 through to December 2022
 - Chapter 2: Taking Shape, delivered from January 2023 through to December 2024
 - Chapter 3: Festival Year, delivered throughout 2025
 - Chapter 4: Keeping Momentum, delivered from 2026 onwards
- 2.1.2 Chapter 1: Starting the Conversation
Launching publicly in February 2022 following six months of consultation and engagement, Children’s Capital of Culture spent 18 months connecting with children and young people from across the borough, undertook an intensive skills and talent development R&D programme and delivered a series of high-profile public events that achieved:
 - Over 99,000 participations by children, young people, and their parents and carers in Children’s Capital of Culture activities
 - Supporting 57 young people employed part-time as Trainee Creative Producers; 14 of these trainees were care experienced
 - Three months after the traineeships were completed, over 70% of the young people had gone into further work or education
 - Working with 57 schools and colleges: 54% of these were from Rotherham, 32% were from the rest of South Yorkshire, and 14% were from other locations

- Working with 340 artists and organisations to make these activities happen: 30% of these artists and organisations were from Rotherham, 40% were from the rest of South Yorkshire, and 30% were from other locations
- Featuring in 86 positive stories in media titles including ITV Calendar News, Yorkshire Post, Rotherham Advertiser, Sheffield Star and BBC Radio Sheffield
- 86 children and 39 adults took part in 10 'Go See' visits to creative destinations across the North
- 61 young people achieved their Bronze Arts Award, and 50 marginalised young people took part in a targeted programme of workshops

2.1.3 As part of this first chapter an ambitious pilot programme to support young people aged 16-25 to access training and employment in cultural and creative industries was developed. The programme was funded by the government's UK Community Renewal Fund which was the pilot for UK Shared Prosperity Fund. A consortium of nine partners came together under the Children's Capital of Culture brand to develop a traineeship scheme for Young Producers that saw 57 young people aged 16-25 placed with seven creative organisations, each given a budget to create a unique cultural event or experience. The programme was supported by informal and formal training opportunities in vocational skills such as First Aid, CV writing and media training.

2.1.4 An independent evaluation of the UK Community Renewal Funded pilot of the Young Producer scheme found:

- The programme successfully provided multiple and rich opportunities for 57 young people to gain work experience and skills for progression to work within the creative industries sector.
- Of the 57 trainees 14 were Care Experienced and the programme gave host organisations training and support in this area via Affinity CIC, building knowledge and capacity in these organisations as well as empathy for care leavers.
- The programme was a catalyst for change, developing civic pride and a perception of Rotherham as an active, creative and cultural place.
- It built the capacity of nine strategic partners to support the development of a future creative and cultural workforce for Rotherham.
- New financial investment to the borough was secured which enabled organisation to capacity build and young people to be paid fairly for their work.
- New inclusive and accessible approaches to recruitment and employment practice were developed that yielded higher levels of interest from young people when compared to similar schemes such as the Kick Start programme.
- Over 70% of those who took part in the Young Producer Traineeships went on to further employment or training in the local economy.

2.1.5 Chapter 2: Taking Shape

Following the recommendations made in both the Chapter 1 and the specific Young Producer evaluations, an updated Manifesto was created and launched in January 2023 which set out key targets and outputs for the next two years of development, including:

- Run activities with 250,000 participants including children, young people, their parents and carers and wider communities
- Place 12 projects for the 2025 programme into R&D
- Build partnerships with at least 25 schools – one in each ward in the borough
- Train and mentor at least 10 Young Artists in Residence
- Work with 450 artists and organisations, 30% of which will be Rotherham based
- Create 10 new creative experiences with children and young people for everyone in Rotherham to enjoy
- Recruit at least 80 16-to-25-year-olds to work as paid Trainee Young Producers with organisations across the borough
- Support at least 200 young people to achieve Bronze and Silver Arts Award and train 24 Rotherham professionals as Arts Award Advisors
- Organise Go See visits for 20 groups of marginalised children, young people and their families

2.1.6 The team is now twelve months into the delivery of Chapter 2 and has made significant progress towards the delivery of these key targets, with the following achieved in 2023:

- 42,307 participations by children, young people, and their parents and carers in Children’s Capital of Culture activities
- Working with 11 partners to develop 11 programme ideas for 2025
- 6 Young Artists in Residence supported to develop creative skills in areas including music, dance, poetry and graphic design
- Built partnerships with 37 schools across 20 wards
- Worked with 365 artists and organisations, 48% of which have been Rotherham-based
- Delivered 12 new creative experiences with children and young people for everyone in Rotherham to enjoy
- 19 traineeships offered across 4 organisations
- Supported 42 young people to achieve an Arts Award qualification and trained 3 Rotherham professionals as Arts Award Advisors
- Delivered 12 Go See visits for groups of marginalised children, young people and their families including Breakin’ Convention in Nottingham, Bussing Out in Bradford, The Spark Festival in Leicester and Contact Theatre in Manchester

2.1.7 As part of this delivery further funding was secured via the UK Shared Prosperity Programme in 2022/23 to support the continuation and further development of the Young Producer Traineeship programme. This funding enabled placements to take place with the Children’s Capital of Culture Team, Wentworth Woodhouse and Flux Rotherham to develop the scheme further based on feedback from the initial pilot.

2.1.8 On the back of this additional funding has been secured for Year 2 (2023/4) and Year 3 (2024/5) of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, totalling £893,166.

2.2 Proposed Additional Investment into Young Producer Programme

2.2.1 As noted at 2.1.2., Children's Capital of Culture has piloted and rolled out a successful traineeship programme that upskills Rotherham young people, brings additional capacity to local culture, sport, leisure and tourism organisations, and creates a pipeline of talent into the sector. To fulfil our Manifesto targets, Children's Capital of Culture must deliver at least 61 more traineeships during 2024; further traineeships and inclusive skills development opportunities will then be offered during the festival year itself.

2.2.2 Children's Capital of Culture have been allocated a grant from UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) by the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) to support programme delivery until March 2025. In December 2023, SYMCA confirmed that a grant of £266,812 has been allocated to Children's Capital of Culture to be spent in the 2023/24 financial year, and a grant of £626,354 has been allocated to be spent in the 2024/25 financial year.

2.2.3 The grant will predominantly be used to fund the traineeship programme, with £172,557 budgeted to fund the traineeship programme in 2023/24 and £433,040 budgeted to fund the traineeship programme in 2024/25. The remainder will be used to fund some of Children's Capital of Culture's core operating costs, including evaluation, marketing, creative programming, and the Engagement Manager's salary cost.

2.2.4 To allocate the 2023/24 traineeship programme funds, an open call for Trainee Hosts was issued. This was intended to grow and diversify the number of businesses and organisations who could host trainees and become project partners. The intention was also to ensure that a transparent and equitable competitive process was used. Promotional materials were created, which were widely and openly shared across social media, on the Children's Capital of Culture website, and through key local and regional business and cultural networks. This communications campaign was intended to raise awareness of the hosting opportunities to a wide range of organisations, and support them to apply. Hosts had to be based within the South Yorkshire region and their proposed activities must take place in Rotherham.

2.2.5 Host organisations could also choose to apply for an additional creative programming budget of between £10,000 to £25,000, which would fund creative, cultural, and sports/physical activities taking place in the borough for communities to participate in, for free. Organisations who applied for a creative programming budget had to provide 10% match (cash or in-kind). This requirement ensured that all UKSPF funding was used solely to support the career pathways of young people from Rotherham, and to fund a high-quality, borough-wide arts, culture, and community engagement programme. Organisations applying to become trainee hosts were required to evidence due diligence through sharing their safeguarding, information governance and

data protection, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and health and safety policies, and their public liability insurance, as part of the application process.

- 2.2.6 12 organisations applied to the open call-out for trainee hosts, proposing 30 potential roles which would have cost £682,653.20 (including creative programming allocations) if they were all funded.
- 2.2.7 An independent selection panel of eight consultees, which included current and former trainees, reviewed the 12 applications and made recommendations to the Children’s Capital of Culture Programme Manager. The Programme Manager used these recommendations to model a proposed allocation of the 2023/24 funding, which was reviewed and approved by the Head of Service and the Assistant Director for Culture, Sport and Tourism.
- 2.2.8 Allocations in the 2023/24 round of funding were provisionally awarded to four applicants, to be confirmed following full completion of all Council procurement processes. These awardees are:
- Clifton Park Museum
 - Flux Rotherham
 - Grimm & Co
 - Sheffield DocFest.
 - Skill Street at Gulliver’s Valley
 - Rotherham United Community Trust
- The details of these proposed awardees have been shared with and approved by SYMCA.
- 2.2.9 The organisations who have been provisionally awarded funding allocations all submitted high-quality applications that demonstrated a track record of successfully training and developing young employees, that outlined a clear plan to develop and deliver impactful public events in Rotherham with the central support of the Children’s Capital of Culture team, and that showed robust due diligence.
- 2.2.10 A full breakdown of the proposed trainee workplans and associated costs are as follows:

Proposed allocation of 2023/24 traineeship funding:			
Organisation title:	Trainee salary allocation:	Creative programming allocation:	Trainee workplan:
Clifton Park Museum	£23,358.40	£0	2 x trainees on 0.4FTE contracts for six months, working to support the development and delivery of the Collections team and the Family Learning team. 1 x trainee on a 0.4FTE contract for twelve months, supporting the Archives team to make digital records

			more accessible to the public, create exhibitions and events, and actively collect records from the Children's Capital of Culture project.
Flux Rotherham	£53,173.80	£10,000	2 x trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 12 months, supporting the planning and delivery of a wide array of community festivals and events across the borough. 1 x 'alumni' trainee on a 0.6FTE contract for 12 months, focusing on community engagement.
Grimm & Co.	£35,037.60	£15,000	2 x trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 12 months, supporting the planning and delivery of a wide array of literary-related workshops, events and festivals, including supporting a town centre-wide Story Festival.
Sheffield Doc/Fest	£35,037.60	£10,000	2 x trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 12 months, gaining experience of working on a large-scale international festival before planning and delivering a community film screening programme across the Rotherham borough.
Skill Street at Gulliver's Valley	£35,037.60	£10,000	2 x trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 12 months, supporting the development, launch and delivery of Skill Street, with a core focus on increasing access to SEND children and young people.
Rotherham United Community Trust	£23,358.30	£15,000	2 x trainees on 0.4FTE contracts for 12 months, who will plan, develop and deliver an inclusive creative programme for matchday attendees, and support core delivery across the organisation's Youth & Inclusion and Health & wellbeing teams.

Total allocation:	£205,003.30	£60,000	£265,003.30
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- 2.2.11 The allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Fund for 2023/4 is £266,812 with £265,003 allocated in this round of recruitment which will be allocated to the partners above under a Partnership Agreement. The remaining will be rolled forward into next financial year.
- 2.2.12 The Programme Manager has contacted all unsuccessful applicants to offer to support them to resubmit applications to future funding rounds from the 2024/25 UKSPF allocation, and to access alternative funding routes for running their own traineeship programmes.
- 2.2.13 Inclusive skills and talent development is a core aim of the Children’s Capital of Culture, and the traineeships programme plays a vital role in the employment, education and training of local young people, and in supporting local businesses and the Rotherham economy.
- 2.2.14 This report recommends that:
- the 2023-24 funding allocations are approved.
 - The decision-making process for future rounds is strengthened by early publication of the application process and deadlines plus the involvement of an independent education or business sector representative to support decision-making.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Do nothing – failing to allocate the UKSPF funding to trainee host organisations using an open and competitive process would mean Children’s Capital of Culture is unable to fulfil its agreement around the purpose and timescales of spending this funding. This would be a substantial reputation risk for the Council and its partners, and may mean that the UKSPF grant is withdrawn and that the Council is unable to access future rounds of funding allocated through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.
- 3.2 Adoption of the proposal outlined above – The above proposal enables six organisations to provide paid, part-time employment to 14 x 16-to-25-year-olds from Rotherham, and to run a public-facing activity programme across the borough that is predicted to reach at least 35,000 people.
- 3.3 It is recommended that the proposal for investment from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and associated selection and allocation process as outlined above is supported.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 With specific regard to the allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Fund to trainee host organisations, consultation has taken place with the Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion alongside the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy. Further consultation was undertaken with key external partners who were involved in delivering and evaluating the traineeship programme during 2022 and 2023, including the Children’s Capital of Culture external evaluator, Dr Becky Parry, and previous host organisations. All are supportive of the proposal outlined above.
- 4.2 Extensive consultation regarding the broader Children’s Capital of Culture programme has been undertaken with children, young people and adults in their lives. The first stage of the programme, Chapter 1: Starting a Conversation, undertook consultation with more than 1,300 children, young people and adults. This consultation was in the form of in-depth workshops and discussions held in schools, at public events, and in community settings providing youth provision. The aim of the consultation was to understand children and young people’s perspectives about Children’s Capital of Culture, how they feel about the concept four years on from its initial inception, and what aspirations they have for the programme, and begin to build a series of themes that they would like to celebrate or explore as part of the programme.
- 4.3 The consultation revealed a desire for the following:
- A wide variety of cultural events and activities ensuring that people feel there is ‘something to do’ in Rotherham
 - A cinema was a key ask from many young people, which will be realised as part of Forge Island developments
 - Greater access to high-quality training and employment opportunities for young people, including more access to paid work for young people within the borough’s creative and cultural industries
 - Greater access to different sports and physical activity
 - Celebration of nature and green spaces including playgrounds, skateparks and AstroTurf pitches
 - Safe spaces for difficult conversations e.g., around gender diversity, safety in public spaces, and better quality-built environments
 - A strong desire to ensure that young people can become decision makers and co-deliverers, and that this is maintained and central to the delivery of the programme

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Investment is requested from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/5.
- 5.2 The service will report on the financial management of the programme through the Council’s monthly financial monitoring systems. The programme will be delivered via a Delivery Partnership with the service reporting to the Cultural Partnership Board.

A Partnership Agreement is in place between SYMCA and the Council to manage the funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Additional Partnership Agreements will be in place between RMBC and each host organisation.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The Council has successfully secured £893,166 UKSPF revenue grant funding from SYMCA over 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years, to support the delivery of the programme outlined in this report. The Council will ensure that the grant is spent in line with the grant terms and conditions, and reported through the Council's budget monitoring processes.
- 6.2 The arrangements to be entered into with the host organisations fall within the realm of grant arrangements and therefore outside the scope of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The application for and receipt of grant funding from SYMCA in the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25, together with compliance with the grant terms and conditions, reporting and monitoring arrangements are in accordance with Rule 14 of the Council's Financial, Procurement Procedure Rules.
- 7.2 The grant arrangements with the host organisations are outside the scope of the Public Contract Regulations 2015, and the call for competition and evaluation procedures adopted comply with Rule 12 of the Council's Financial, Procurement and Procedure Rules. Legal Services should be consulted on the form of grants to host organisations.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 No HR implications in relation to the traineeships and the external organisations, however where a trainee may be appointed into RMBC (Clifton Museum) RMBC recruitment procedures should apply.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 Children, young people and the adults in their lives have been considered at all stages of the design and development process to date. Children's Capital of Culture is a programme that is designed and delivered through co-production with children and young people, investing the skills and talent development required for groups to actively participate in all levels of the programme from decision making to front-line delivery.
- 9.2 This programme has the potential to improve the individual life chances of children and young people across the borough, including those from marginalised backgrounds or with complex needs such as care experienced young people, children with SEN requirements and young carers. The traineeship programme uses an innovative, creative and accessible

application and selection process, which opens up access to careers in the cultural sector to young people who may have barriers to accessing work.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 An Equalities Impact Screening, Assessment and Action Plan has been completed for the proposed guidance and can be found at Appendix 1.
- 10.2 Significant work has already been undertaken to ensure that Children's Capital of Culture maintains and embeds its commitment to ensuring the voice, influence and creativity of children and young people is at the heart of this programme. Wide-ranging consultation and engagement has already taken place across the borough, but this must continue to ensure the needs of all children and young people across the borough are heard and met. The funding proposed in this report is vital to ensuring a wider range of access, participation and engagement, with particular reference to those from marginalised backgrounds.
- 10.3 The Equalities Action Plan sets out a series of measures for addressing equality, diversity and inclusion through two key areas:
- Overarching programme activities that are embedded across the programme
 - Specific and targeted activities to address the audience gaps identified in the Equalities Assessment

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 A Carbon Impact Assessment has been completed for this programme and can be found at Appendix 2.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1. Children's Capital of Culture will be delivered in partnership with children and young people and a wide range of cultural and community partners. The delivery partnership for the programme will be managed via the Cultural Partnership Board and supported with a framework of Partnership Agreements to underpin specific elements of programme delivery.
- 12.2 The programme will be facilitated by the Council, and delivered in partnership with a wide range of local organisations. Capacity building in organisations across the sector is required to be ready to deliver Children's Capital of Culture at the scale, quality, and transformative level of ambition as set out in the Rotherham Cultural Strategy.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 **The programme does not have the appropriate levels of staffing and resource** – In order to ensure a good operational foundation as the programme scales up, it is vital to have key staff in place and an operating budget to support these activities. Investment from UKSPF will enable the

Council to provide a high-quality, professional and credible foundation for the programme partners to build on.

- 13.2 **Ability to unlock additional funding** – Funders have indicated a strong desire to back the programme, however many of the funds available require match funding and a demonstration of commitment from the local authority. There is potential to leverage in excess of £10m from these sources which will be lost should the programme disband due to lack of funding and resources. Furthermore, SYMCA have required that at least 80% of the 2023/24 UKSPF grant is spent by March 31st 2024. Failure to comply with this risks losing the grant Children’s Capital of Culture have been allocated, and jeopardises our ability to successfully access future funding through SYMCA.
- 13.3 **Creative partners are not allocated funding** – If the proposed project partners are not allocated funding as outlined above, young people from Rotherham will lose the opportunity to participate in a high-quality traineeship programme, where they will gain vital skills, experience and knowledge while delivering a borough-wide public engagement programme expected to reach audiences of at least 35,000 people.
- 13.4 **A wider range of creative partners are unable to access funding** – the Programme Manager has contacted all unsuccessful applicants to the 2023/24 UKSPF funding round, supporting them to both resubmit to the 2024/25 funding round and to access alternative routes to funding traineeships and other inclusive skills development opportunities. A ‘seeding list’ has been developed, which will ensure that a wide range of organisations across the region are made aware of and given the support to successfully apply to any future funding rounds.

14. Accountable Officers

Leanne Buchan, Head of Creative Programming & Engagement
 Sarah Christie, Programme Manager, Children’s Capital of Culture 2025

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.
Head of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Named officer	Click here to enter a date.

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