

**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet – 29 July 2024

**Report Title**

Children's Capital of Culture

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

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Andrew Bramidge, Interim Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

**Report Author(s)**

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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

This report sets out the impact of the Children's Capital of Culture programme to date, and the external funding secured. It also sets out the proposed future delivery arrangements, and the likely spend, along with the assurance mechanisms in development in line with the Council's role in the project as a facilitator and accountable body.

**Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

1. Note the progress of the Children's Capital of Culture initiative, the impact of the programme to date, and the external funding achieved.
2. Note the proposed programming themes, anticipated outcomes, quality principles and key activities of the 2025 Festival Year.
3. Approve the proposed spend, subject to the successful achievement of the external fundraising activity as set out in Appendix 1.
4. Approve the proposed governance arrangements for the remainder of the programme, including:

- the role of the Cultural Partnership Board in leading the delivery of the programme.
  - the Council's role in the project as a facilitator and accountable body
  - the development of the activity programme and the Programme Decision-Making Framework (Appendix 2.)
  - the proposed arrangements with project delivery partners.
5. Delegate approval of the remaining activities of the Children's Capital of Culture programme to the Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion and Neighbourhood Working

### **List of Appendices Included**

- Appendix 1 Children's Capital of Culture Funding Breakdown  
Appendix 2 Programming Decision-making Framework  
Appendix 3 Partner Support for Children's Capital of Culture  
Appendix 4 Equalities Impact Assessment Parts A and B  
Appendix 5 Carbon Impact Assessment

### **Background Papers**

Rotherham Cultural Strategy [Rotherham Cultural Strategy Final Compressed.pdf](#)

**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

### 1. Background

- 1.1 There is a growing evidence base which demonstrates the success of 'Capital of Culture' programmes to deliver regeneration, inclusive growth, and place-making. The World Health Organisation has captured over 300 studies demonstrating improved health and wellbeing from participation in the arts and engagement with nature. The NHS and Sport England recognise the importance of physical activity and sport to recovery and staying well. The Cultural Learning Alliance has compiled a body of research setting out the importance of engagement with the arts, museums and libraries to supporting young people's life-chances, including literacy, academic attainment, securing quality jobs and living healthier, for longer.
- 1.2 In 2025 Rotherham will become the world's first Children's Capital of Culture. Children's Capital of Culture is one of seven 'game-changers' set out in the Rotherham Cultural Strategy, which was approved by Cabinet in June 2019.
- 1.3 The Cultural Strategy sets out the vision as follows:  
  
*"By 2025 Rotherham will be the world's first Children's Capital of Culture, a place people want to visit, where everyone can enjoy Rotherham through the eyes, ears and actions of children and young people...We will support our young people in their ambition to create an amazing programme of events and activities for everyone."*
- 1.4 Children's Capital of Culture is a title bestowed upon Rotherham by its young people. It was devised by them as a way to change how young people feel about their hometown and create positive opportunities for children and young people across the Borough.
- 1.5 Children's Capital of Culture has already 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. An action-research programme is co-designing and testing new festivals, projects and events. This work is leading up to the delivery of a year-long festival in 2025 that will celebrate the talent and creativity of young people in Rotherham.
- 1.6 The initiative is being facilitated by the Council but delivered by Rotherham Cultural Partnership Board - a partnership of cultural organisations who are working to co-produce a year-long celebration of Rotherham in 2025 with children and young people from across the Borough.
- 1.7 Children's Capital of Culture is a multi million-pound programme delivered over a 5-year period, funded by external sources including Arts Council England, Shared Prosperity Fund and UK Community Renewal Fund.

## 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

Children's Capital of Culture was formally launched to the public in February 2022, following six months of consultation and engagement with children and young people across the Borough. This was followed by 12 months of intensive skills and talent development along with a series of high-profile public events that achieved:

- 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.
- Over 99,000 engagements (a combination of audiences, active participants, regular participants and school students) by children, young people, and their parents and carers in Children's Capital of Culture activities.
- Involvement of 57 schools and colleges: 54% of these were from Rotherham, 32% were from the rest of South Yorkshire, and 14% were from other locations.
- 340 artists and organisations took part 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.
- 86 positive stories featured 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 national accreditation scheme. 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 and 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 (children within the Looked After system) and the programme gave host organisations training and support in this area via an external training provider, 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 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 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 Significant progress has been made towards the delivery of these key targets, with the following achieved by April 2024:

- 90,500 engagements (a combination of audiences, active participants, regular participants and school students) by children, young people, and their parents and carers in Children's Capital of Culture activities.
- Working with 16 partners to develop 16 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 38 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.
- Recruited 38 trainees to work with local organisations.
- Supported 57 young people to achieve an Arts Award qualification and trained 3 Rotherham professionals as Arts Award Advisors.
- Delivered 14 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 Fund 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 programme further based on feedback from the initial pilot.

2.1.8 The delivery of the Chapter Two programme continues until the end of December 2024.

## 2.2 How the 2025 Festival Year (Chapter 3) is Being Developed

2.2.1 **Themes:** The programme themes are an important part of the process of enabling children and young people to shape the CCoC programme. The ideas were developed in consultation with children and young people, in the first two years of the programme. The themes are as follows:

- **You're Not From New York City, You're From Rov'rum:** supporting young people to have agency and create change, building pride in Rotherham as their home.
- **Who We Are, Where We Come From:** enabling children and young people to develop a sense of community and belonging through the arts and culture, enhancing their mental health and critical thinking.
- **Plug In & Play:** increasing opportunities for play in digital and physical spaces, as well as fostering physical activity and participation in sport.

- **The World Beneath Our Feet:** enabling children and young people to engage with nature and their local environment and take action to combat climate change.

2.2.2 The projected **Outcomes** of the Children’s Capital of Culture programme are as follows:

Children and young people will:

- Be proud to call Rotherham their home.
- Be confident that they can establish a career in Rotherham.
- Feel that their mental and physical health is improving.

Rotherham residents will:

- Have a stronger sense of community cohesion and connection with their local community.
- Feel that Rotherham’s reputation is improving regionally and nationally.

2.2.3 The **Quality Principles** which govern the activity programme for the project are informed by current best practice as gathered by Arts Council of England, Sport England, Connecting Nature, Involve (Public Participation Charity) and the National Lottery Community Fund. They include: Co-production; Children and Young People’s Involvement (including safe-guarding); Building Pride in Rotherham; Artistic/Creative Activity; Nature/Environment; Sport and Physical Activity.

2.2.4 The **Key Activities** in the 2025 Festival Year will relate to the Programme Themes set out in 2.2.1 and include creative and arts activities, sport and physical activities, heritage, reading and author events, leisure, play, gaming, digital, nature and the environment – there will be something for everyone, whatever their age. The programme has a number of strands:

- i. **Schools’ Programme:** this will engage schools in every ward of the Borough through projects linked to the curriculum and offering continuing professional development to teachers to embed good practice for the future.
- ii. **Community and Neighbourhood Activity:** there will be an increased range of cultural, sporting and environmental activities across the Borough taking place at weekends and in school holidays. Targeted projects will ensure that opportunities to participate will be made available to all our children and young people.
- iii. **Events & Festivals:** as well as an exciting and celebratory Opening and Closing programme, there will be large-scale projects, and a diverse range of amazing events to enjoy throughout the year and in different parts of the Borough.
- iv. **Skills & Talent Development:** the flagship training programme for young people 16 – 25 years will continue, ensuring young people are better equipped for jobs in the creative and leisure industries, as well as the wider economy. This strand includes a development

programme for young artists, accreditation via the national Arts Award scheme, plus training and continuous professional development for staff in schools, cultural and leisure organisations.

- v. **Other Projects and Activities:** this includes the projects led by other partners, such as the Story Festival led by Grimm and Co, partnerships with national organisations, and enhancing existing activity such as Rotherham Show or the North Star Science School.

2.2.5 The programme activities will be influenced by what major funders such as Arts Council England, Sport England and National Lottery Heritage Fund will support, and scaled up or down depending on the resources available.

2.2.6 **Curation and Programming:** Unlike other major 'Capital of Culture' programmes, the development and curation of the Activity Programme for the festival year is not led by a single Artistic Director, but instead is being co-produced by local children and young people working with a wide range of cultural and leisure organisations, including the Council.

2.2.7 In utilising co-production, the initiative is in keeping with and contributes to the understanding of professional practice across the Council in relation to strengths-based working and engagement work taking place in Children and Young People's Services, Neighbourhoods, Adult Social Care, and Culture, Sport and Tourism. Despite this approach taking longer to deliver, it has several advantages. It means that:

- The knowledge and learning built up over the course of the development and delivery of the initiative is extended over a wider range of local delivery partners and retained locally at the end of the festival year strengthening the legacy of the initiative.
- There is greater ownership of festival activities by children and young people, local teachers, parents and carers, which creates breadth and depth of engagement leading to a better quality experience and higher levels of participation over time.
- Skills and talent development are an inherent part of the programme
  - Young people are trained in a variety of roles such as producers, artists and project managers, as well as gaining transferable core skills and invaluable work experience.
  - Teachers, youth workers and other professionals are enabled to develop their knowledge of best practice in the commissioning of high quality arts, sports, and nature-based activities both linked to, and beyond the national curriculum.
  - Staff within local cultural and leisure organisations strengthen their skills in working with and empowering children and young people.

2.2.8 The expectation of the funders of Children's Capital of Culture is that it will have delivered against the outcomes set out in paragraph 2.2.2, and that it will also be able to demonstrate significant improvement in addressing the low levels of participation in culture, physical activity and sport, which were apparent in 2017/18. Considering ways to embed the impact of the initiative will be ongoing throughout 2025 as the Cultural Partnership Board, project



delivery partners, children and young people and other stakeholders identify an appropriate legacy for the Children's capital of Culture initiative.

## **2.3 Funding Children's Capital of Culture**

2.3.1 The Children's Capital of Culture Programme is estimated to attract funding in the region of £13.9m between 2021 and 2026. This includes all the build-up activity set out in Section 2 of this report, the Festival programme activities, additional staffing, marketing and the independent evaluation required as a condition of external funding.

2.3.2 To date, £823,700 from the UK Community Renewal Fund, UK Shared Prosperity Fund, and Arts Council England has been invested into the Children's Capital of Culture Skills and Talent Development programme, which supports the education, employment and training of young people from Rotherham. In the 2024/25 financial year, the service anticipates an additional £475,076 being invested into the Skills and Talent Development programme.

2.3.3 The majority of the funding of the Children's Capital of Culture programme has been secured from external funders including UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Community Renewal Fund, Arts Council England, SYMCA Gainshare. Appendix 1 sets this out in more detail.

2.3.4 Delivery partners such as Grimm and Co, Wentworth Woodhouse and Places Leisure and others are expected to secure £5m towards the cost of delivering the programme. Projects which do not have sufficient funding will not be included in the Festival 2025 programme.

2.3.5 It is estimated that in the region of £4.2m will be spent on the Festival programme in 2025. This figure excludes core costs such as staffing and is subject to confirmation of external funding sources and finalisation of the programme as part of the process set out in Appendix 2 Programme Decision-making Framework.

2.3.6 The activity programme for the Festival will be scaled up or down in line with the available funding.

## **2.4 The Role of the Cultural Partnership Board**

2.4.1 The Children's Capital of Culture is being led by the Cultural Partnership Board which includes: ARC Cinema, Arts Council England, Flux Rotherham, Grimm and Co, Gulliver's Valley Resort, Places Leisure, RNN Group, ROAR, Sense, Wentworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire Sport Foundation, and representatives of networks such as Rotherham Creative Network, Moving Rotherham and Rotherham Headteacher's Forum, as well as senior officers from Culture Sport and Tourism, School Effectiveness and Public Health.

2.4.2 It is proposed that the Cultural Partnership Board is responsible for the following:

- Leading and overseeing the delivery of the Children’s Capital of Culture
- Approval of the Activity Programme.
- Approval of the Festival 2025.
- Acting as advocates and ambassadors for Children’s Capital of Culture and for Rotherham.
- Approving key messages about the activities and benefits of Children’s Capital of Culture.
- Monitoring and developing the Risk Register.
- Monitoring compliance of all programme activities in line with legislation, and the terms and conditions of external funding agreements.

2.4.3 The Terms of Reference for the Cultural Partnership Board have been updated in conjunction with Legal Services.

## **2.5 The Role of the Council**

2.5.1 In its role as a facilitator for the Cultural Partnership Board and the Children’s Capital of Culture Programme, the Council has agreed to:

- Identify and apply for funding for core activities such as the Opening Programme, traineeships programme, evaluation and marketing.
- Secure the trademark for the Children’s capital of Culture brand and protect its use by other organisations.
- Lead the schools’ activity programme.
- Lead the skills programme, including the appointment of trainees.
- Appoint an independent marketing agency and develop a website.
- Host a temporary core team to support the Cultural Partnership Board and the delivery of the core activities of the initiative.
- Work with Strategic Partners and other stakeholders to develop the legacy for Children’s Capital of Culture.

2.5.2 The Council has also taken on the role of Accountable Body and lead applicant in a number of funding bids. Given the scale of the resource needed to deliver the programme activities, this brings additional responsibilities, appropriate to its role as the local authority. All funding secured by the Council is subject to its Financial Procurement and Procedure Rules, and processes such as Grant Authorisation, Officer Decision Reports, and the award of grant agreements and the procurement of contracts.

2.5.3 In order to balance the Council’s legal and financial responsibilities with the involvement of children and young people in the development of the Activity Programme, a Programme Decision-Making Framework has been developed and is included at Appendix 2. This framework ensures that the process for the development of the final programme:

- consults with the Council at key stages in order to provide appropriate assurance that activities are in line with the conditions of any external funding and the Council’s policies and procedures where they apply.
- is transparent and accessible for potential delivery partners

- includes and involves children and young people
- protects the Children's Capital of Culture brand and licence, which is owned by the Council on behalf of the partnership.

- 2.5.4 Other Council Assurance Mechanisms: There are a range of assurance mechanisms in place, related to the Council's role as an Accountable Body:
- The Council has worked with the Cultural Partnership Board to produce a Risk Register for the project and this is monitored on a bi-monthly basis by the Cultural Partnership Board.
  - The Council holds the licence for Children's Capital of Culture on behalf of the partnership which provides a backstop.
  - An Internal Audit has taken place in order to identify ways to address risks related to the programme to date and a follow up to provide assurance.
  - A cross-departmental working group meets to monitor progress and ensure that all Council departments are ready to support the 2025 Festival year.

## 2.6 Project Delivery Partners

- 2.6.1 Project Delivery Partners are those organisations delivering projects and events which will make up the Festival 2025 activity programme. There are three kinds of delivery partner:
- Strategic Partners
  - Commissioned Partners
  - Associate Partners
- 2.6.2 **Strategic Partners** are those on the Cultural Partnership Board such as Flux Rotherham, Wentworth Woodhouse, Grimm and Co, Council departments such as Rotherham Music, Museums, Arts and Heritage Services. Projects developed by these partners will still go through the Programme Decision-making Framework in order to ensure transparency and fair process.
- 2.6.3 **Commissioned Partners** will be directly commissioned by the Children's Capital of Culture programme team, to undertake key activities such as the delivery of Opening and Closing Programme events and hosting of traineeship. They include unique national partners such as Royal Opera House, National Videogames Museum, Royal Horticultural Society and the Hay Festival. All commissioned projects will still go through the Programme Decision-making Framework to ensure transparency and fair process.
- 2.6.4 **Associate Partners** are those who will be allowed to utilise the brand in return for delivering a project of benefit to Rotherham. These partners will largely be sourced through the Open Call and the Programme Decision-making Framework.
- 2.6.5 Partner responsibilities are as follows:
- Develop projects and events suitable for inclusion in the Children's Capital of Culture Festival Year.

- Involve children and young people in the design, development and/or delivery of their project.
- Secure additional funding to deliver their project/activity.
- Be positive ambassadors for Children’s Capital of Culture and for Rotherham.
- Participate in the overall evaluation of the initiative.

2.6.6 In order to ensure that project delivery partners understand and deliver project activities in line with the external funding, the use of the Children’s Capital of Culture brand and licence and the Council’s policies and procedures, Partnership Agreements have been drawn up with the support of Legal Services.

2.6.7 A Programme Decision-making Framework has been developed which sets out the process by which decisions relating to the activity programme for 2025 will be made. This can be found at Appendix 2.

2.6.8 A sponsorship programme is in development with the business community and the process for identifying appropriate sponsors and business partners will require approval via both the Council and the Cultural Partnership Board.

## **2.7 How Councillors Can Be Involved**

2.7.1 Children’s Capital of Culture offers a wide range of opportunities for local ward Members to get involved. Councillors can take part in a variety of ways:

- Attending Members’ Seminars to find out about Children’s Capital of Culture activities.
- Promoting Children’s Capital of Culture with their constituents and encouraging involvement of local schools, community groups.
- Working through Neighbourhood Co-ordinators to share and understand local needs and aspirations where CCoC activities could provide support.
- Building a legacy by embedding cultural, sporting and nature-engagement activities within their Ward Plans.
- Being an ambassador, helping to communicate the benefits of getting active, creative and outdoors, more often.
- Turning up to events in their ward and showing support.

## **2.8 The Voice and Influence of Children and Young People**

2.8.1 The involvement of children and young people in the design, development and/or delivery of the Children’s Capital of Culture programme is what sets it apart from other ‘City of Culture’ initiatives. In line with national best practice, children and young people have been fully involved at every stage of development.

- 30 young people were involved in the ‘Embassy for Reimagining Rotherham’ project produced by Grimm and Co, which created the original ‘manifesto’ on which the concept was based.

- 240 young people attended a conference in June 2018 to further develop the concept.
- 95 young people have been employed as trainees since 2022, helping to shape and deliver test activities.
- 1,330 children and young people have been involved in consultation activities to help shape the programme activities, themes and outcomes.
- A further 4000 children have been engaged via school activities in the build-up programme (Chapter Two.)

2.8.2 30 children and young people aged 13-22 appointed to the Youth Programming Panel in the first wave of recruitment, working with members of the Cultural Partnership Board to develop assessment criteria for the activity programme for the 2025 Festival Year. The numbers of 'unique' participants will be tracked as part of the evaluation activity, to make sure that the programme is reaching new children and young people.

2.8.3 Through the engagement activity, the intention is to widen participation of young people from across the borough, with a view to creating opportunities for all children and young people to take part, as well as sustaining and deepening the involvement of those who do, over time. The numbers of 'unique' participants will be tracked as part of the evaluation activity, to make sure that the programme is reaching new children and young people.

2.8.4 The Youth Programming Panel is a cohort of young people who have been trained to support the curation of the Festival Year in 2025 and they are consulted as part of the Programme Decision-making Framework set out in Appendix 2.

## 2.9 **How the Public Can Get Involved**

2.9.1 Everybody involved in Children's Capital of Culture is working towards building an exciting programme of amazing events, activities and projects that will happen in every part of the borough, throughout the whole Festival 2025 year. Activities include sport, physical activity, arts, heritage, reading and author events, leisure, play, nature and the environment – there will be something for everyone, whatever their age. Local people can get involved by:

- Taking part – most events and activities will be free and open to families and people of all ages.
- Encouraging the children and young people in their lives to take part: getting active, creative and outdoors will improve their health and wellbeing, confidence and employability.
- Becoming a volunteer – giving time to help deliver an amazing year and being part of the fun.
- Suggesting ideas for activities and events through the Open Call process.
- Encouraging young people to access employment and training opportunities created by the programme, such as traineeships, paid

performance opportunities and the Arts Award national accreditation scheme.

- Being an ambassador for Children’s Capital of Culture and for Rotherham, helping to build pride in our Borough.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 **OPTION 1 - Do nothing** – Option discounted because the Council approved the Cultural Strategy in 2019, which included Children’s Capital of Culture as a ‘game-changer’. Significant funding has been secured to deliver activities as part of the build-up programme. Funders may seek to recall funding if the project does not go ahead.

3.2 **OPTION 2 - Badge up existing activity** – Although this could be achieved for very little cost, it would not achieve the projected outcomes set out in 2.2.2. The initiative has been developed to create positive change for children and young people, as well as adult residents, of the borough. This transformation requires new or different activities and interventions if it is to succeed.

3.3 **OPTION 3 - Create an independent company to deliver the initiative** – although this model has been used by many other successful ‘Capital of Culture’ programmes, this can bring financial risks as it requires the establishment of a whole new company. This model would not create the additional opportunities for skills development, growth and transformation within the cultural and leisure sector, including within the Council’s own cultural and leisure services.

3.4 **OPTION 4 - Create a programme in collaboration with children and young people, involving the Council and a range of partners.** This would deliver the aspirations for Children’s Capital of Culture as set out in the Cultural Strategy 2019 – 2026. By involving children and young people and partners, the festival is co-produced and therefore more likely to succeed in building audiences and increasing participation in culture, physical activity, sport and the natural environment.

3.5 Although Options 3 and 4 require significant financial resources to deliver, early research with prospective funders such as National Lottery Heritage Fund and Arts Council England, as well as advice from an independent fundraising specialist suggested that Children’s Capital of Culture was an attractive proposition. Option 4 would also create the most potential for sustaining a legacy beyond the festival year because of the involvement of young people and local partners who would have the opportunity to learn as part of the process. For these reasons, **Option 4** is the recommended proposal.

### **4. Consultation on Proposal**

4.1 Extensive consultation regarding the broader Children’s Capital of Culture programme has been undertaken with children, young people and adults in

their lives. The concept was devised by children and young people and tested with over 1,570 children and young people through a conference and a range of other engagement activities between 2017 and 2019.

4.2 This was followed up in 2021 through the first stage of the programme, Chapter 1: Starting a Conversation, which undertook consultation with a further 1,300 children, young people and their parents, carers and teachers/youth workers. 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 sports 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.

4.4 Consultation with educational, leisure, cultural, tourism and environmental sector stakeholders revealed a demand for the Children's Capital of Culture initiative. Appendix 3 Partner Support sets out the list of those consulted along with a sample of testimonials of support.

## **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 The key dates and milestones are as follows:

- August 2024 – first decisions confirmed on Activity Programme for 2025 Festival Year
- September 2024 – Members' Seminar
- November 2024 – Launch of the 2025 Festival Year
- January 2025 – Children's Capital of Culture Festival 2025 begins
- September 2025 – Cabinet Report on the first 6 months plus approval of the Legacy Programme (or agreement to consider as part of the Council's budget-setting process)

- December 2025 – Closing Programme for 2025 Festival
- January 2026 – Children’s Capital of Culture Legacy Programme begins
- July 2026 – Cabinet Report on the impact of Children’s Capital of Culture Festival 2025.

5.2 The officer accountable for implementing these decisions is the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment.

## **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

6.1 On a case-by-case basis, careful consideration is needed as to the form of agreement the Council will enter into with Delivery Partners. Whilst grant agreements fall outside the scope of procurement legislation, there is still a need to ensure the Council’s Financial Procedure Rules are applied.

6.2 For activity where the Council is formally entering into Contracts for Goods, Works or Services then the Council must ensure that the relevant procurement legislation is complied with (Public Contracts Regulations 2015 / Procurement Act 2023), the Council’s own Procurement Procedure Rules as well as any obligations stated in grant funding agreements received by the Council.

6.3 As outlined in the report Children’s Capital of Culture is externally funded as detailed in Appendix 1. Expenditure will not be incurred without a funding source secured.

## **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1 The theme of the paper supports positive outcomes for children which is also at the heart of Children’s Social Care National Framework (December 2023), the statutory guidance from the Department of Education, bringing together the purpose of Local Authority children’s social care, principles whereby children, young people and families be supported, mechanisms that are effective so that children and young people thrive. The statutory guidance, “Working Together to Safeguard Children”, (Working Together), is also relevant particularly in view of the local multi-agency working arrangements that would enable good outcomes to be achieved, such working arrangements that would be necessary in delivery of the services described above. Such statutory guidance is to be complied with unless exceptional circumstances arise.

7.2 With the programme of events lists above and the options set out, it is noted that option 4 captures the voice of the child by way of involving the children and young people in its delivery. This voice of the child is promoted in Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the child which states that children and young people have a right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them. In view of this, there are no legal implications by adopting option 4.



## **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 Should any HR 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 the skills and talent development required for young people 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.

9.3 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.

9.4 Further information about the voice and influence of young people in the development of the programme to date is set out in section 2.7.

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 An Equalities Impact Screening, Assessment and Action Plan has been completed for the Children's Capital of Culture initiative and can be found at Appendix 4.

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 with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act.

10.3 The Cultural Partnership Board has taken positive action to strengthen the diversity of the board by including people who identify as disabled and BAME. A Youth Panel has been recruited, bringing together a wide-ranging group of young people and includes those with protected characteristics in relation to ethnicity; disability; sexuality; and gender identity.

- 10.4 The Equalities Action Plan sets out a series of measures for addressing equality, diversity and inclusion through the following key areas:
- Monitoring representation of people with protected characteristics as part of our evaluation framework.
  - Targeted activities that are embedded across the programme
  - Training as needed for project delivery partners to build their understanding of the needs of people with protected characteristics

- 10.5 Targeted activities to address the participant and audience gaps identified in the Equalities Assessment and ensure that Children’s Capital of Culture opportunities are open to all children and young people within the borough.

## **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 5

## **12. Implications for Partners**

- 12.1 Children’s Capital of Culture is led by the Cultural Partnership Board. Partners on the board include: ARC Cinema, Arts Council England, Flux Rotherham, Grimm and Co, Gulliver’s Valley Resort, Places Leisure, RNN Group, ROAR, Sense, Wentworth Woodhouse, Yorkshire Sport Foundation, and representatives of networks such as Rotherham Creative Network, Moving Rotherham and Rotherham Headteachers’ Forum.
- 12.2 Programme activities have positively engaged a wide range of partners including: Looked After Children’s Council, Young Inspectors, Barnardos, Ferham Lads Group, Rotherham United Community Sports Trust, RDaSH and others.
- 12.3 Project Delivery Partners will be identified through the process set out in the Programme Decision-Making Framework (see section 2.2.5 and Appendix 2). This ensures that the Cultural Partnership Board, which includes the Council, can be confident that organisations delivering activities under the Children’s Capital of Culture brand have the capacity and capability to deliver high quality activities in line with the agreed quality principles. The process will ensure that the appropriate checks are carried out by Council officers in relation to safeguarding, health and safety, etc.
- 12.4 Children’s Capital of Culture has wide–ranging support from partners at a local, regional and national level. See Appendix 3 Partner Support for further information.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

- 13.1 Assurance mechanisms are set out in section 2.4.6. A Risk Register has been produced for the Children’s Capital of Culture Programme and a risk workshop has taken place with members of the Cultural Partnership Board. The Risk Register has been checked by the Council and it is monitored and

updated on a bi-monthly basis by both the Cultural Partnership Board and the Council. The key risks and mitigation are as follows:

- 13.1.1 **Reputational Risk** – with increased profile comes increased scrutiny, national and political context, public opinion, funders and partners.
- 13.1.2 Mitigation: The Cultural Partnership Board brings together a wide range of experienced partners and additional staff have been brought in to manage the delivery of the activity programme. The programme has support from a good range of funders and stakeholders, including national government and South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority. A Marketing and Communications Plan is in development. Ultimately, the Council is the licence holder for Children’s Capital of Culture.
- 13.1.3 **Financial & Procurement Risk** – governance, transparency and decision making, appropriate management of funds, links to reputational impact, appropriate funding.
- 13.1.4 Mitigation: programme activities will be scaled up or down in accordance with available resources. In its role as the accountable body for major funders of CCoC activities, the Council will ensure compliance with its own Financial Procurement and Procedure Rules.
- 13.1.5 **Children & Young People’s Experience Risk** – the need to build trust, repair connection to place, invest in future generations, reach a wide range of ages.
- 13.1.6 Mitigation: the intensive co-production process is building the engagement of a wide range of children and young people of all ages. Programme activities are being shaped by the needs and aspirations of young people who are actively engaged in the project development process. Delivery via schools will ensure that children and young people will have the opportunity to participate in each ward. Additional targeted activity will enable the engagement of children and young people with protected characteristics. An Equalities Action Plan has been produced to ensure the accessibility of programme activities. Many public events and activities will be free to everyone.
- 13.1.7 **Operational Risk** – health & safety, information governance, modern slavery, staff welfare.
- 13.1.8 Mitigation: since the Council is an accountable body for funding and the core team is employed by the Council, then the programme will be covered by the Council’s existing policies and practice. A cross-departmental working group has been formed to oversee the development of the programme and ensure that the Council has an oversight of CCoC activities. In addition, the Cultural Partnership Board and project delivery partners have their own policies and practice: where possible the board is working to align these.

- 13.1.9 **Safeguarding Risks** – how we keep children and young people safe, how we consider vulnerable adults who may attend events, exposure to sensitive content.
- 13.1.10 Mitigation: All key staff have an enhanced level of DBS check and Safeguarding Plans. Council staff and project partners have undertaken additional safeguarding training. Safeguarding is one part of the screening criteria for CCoC projects, as set out in the Programme Decision-Making process. Further checks will be done via the Rotherham Events Safety Advisory Group and/or referred via the normal channels.
- 13.2 An Internal Audit of the Children’s Capital of Culture Programme is underway and this enable the Council to identify ways to strengthen its assurance mechanisms, improve the governance and further reduce risks related to Children’s Capital of Culture.

**14. Accountable Officers**

Polly Hamilton, Assistant Director Culture Sport and Tourism

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp OBE	27/06/24
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	25/06/24
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	24/06/24

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