

**CORPORATE PARENTING
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

22 January 2023

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, CHILDRENS SERVICES

CHILD FRIENDLY CITY UPDATE

Reasons for the report

1. This report sets out an update regarding the work undertaken by Child Friendly City and their work in Cardiff being the first city in the UK to achieve UNICEF Child Friendly City status on 27th October 2023.

Background

2. The journey to attain UNICEF Child-Friendly City status began several years ago when Cardiff initiated comprehensive efforts to ensure children's voices were heard, their rights protected and they were encouraged to take part in decisions that impact them.
3. The city's leadership, in collaboration with various stakeholders and partners, implemented a number of initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of life for children and young adolescents across the diverse communities within Cardiff.
4. UNICEF's endorsement of the work currently being undertaken by Cardiff City Council highlights the city's commitment to prioritising the rights and wellbeing of children and young people, underpinning a milestone step toward creating a more inclusive, safe, and nurturing environment for its youngest residents.

Issues

5. Whilst the UNICEF recognition is rightly celebrated, there is also an opportunity to improve in areas that were identified during the collaboration. These areas include, but are not limited to:
 - Tackling discrimination (with special attention to youth justice, policing, school exclusions and behaviour policies and disaggregating data).
 - Strengthening the 'participation loop' so children and young people understand the extent of their influence and the impact of their engagement.
6. Robust strategies to address these highlighted areas have been added to the Cardiff Child Friendly City Sustainability Plan 2023-26.

7. Child Friendly City has several key priorities for 2023-2026:

- Series of Child Rights Education

Roll out child rights e-learning to 80% of council staff; extend applied child rights training to other departments and external partners; identify and up-skill child rights policy officers; Deliver Elected Members training programme

- Participation

Provide quality assured, high quality opportunities for C&YP to influence decision making including younger children, further embed National Participation Standards and develop a dashboard for disaggregated data.

- Place – Urban Planning & Design

Evidence gathering and engagement, train staff, commission research, developing the strategy, implementation of delivery plan and monitoring and review

- Equal & Included

Equal and Included CFC delivery plan with a focus on gender equity
Cardiff Youth Justice Services Disproportionality Policy and Action Plan
Deliver consultation on transport improvements

8. Cardiff's UNICEF Child Friendly City recognition will serve as a catalyst to continuously improve and innovate programs and policies benefiting children and young people. Cardiff aims to build on this success by expanding initiatives, engaging more of our partners and stakeholders, and fostering a culture where the voices of children and youth continue to shape the city's future.
9. Cardiff's classification as a UNICEF Child-Friendly City stands as a testament to the city's dedication to creating an environment where children and young people thrive, feel safe, and have their voices heard.
10. This achievement not only elevates Cardiff on the global stage, but also sets a leading example for other cities, showcasing the positive impact that can take place when championing the rights, and prioritising the wellbeing, of the youngest members of our society.

Financial Implications

11. The costs of retaining and maintaining accreditation are to be found from existing budgets and would be subject to any future annual budget setting decisions.

Legal Implications

12. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

13. To note the information shared within the update as outlined at **Appendix A** and share their comments in how this may benefit Children Looked After in Cardiff.

DEBORAH DRIFFIELD
Director, Childrens Services
21 December 2023

Appendix A– Child Friendly City Update