

**REPORT AUDIT TRAIL****CONSULTATION**

*This is important as it shows that consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of the report and provides a quick reference point for specific comments, whilst the report will not be publishable if these areas have not been completed by the named persons below. **You must liaise with and receive sign off from the relevant Cabinet Member(s).***

<b>Name/Position</b>	<b>Portfolio/Ward/ Directorate</b>	<b>Date Sent</b>	<b>Date Received</b>	<b>Comments in para:</b>
Councillor Chris Read	Cabinet Member for Leader of the Council	19/06/2025	24/06/2025	No Comments
<i>Andrew Bramidge</i>	Assistant Chief Executive/ Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment	19/06/2025	24/06/2025	No Comments
<i>Chloe Parker, Finance</i>	Finance and Customer Services	06/06/2025	12/06/2025	6.2 The cost of the recommendation within this report is £275,000 and is fully funded from South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
<i>Stuart Fletcher, Legal Services</i>	Legal Services	06/06/2025	20/06/25	7.1 The use of the funding in the way set out in the body of the report is consistent with the terms of the Shared Prosperity Fund and UK Community Renewal Fund and is consistent with previous plans and policies of the Council. Further each of the traineeships as referred to in the report will be compliant with subsidy control requirements.
<i>Helen Rowe, Human Resources</i>	Assistant Chief Executive's Office	06/06/2025	09.06.2025	8.1 Should any Human Resources matters arise from this report the Council will follow due processes.
<i>Karen Middlebrook, Procurement</i>	Finance and Customer Services	06/06/2025	08/06/2025	2.2.10 The Creative Skills Manager will contact all unsuccessful applicants to provide feedback on their submission and offer support to

				<p>access alternative funding routes for running their own traineeship programmes.</p> <p>6.1 As this report proposes the award of grants via Partnership Agreements, there are no direct procurement implications, as grants fall outside the scope of procurement legislation.</p>
Chloe Harrop Equalities	Assistant Chief Executive's Office	19/06/2025	25/06/25	<p>No comments to cabinet report. Comments to appendix 1 part A – Addition to section 2: The 2025-26 programme is a continuation of the 2024-25 programme, and no new equality implications have been identified.</p>
<i>Councillor John Williams</i>	Cabinet Member for Transport, Jobs and the Local Economy	13/06/2025	16/06/2025	<p>2.2.8 What activities will be done in Rotherham with DocFest Sheffield as required by a host organisation to be a part of this traineeship programme? Addition to 2.2.8 - Trainees will then develop their own Rotherham-based screenings programme: selecting films, designing extra community activity such as events, talks, workshops and marketing these events locally. Building on the success of the 2024 Rotherham based programme - Growing Pains.</p>
<i>Councillor Victoria Cusworth</i>	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	13/06/2025		No comments received

<b>REPORT APPROVAL TRACKING</b>			
<b>Equalities</b> Your report will not be authorised for submission to Cabinet by your Strategic Director if you have not undertaken and included an initial equalities screening. All equalities analysis documents should be included as appendices	<b>Initial Screening completed and included with report</b>	Appendix 1 Part A	
	<b>Full Assessment completed and included with report</b>	Appendix 1 Part B	
<b>Climate Impact Assessments</b> Climate Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports. climate Impact Assessments should be sent to <a href="mailto:climate@rotherham.gov.uk">climate@rotherham.gov.uk</a> for feedback prior to your report being sent to your Strategic Director for approval.	Climate Impact Assessment completed and included with report.	Appendix 2	
<b>Background information</b> <b>MANDATORY:</b> Insert headings for a few main <b>public</b> documents you have used or referenced to write this report. This is a legal requirement. For Cabinet reports, <b>insert hyperlinks</b> . Do not list private documents.	RMBC Year Ahead Plan, September 2023/24 Rotherham Cultural Strategy, 2019-2026 Rotherham Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2018-2025 Children’s Capital of Culture Manifesto: Chapter One: Starting the Conversation – 2021 and 2022 Children’s Capital of Culture 2025: Starting the Conversation – Evaluation Report 2021-22		
<b>Appendices</b> If appendices are essential to the understanding of the report, list titles here. Ensure that appendices have proper titles. List any appendices relevant to the decision being taken first with the Equality Analysis documents coming next and the Carbon Impact Assessment being listed as the last Appendix for all reports.	<i>Appendix 1 – Equalities Impact Assessment Part A &amp; Part B</i>  <i>Appendix 2 – Climate Impact Assessment</i>		
<b>Cabinet Member Approval</b> You should retain an email confirming the Cabinet Member approval for your records. Strategic Directors should not authorise reports unless Cabinet Members have given sign off	YES (delete as appropriate)	24/06/25	
<b>Report Authorised by Strategic Director</b>	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.	
<b>Report Authorised for publication by Chief Executive</b>	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.	

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Delegated Officer Decision – 12 June 2025

**Report Title**

Children's Capital of Culture: 2025/26 Traineeship 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

**Assistant Director 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**

This year (2025) Rotherham is 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.

This report details the progress and impacts made to date regarding the Children's Capital of Culture traineeship programme and makes recommendations for additional investment in this flagship 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 trainee placement, is approved.

### **List of Appendices Included**

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

### **Background Papers**

N/A

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None.

### **Council Approval Required**

No

### **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## **Children’s Capital of Culture 2025 – Traineeship Programme**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 This year (2025) Rotherham has 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.
- 1.3 The initiative is facilitated and delivered by the Council, in partnership with a wide range of public, private, and VCS sector organisations who are co-producing the 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 into part-time employment 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, a nationally-accredited qualification, 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 the 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 was given a budget to create a unique cultural event or experience. The programme was supported by both 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 by working in partnership with Affinity CIC; this built 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 organisations 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, which 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 Programme went on to further employment or training in the local economy within three months of completing their traineeships.

### 2.1.5 Chapter 2: Taking Shape

Following the recommendations made in both the Chapter 1 and the specific Young Producer evaluation reports, an updated Children's Capital of Culture 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 following was achieved during Chapter 2 across 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 to support the continuation and further development of the Young Producer Traineeship programme. In 2022/23 (Year 1 of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund), this funding enabled placements to take place with the Children's Capital of Culture team, Wentworth Woodhouse and Flux Rotherham to develop the traineeship scheme further based on feedback from the initial pilot.

- 2.1.8 Additional funding totalling £893,166 was secured for the traineeship programme across Year 2 (2023/24) and Year 3 (2024/25) of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Children's Capital of Culture were allocated this grant from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 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 was 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.
- 2.1.9 The grant was predominantly to be used to fund the traineeship programme, with £172,557 budgeted to fund the traineeship programme in 2023/24 and £433,041 budgeted to fund the traineeship programme in 2024/25. The remaining £287,568 is being 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 In Year 2 the funding initially enabled 14 trainee placements across six organisations – Flux Rotherham, Museum, Arts and Heritage service, Sheffield DocFest, Grimm & Co., Rotherham United Community Trust and Skills Street at Gulliver's Valley – as well as four 'alumni' roles for previous trainees, who were placed across Children's Capital of Culture and Flux Rotherham. Followed by a further eight organisations - Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust, Flux Rotherham, Rotherham Civic Theatre, Hybrid 3 Studios, Rotherham Libraries & Neighbourhoods service, Museum, Arts & Heritage service, NovaCity and RNN Group, hosting 12 trainee or alumni roles between them.

### **2.2.1 Proposed Additional Investment into Traineeship Programme**

Additional funding totalling £275,000 has now been provisionally secured for the continuation of the traineeship programme until March 2026. Children's Capital of Culture were allocated this grant from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund by the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) to support programme delivery.

- 2.2.2 To allocate the 2025/26 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 can host trainees and become Children's Capital of Culture project partners. The intention was also to ensure that a transparent, equitable and competitive process is used for selecting grant recipients. 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 had to take place in Rotherham.

2.2.3 As well as applying for trainee wage costs to be covered, host organisations could also choose to apply for an additional creative programming budget of up to £10,000, 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% cash match. This requirement ensured that all UK Shared Prosperity Fund 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.

2.2.4 25 organisations applied to the open call-out for trainee hosts, proposing 37 potential roles which would have cost £521,811 in trainee salaries and £127,950 in creative programming allocations if they were all fully funded.

2.2.5 An independent selection panel of five consultees, which included four current and former trainees and RiDO's Business Growth Manager, reviewed the 25 applications and made recommendations to the Children's Capital of Culture Creative Skills Manager and Programme Manager. As the number of organisations CCoC can fund is dependent on variables such as number of trainees applied for, length of contract and number of working days, we asked the panel to rank the applications in order of strongest to weakest.

These recommendations were used to model a proposed allocation of the 2025/26 funding, which was reviewed by the Head of Service.

2.2.6 Allocations in the 2025/26 round of funding have been provisionally awarded to eleven successful applicants; these will only be confirmed following full completion of all Council decision-making processes. These provisional awardees are:

- **Affinity 2020 CIC**
- **Hybrid 3 Social Enterprise Ltd**
- **Intrapology Ltd**
- **Grimm & Co.**
- **Wentworth Woodhouse Preservation Trust**
- **RMBC Green Spaces**
- **Skills Street**
- **Sheffield DocFest**
- **RMBC Rotherham Museums, Arts & Heritage**
- **Rotherham United Community Trust**
- **Hopian**

2.2.7 There were 14 unsuccessful applicants and feedback will be shared with them after the call in period.

2.2.7 The organisations who have been provisionally awarded funding allocations all submitted high-quality applications that clearly aligned with CCoC aims, 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.

2.2.8 A full breakdown of the proposed trainee workplans and associated costs are as follows:

<b>Proposed allocation of 2025/26 traineeship funding:</b>			
<b>Organisation title and description:</b>	<b>Trainee salary allocation:</b>	<b>Creative programming allocation:</b>	<b>Trainee workplan:</b>
<b>Affinity 2020 CIC</b> The Work & Enterprise Institute at Affinity 2020 CIC is a specialist college for young people who are care experienced with an Educational Health and Care Plan.	£25,336	£5,500	2 x trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 8-months who will use their own lived experience to create an arts and cultural programme specifically for care-experienced community, raising awareness about the town, its heritage, assets, job opportunities, especially in the sector, but also wider.
<b>Hybrid 3</b> An independent community recording studio and audio hub, passionate about making music and sound accessible to all. Providing tools, spaces, and support to help people find and share their voice.	£28,815	£5,500	2 x trainee and 1 Alumni on a 0.6FTE contract for 6 months, who will play a central role in the delivery of StoryBombs Radio Play and Podcast workshops, supporting young people in Rotherham to produce original, high-quality audio plays. This work will culminate in exhibitions at the Crossed Wires Podcast Festival and coverage on BBC Sheffield and Sheffield Live.
<b>Intrapology Ltd</b> Combines games and theatre, through an	£12,668	£0	2 x trainee on 0.4FTE contract for 6 months who will support the delivery of innovative

innovative format designed for audiences that are excluded from in-person venues due to disability, chronic illness, or regional inequality.			digital projects as part of an interdisciplinary and international team. They will work towards 4 performances, the last of which will be designed and led by the trainees.
<b>Grimm and Co</b> A Yorkshire literacy charity with a mission to change lives, one story at a time. Providing exciting arts-based writing workshops for children and young people, aged 0-18.	£25,336	£5,500	2 x trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 8 months, who will work on a range of arts, creative and cultural story events, Including Family Learning engagement activities in schools, a new Saturday Club and maintaining collaboration Rotherham NHS Family Hub. Trainees will draw on their own experiences, interests and skills and advance and develop skills and understanding of the many roles and functions around creative programming and events.
<b>Wentworth Woodhouse</b> One of the UK's largest stately homes, this heritage site and landmark cultural organisation runs an innovative events programme and thriving volunteer programme, with a proven track record of welcoming visitors to the house.	£8,446	£5,500	1 x trainee on 0.6FTE contract for 8 months. The trainee will curate displays of archival objects for an audience of their choice in the House. Develop activities or workshops as part of the Cultural Event programme mapped to the theme of House of Fun e.g. family craft activities Develop family activities for inclusion in the Easter 2026 programme. Support the delivery of the 2025 Winter Festival, and supporting development

			of 2025 exhibition programme
<p><b>RMBC Green Spaces</b> Is dedicated to enhancing, supporting, and protecting the cultural and natural heritage of urban public parks, countryside, woodlands and lakes as places for nature. It manages a diverse range of sites. The service aims to increase community engagement, biodiversity, and the long-term sustainability of green spaces.</p>	£12,668	£5,000	<p>1 x trainee on 0.6FTE contracts for 8 months who will be involved in a variety of projects focusing on the conservation and enhancement of Rotherham's green spaces. Key areas include: Estate Maintenance. Tree Planting and Woodland Management. Practical Skills Acquisition (hands-on experience in estate maintenance, including landscaping, horticulture, and park management. They will work towards obtaining LANTRA qualifications - recognised certifications in land-based and environmental industries.</p>
<p><b>Skills Street</b> Yorkshire's new world-of-work learning centre, designed to immerse and inspire the next generation workforce in practical, skills-linked activity. Putting curriculum learning in a real-life industry context to raise educational attainment and career aspirations.</p>	£25,336	£5,500	<p>2 x trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 8 months, will deliver hands-on, industry learning experiences in various sector zones. They will also help with curriculum-linked resource development. Develop a youth employability hub for 16- to 25-year-olds in Rotherham. Be involved with ongoing projects, such as working with local artists to decorate the venue and producing summer activity programme and events for the community.</p>

<p><b>DocFest Sheffield</b> Is one of the world's leading documentary festivals, and the UK's most impactful film and TV marketplace. Creating opportunities for business through their industry programme; for creativity by bringing filmmakers and artists together; and for exchange between makers and audiences through our screening programmes, exhibitions and talks and sessions.</p>	<p>£25,336</p>	<p>£5,500</p>	<p>2 x trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 8 months, will work on a Festival Assistant programme throughout August, to help develop key administrative skills as they take on a wide range of tasks such as research for the programming and operations teams, marketing support and database maintenance and email/office administration. Once familiar with our internal systems, database, and staffing, trainees will be placed within the programming, industry, communication or community teams. Giving further experience within their specialism. Trainees will then develop their own Rotherham-based screenings programme: selecting films, designing extra community activity such as events, talks, workshops and marketing these events locally. Building on the success of the 2024 Rotherham based programme - Growing Pains.</p>
<p><b>RMBC Rotherham Museums, Arts and Heritage.</b> Home of Rotherham's stories, from history to here and now. Services</p>	<p>£12,668</p>	<p>£0</p>	<p>1 x trainee on 0.6FTE contract for 8 months will work with the Collections and Exhibitions team on cataloguing objects that will be used in the next exhibition in 2026,</p>

<p>include Rotherham Collections and Archives and Local Studies as well as venues such as Clifton Park Museum, Boston Castle and five heritage sites including Keppel's Column, Waterloo Kiln and Catcliffe Glass Cone. Committed to delivering our mission through developing inclusive opportunities for participation and engagement, creative programming and storytelling.</p>			<p>ensuring that our object data is accurate and that our knowledge of collection is increased. As the exhibition for 2026 has not yet been finalised they will be involved in preparing collections for the exhibition and cataloguing any new objects that are acquired from the new exhibition SELF: There's More to Me Than What You see exhibition which was co-produced with young people. They will have the opportunity to support the team during the exhibition process so they can learn about exhibition development and collections care.</p>
<p><b>Rotherham United Community Trust (RUCT)</b> is the charitable arm of Rotherham United Football Club. Working with partners and communities across the borough to plan and deliver beneficial provisions to a range of groups and individuals. RUCT's vision is for a Rotherham that is United, Healthy and Successful.</p>	<p>£25,336</p>	<p>£5,500</p>	<p>2 x Trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 8 months will be embedded across several high-impact projects designed to celebrate the centenary and deepen community engagement by: Planning and delivering themed activities to support the fan zone on match days. Playing an active role in "100 Schools for 100 Years" initiative, a borough-wide engagement programme aiming to reach every school in Rotherham. Supporting the delivery of "Picture This" project – a community arts initiative inviting people of all ages to share</p>

			photos, drawings, and stories that capture what Rotherham United means to them.
<p><b>Hopian</b> Is a charity that has been providing support and advocacy for survivors of domestic abuse since 1976 and for those affected by child sexual exploitation (CSE) for the last decade. Offering trauma-informed community support, refuge accommodation, and specialised counselling for those who have experienced domestic abuse or CSE. The dedicated children and young people's service collaborates with schools to deliver prevention and intervention programmes. Hosting events, workshops, and support groups, creating a safe place for personal development and community interaction.</p>	£19,002	£5,500	<p>2X trainees on 0.6FTE contracts for 8 months will engage in a multi-faceted programme integrating creativity, education, and advocacy. They will work closely with children and young people's services. They will create resources for future children and young people who will use our services. Trainees will assist in creating youth-led awareness campaigns addressing social issues affecting young people, focused on healthy relationships. They will work with experienced advocates and artists to design impactful campaigns and interactive promotional materials about accessing support services.</p>
<b>Total allocation:</b>	<b>£220,946</b>	<b>£49,500</b>	<b>Overall Total: £270,447</b>

2.2.9 As noted at 2.2.1, £275,000 has been budgeted to fund the traineeship programme in 2025/26. Of this, £270,447 has been provisionally allocated to the above 11 hosts and will be transferred to the partners above under a Partnership Agreement. The remaining £4,553 will be allocated to a training and development budget for the trainee cohort once recruited.

2.2.1  
0 The Creative Skills Manager will contact all unsuccessful applicants to provide feedback on their submission and offer support to access alternative funding routes for running their own traineeship programmes.

2.2.1  
1 Inclusive skills and talent development is a core aim of 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.

2.2.1  
2 This report recommends that:

- the 2025-26 funding allocations are approved, enabling 19 new trainees and 1 alumni trainee to be employed across 11 organisations.
- The decision-making process for future rounds is conducted using a similar transparent, equitable and competitive process, including early publication of the application process and deadlines and 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 UK Shared Prosperity Fund funding to trainee host organisations using an open and competitive process would mean Children's Capital of Culture is unable to fulfil its agreement with SYMCA 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 grant is withdrawn and that the Council is unable to access future rounds of funding allocated through SYMCA and through the Ministry of Housing, Community and Local Government (MHCLG).

3.2 Adoption of the proposal outlined above – The above proposal enables 11 organisations to provide paid, part-time employment to 20 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 60,000 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 on the process for allocating the grants for the traineeship programme was undertaken with key external partners who

were involved in delivering and evaluating the traineeship programme, including the Children's Capital of Culture external evaluators, Dr Becky Parry for 2022 and 2023, and Catherine Banister for 2023 and 2024. 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, consultation was undertaken 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 felt about the concept four years on from its initial inception, and what aspirations they had 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 Astro turf 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 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.

5.2 A Partnership Agreement is in place between SYMCA and the Council to manage the funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The service will report quarterly to SYMCA on expenditure and the outcomes against this funding allocation.

5.3 Additional Partnership Agreements will be in place between RMBC and each host organisation.

**6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)**

- 6.1 As this report proposes the award of grants via Partnership Agreements, there are no direct procurement implications, as grants fall outside the scope of procurement legislation.
- 6.2 The cost of the recommendation within this report is £275,000 and is fully funded from South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority's UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

**7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**

- 7.1 The use of the funding in the way set out in the body of the report is consistent with the terms of the Shared Prosperity Fund and UK Community Renewal Fund and is consistent with previous plans and policies of the Council. Further each of the traineeships as referred to in the report will be compliant with subsidy control requirements.

**8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 Should any Human Resources matters arise from this report the Council will follow due processes.

**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 in the skills and talent development required for all 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.

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 Climate Impact Assessment has been completed for this programme and can be found at Appendix 2.
- 11.2 Climate Impact Assessment Summary

Carbon impacts may be generated by:

- Staff, contractor, freelancer, volunteer, participant and audience travel
- The procurement and creation of waste resources in the course of running a major events programme
- The delivery of digital events (e.g., film screenings, livestreams).

Carbon impacts will be mitigated by:

- Encouraging use of suppliers within the local supply chain
- Encouraging use of public transport and active travel
- Programming activity at locations across the borough to reduce required travel for residents
- Create a 'pool' of shared resources for use across host organisations and wider networks in the delivery of events
- Upskilling trainees and their host organisations around identifying, and putting into action plans for, reducing carbon emissions

They will be monitored through:

- Use of Trace monitoring systems
- Bimonthly consortium meetings between host organisations

- Utilising a shared evaluation and monitoring toolkit across all project partners

## 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 the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 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 the entirety of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund grant is spent by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2026. 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 60,000 people.
- 13.4 **A wider range of creative partners are unable to access funding** – the Creative Skills Manager will contact all unsuccessful applicants to the latest funding round, to offer support to both resubmit to further funding rounds 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  
Dawn Richmond-Gordon, Creative Skills Manager, Children's Capital of Culture

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.

*Report Author:*

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