

Report for: Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel – 19 October 2016

Item number:

Title: Scrutiny Review on Child Friendly Haringey – Introduction, Scope and Terms of Reference

Report authorised by : Cllr Hearn, Chair of Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel

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Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision:**

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 The report provides a short introduction to the Panel's review on Child Friendly Haringey and, in addition, seeks agreement of the proposed scope, terms of reference and arrangements for the review.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the scope and terms of reference for the review be approved.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 It was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 July that the Panel would undertake a review on the issue of Child Friendly Haringey. The agreement of a scope and terms of reference for the review will provide a framework for the work as well as clarity on the issues to be considered.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 If the scope and terms of reference are not agreed, it will delay progress with the review.

6. Background information

- 6.1 The Panel is undertaking a review on Child Friendly Haringey, as agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 July 2016. The suggestion that this arose from, which was discussed at the Scrutiny Cafe, was that the Panel should look in depth at how Haringey could be made into a "child friendly" borough. This would include the considering what would constitute a child

friendly borough and what actions would be required by the Council and its partners to achieve such a goal.

- 6.2 Other local authorities – for example, Leeds, Bristol, Calderdale and Brighton - have undertaken similar initiatives and these have involved focussing upon ensuring that children know about their rights, can access services when they need them and help to design, implement and evaluate services designed for them.
- 6.3 The initiatives undertaken by other local authorities have all been inspired by the concept of “Child Friendly Cities”. This is regarded as the process for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, led by local government. It is a global project led by UNICEF, with the aim of fulfilling the right of every child and young person to participate in and express opinions on the city in which they live, safely, equally and with respect and influence.
- 6.4 The aim is to improve the lives of children by “recognising and realising their rights”. It is envisaged as a practical process that must engage actively with children and their real lives. The concept of Child Friendly Cities is considered to be equally applicable to governance of all communities which include children, irrespective of their size.
- 6.5 There is a UNICEF framework dating from 2004 that is intended to provide a foundation for use by all localities. A Child Friendly City is expected to guarantee the right of every young citizen to:
- Influence decisions about their city;
 - Express their opinion on the city they want;
 - Participate in family, community and social life;
 - Receive basic services such as health care, education and shelter;
 - Drink safe water and have access to proper sanitation;
 - Be protected from exploitation, violence and abuse;
 - Walk safely in the streets on their own;
 - Meet friends and play;
 - Have green spaces for plants and animals;
 - Live in an unpolluted environment;
 - Participate in cultural and social events; and
 - Be an equal citizen of their city with access to every service, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or disability.
- 6.6 UNICEF is a global organisation and the above rights therefore reflect this and may be less relevant to cities in more highly developed countries. In view of this, some local authorities have instead not formally sought to link their child friendly initiative to the UNICEF framework but develop a framework of their own.
- 6.7 Leeds used local performance information, complemented by extensive consultation with young people, to develop “12 wishes”. These are the issues and changes that children and young people felt that would make the most difference to their lives in Leeds:
1. Children and young people can make safe journeys and easily travel around the city.

2. Children and young people find the city centre welcoming and safe, with friendly places to go, have fun and play.
 3. There are places and spaces to play and things to do, in all areas and open to all.
 4. Children and young people can easily find out what they want to know, when they want it and how they want it.
 5. Children, young people and adults have a good understanding of children's rights, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
 6. Children and young people are treated fairly and feel respected.
 7. Children and young people have the support and information they need to make healthy lifestyle choices.
 8. All our learning places identify and address the barriers that prevent children and young people from engaging in and enjoying learning.
 9. There are a greater number of better quality jobs, work experience opportunities and good quality careers advice for all.
 10. All children and young people have their basic rights met.
 11. Children and young people express their views, feel heard and are actively involved in decisions that affect their lives.
 12. Places and spaces where children and young people spend time and play are free of litter and dog fouling.
- 6.8 Leeds have nevertheless worked closely with UNICEF on the development of children's rights and are one of 5 local authorities who UNICEF Children's Rights Partners. The definition that they have used of "child" applies to young people up to the age of 25.
- 6.9 The UNICEF framework also contains the 9 "building blocks" to assist local authorities in developing their schemes and these may be more relevant to local authorities in the UK. They also provide an illustration of what might be necessary in order to be regarded as "child friendly";
1. Children's participation
 2. A child friendly legal framework
 3. A city wide Children's Right Strategy
 4. A Children's Rights Unit or coordinating mechanism
 5. Child impact assessment and evaluation
 6. A children's budget
 7. A regular 'State of the Borough' - Children Report
 8. Making children's rights known
 9. Independent advocacy for children
- 6.10 The development of Child Friendly Cities is based on recognition that children have a wide range of wants and needs. It will therefore require a co-ordinated and strategic response from local authorities so the children's rights and the voice of the child are embedded in the full range of Council activities – not just Children's Services - as well as partnership bodies and governance.
- 6.11 The local authorities in the UK that have taken action to become child friendly cities have up to now tended to be cities. Calderdale has nevertheless recently declared its intention to seek Child Friendly City status but there do not appear to be any London boroughs who have yet made a similar commitment.

- 6.12 It is proposed that the review consider whether Haringey should state its intention to become a Child Friendly City as a means of providing a greater strategic focus on support and services for children and young people. In doing this, it is proposed that the review look at;
- What obtaining Child Friendly City status may entail;
 - Its potential strategic benefits;
 - Risks and resource issues; and
 - What a scheme for Haringey might look like.
- 6.13 This will involve looking closely at the work that has been done by other local authorities and the outcomes arising from this and developing an understanding of what becoming a Child Friendly City will involve and what a scheme for Haringey may look like. It is proposed that the views of relevant officers and partners be sought towards the end of the process, when a clearer view of what becoming a Child Friendly City may entail has been developed so they are better able to respond.
- 6.14 From preliminary work and especially work done by other local authorities, it has become clear that becoming a Child Friendly City may well require a significant investment in terms of time and resources. Although there is already a large amount of work already taking place that is relevant to this, it will require the development of a strategic framework, co-ordination, extensive consultation and publicity. It is therefore proposed that the review focus on the feasibility of Haringey becoming a Child Friendly City and leave further developmental work to be undertaken elsewhere, should the Council decide to proceed with this initiative.
- 6.15 It is therefore proposed that the terms of reference be as follows:
“To consider and make recommendations on the feasibility of the Council declaring its intention to become a Child Friendly City, including;
- What it may entail;
 - Potential benefits;
 - Risks and resource issues; and
 - What a scheme for Haringey might look like. “

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 7.1 This review relates to Corporate Plan Priority 1 – “Enable every child and young person to have the best start in life, with high quality education”. In addition, the review also relates to Corporate Plan Priority 3 – “A clean, well maintained and safe Borough where people are proud to live and work.”

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

Finance and Procurement

- 8.1 At this preliminary stage there are no financial implications associated with the review of Child Friendly Haringey. It is noted however that becoming a Child Friendly City may require significant investment in time and resources. If this involves expenditure over and above approved budgets this will have to be

considered as part of the Council's Service and Financial Planning arrangements.

Legal

- 8.2 Under Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 ("LGA"), the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to make reports or recommendations to Cabinet on matters which affect the Council's area or the inhabitant of its area. Reports and recommendations will be presented to the next available Cabinet meeting together with an officer report where appropriate.
- 8.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee must by notice in writing require Cabinet to consider the report and recommendations and under Section 9FE of the LGA, there is a duty on Cabinet to respond to the report, indicating what (if any) action Cabinet, proposes to take, within 2 months of receiving the report and recommendations.

Equality

- 8.4 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;
 - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 8.6 The Panel will seek to consider these duties within this review and, in particular;
- How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics;
 - Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate;
 - Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Haringey;
 - Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.

9. Use of Appendices

None.

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985