



## Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017

<b>Title</b>	Launch of the UNICEF Partnership and the Child Rights Programme.
<b>Report of</b>	Voice of the Child Coordinator
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	No
<b>Enclosures</b>	<a href="https://www.unicef.org.uk/child-rights-partners/">https://www.unicef.org.uk/child-rights-partners/</a>
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### Summary

Barnet Family Services and UNICEF are pleased to confirm that we will be entering into partnership in 2017 in order to deliver UNICEF's Child Rights Partners (CRP) programme across the borough.

Working in partnership with local authority, health, education and voluntary and community sector partners the CRP programme will embed a child rights-based approach across local policy, strategic development, commissioning intentions and service delivery. It will ensure that children within our borough, including the most vulnerable children, can be supported to grow up healthy, happy, safe and resilient. We believe that the impact of CRP programme will support our vision to make Barnet the most Family Friendly borough in London by 2020. The CRP programme transforms and strengthens the support that surrounds children and this paper seeks to outline in more detail the nature of our partnership, how the CRP programme will be delivered and its objectives.

This paper also formally launches our partnership with UNICEF for the first time at a local level, as one of only a few local authorities nationally to have been successful in entering into partnership.

## Recommendations

- 1. That the Committee note the following report upon the forthcoming partnership with UNICEF and provide support for its objectives.**
- 2. That the Committee agrees to promote our Family Friendly Barnet vision through the UNICEF Children's Rights Partner (CRP) programme.**

### 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 This report is needed to outline our forthcoming partnership with UNICEF and how it is anticipated that the CRP programme will be implemented, monitored and what impact it is hoped to achieve across the borough for the benefit of children and young people.
- 1.2 This report delivers upon a previous report presented to this Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015 titled: *'Promoting British Values and Citizenship amongst Children & Young People in Barnet – Hearing the Voices of Children and Young People'*. As a consequence of this report, this Committee agreed moving forward to be mindful of the rights of the child, as laid out within UK law and the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- 1.3 As a result of our ambitions outlined within that report, it is important that this Committee is now briefed on the implementation of the forthcoming 3 year partnership with UNICEF that will uphold our recognition of the rights of the child. Ownership and the championing of the CRP programme at a senior political level will also seek to ensure that the CRP programme is a vehicle through which we intend to progress and implement our vision of Barnet being the most Family Friendly Borough in London by 2020. A unique opportunity

will be available to us to be assessed against 6 UNICEF badges. It is anticipated that one of these badges will be a 'Family Friendly' badge, and if successfully awarded will provide us unique UNICEF led international and national recognition for being Family Friendly.

- 1.4 A child rights approach effectively implemented within Barnet will further support our approach to resilience based practice when working with children and families. The progress and success of the CRP programme will be monitored through the Children's Partnership Board, with further insight in to its implementation gathered through the Young People's Perception Survey, our Service User Engagement Strategy and the wider Youth Voice Offer, as overseen by the Voice of the Child Team. We will know that we have successfully embedded the CRP programme within the borough when children are able to identify 3 core phrases: I HAVE the opportunity to participate in decision making that affects my life, I AM able to see the change as a result of having my voice heard and I CAN identify the support and the path that I am on that will help me achieve good outcomes.
- 1.5. This report is needed therefore to formally launch the partnership with UNICEF and in tandem with fellow local authorities across the UK - who have also become successful in entering into partnership. UNICEF is the world's leading organisation for children, working in over 190 countries to advance children's rights and promote child well-being. All of UNICEF's work is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The CRP programme builds on and is part of the UNICEF global Child Friendly Cities Initiative. Launched in 1996 and active in 24 countries, the Initiative translates UNICEF's global mission into practical action at the local level. In the UK, CRP brings UNICEF and local authorities together to put children's rights at the heart of communities and public services to ensure all children have the same opportunity to flourish.
- 1.6 During the course of a three year pilot, launched in November 2013, UNICEF UK has been supporting pilot local authorities to use a 'child rights-based approach' to strengthen or transform local policy and practice in a range of

areas, from developing area-wide children and families' plans to training elected members, from embedding children's rights in corporate parenting strategies or to placing children at the heart of commissioning and community planning.

- 1.7 Now at the conclusion of this pilot, in 2017 UNICEF UK is growing and developing the CRP programme. As well as inviting newly successful local authorities such as Barnet on to the CRP programme, UNICEF will also introduce an award element which will give participating authorities the opportunity to work towards international recognition as a Child or Family Friendly City or Community. In respect of our ambitions within Barnet we would hope to be recognised formally and internationally as a Family Friendly authority. In awarding Barnet the opportunity to become an official partner, UNICEF commented how within our Expression of Interest we *“demonstrated a commitment to children’s rights, high aspirations for children, young people and families in your local authority and a coherent vision of how to use the programme to achieve these aspirations.”*
- 1.8 Over the course of three years, UNICEF will support Barnet in order to achieve the aforementioned six ‘badges’ – each of which will demonstrate progress towards embedding a child rights-based approach across the borough. The badges will recognise Barnet’s progress and development in key areas such as political commitment to children’s rights, workforce knowledge and understanding of children’s rights, meaningful participation and child rights innovation. These key areas will be identified by ourselves and UNICEF at the outset of the journey. Assessment of progress will be undertaken annually by a mixture of external and internal monitoring, self-evaluation and an independent panel of experts in human rights, child well-being and public services. Our progress will be celebrated at an annual event focused on child rights in practice.
- 1.9 Within Barnet the CRP programme will be tailored to meet our needs and priorities. This will include a number of resources, tools and expertise available across the partnership including:

- 40 days of UNICEF staff time annually over three years.
- High quality, CPD certified training for staff.
- Technical assistance in the development of plans, policies and strategies.
- Project management support and facilitation.
- Mentoring.
- Access to digital and physical resources.
- Participation in virtual networking groups connecting you to other Child Rights Partners across the UK.
- Recognition of progress.
- Participation in an annual knowledge exchange, awards and networking conference coinciding with Universal Children's Day on 20 November, focused on child rights in practice.
- A seat on the UNICEF UK Child Rights in Practice Forum.

The CRP programme that is designed to meet Barnet's needs will be available for partner organisations to access, with oversight of its delivery held within Family Services.

1.10. Together in partnership with the local authority, health, education and voluntary and community sector partners we believe that the difference and the impact that can be achieved through delivering the CRP programme will mean that children and young people within our borough are:

- able to identify the services they need to support them and know how to access them.
- clearly co-producing services and challenging senior officials to strive for continued excellence.
- in control of their future pathways.
- experience services in a seamless and connected way where they only have to tell their story once and receive tailored support that meets their specific needs

- are treated with dignity, respect and compassion. The voice of the child must be the first thought and not an afterthought.

## **2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the report and to support the partnership with UNICEF recognising the impact that it can achieve and how our Family Friendly Barnet vision can be achieved through it.

## **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 Not applicable.

## **4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 The UNICEF CRP programme will be delivered over a period of 3 years. In May 2017 Family Services will host a launch event seeking to promote the objectives of the CRP programme and how it can support partners' own objectives and child rights approaches. Later, in November 2017, the partnership will be launched nationally in tandem with other local authorities who have also been successful. Thereafter, Family Services will oversee the implementation and delivery of the CRP Programme across the borough over a period of 3 years. The governance of the CRP programme will be overseen by the Children's Partnership Board, which includes membership from the Council and our key partners. This would provide accountability to ensure the project is implemented and meets key deliverables. The Board already has oversight for the implementation and monitoring of the Children and Young People's Plan 2016 – 2020.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1** We want Barnet to be the most 'Family Friendly' borough in London by

2020. We want our children, young people and their families to be safe, healthy, resilient, knowledgeable, responsible, responsible, informed and listened to. Our vision sets our ambition to work together to make sure that Barnet is a great place to live for all children, young people and their families. We adopt a partnership approach because addressing these issues is the responsibility of everyone who works with and cares about children and young people in Barnet. One of the four outcomes set out in our Children and Young People's Plan 2016 - 2020 is that 'Families and children have their say and are active citizens'.

**5.1.2** We therefore believe that adopting a robust child rights-based approach will support the achievement of our overall vision and our outcomes and that our strengthened services will be child centred, user friendly, outcome focussed and tailored to the needs of children and young people. Working closely with UNICEF would be an opportunity to fully realise our ambition of a Family Friendly Barnet with children's rights at the heart of our communities and public services.

## **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

5.2.1 Due consideration has been given to the need for resourcing of the partnership and the implementation of the CRP programme. We have committed to the annual participation fee and have sought to ensure that the post of Voluntary and Community Sector Partnership Lead will oversee the management of the partnership, reporting to the Voice of the Child Coordinator.

### **5.3.1 Social Value**

N/A

## **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.4.1. As Outlined in the Council's Constitution, in the Responsibility for Functions, Annex A, the Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee is responsible for those powers, duties and functions of the Council in relation to Children's Services (including schools).

## **5.5 Risk Management**

- 5.5.1. Any risks associated with the delivery of the CRP programme will be overseen and mitigated for within the Children's Partnership Board. Ensuring sufficient involvement from across the partnership from the outset is a primary risk to first mitigate for.

## **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

- 5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010,
  - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups,
  - foster good relations between people from different groups

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day to day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services. Equalities and Diversity considerations are a key element of the Council's approach to safeguarding and service delivery. It is anticipated that the adoption of the UNICEF CRP programme will further strengthen recognition of children's rights across the borough and promote equality and diversity.

## **5.7 Consultation and Engagement**

- 5.7.1 In 2015 Family Services delivered a Youth Convention attended by nearly 200 children and young people from a broad cross section of our community.



Young delegates informed us and our partners what they felt were priorities for them and as a result these priorities were made the cornerstone of our Children and Young People's Plan 2016 – 2020 and therefore at the heart of our vision for a Family Friendly Barnet. A key priority is that 'Families and children have their say and are active citizens'. Our partner organisations such as the CCG, Education and Public Health were all able to use the insight gleaned from children and young people and in turn work toward ensuring that the voices of children are at the heart of the service planning and delivery too. The UNICEF CRP programme would strengthen and re-enforce our ambitions to achieve this objective.

- 5.7.2 Ahead of the national launch in November 2017 we will be consulting further with key partners to ensure that the CRP is tailored to the needs of the borough. We will also be seeking to ensure that through our Youth Voice Forums children and young people are involved in its promotion, championing and monitoring.

## **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 For more information upon the UNICEF CRP programme  
<https://www.unicef.org.uk/child-rights-partners/>

- 6.2 Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee Report, 18.11.15  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s27431/Promoting%20British%20Values%20and%20Citizenship%20amongst%20Children%20and%20Young%20People%20in%20Barnet.pdf>