



## Cork Child Friendly City

### Summary points

- We wish for Cork to be designated and recognized as a Child Friendly City, harnessing all the existing initiatives across the city, building on them through a children's rights lens, and including children in every part of the journey.
- Children will be the longest to be impacted by the recent pandemic restrictions, will experience the impacts of the climate crisis most acutely and will be currently experiencing significant increasing in child poverty and a widening group at risk of child poverty.
- We wish for all children's rights to be understood and considered when providing, directly and indirectly for children.
- Cork City Council adopted a motion to support this goal and indeed the city development plan refers to the ambition of Cork being a child friendly city.
- A forum of interagency partners and a growing number of children themselves are leading this work, including the council and other public bodies and the C&V sector aligning together to deliver this goal.
- We would like to see children visible, front and centre in the LECP plan. Experiences in childhood matter, now and into the future. Children will be for the longest duration be impacted by the Covid Restrictions of the pandemic, will experience most acutely, the climate crisis. Child poverty is currently increasing and the group of children at risk of child poverty is widening. Child homelessness is increasing.
- A society that respects the rights of children, benefits all.
- We would like this plan to support the development of Child Friendly City over all.
- We would like training for all public cross cutting services to have training in:

- Convention on the Rights of the Child
  - Children's Participation in Decision Making
  - Trauma Awareness
  - Universal Design
- We would like this plan to allocate dedicated resources to children and to support the concept of the "Children's Mayor"
  - We would like all policy decisions of the city impacting (directly and indirectly) on Children, to include children in the consultation, implementation and evaluation processes.
  - We would like those policies to be assessed in terms of their impact on children as part of the decision making process.

### **What is a Child Friendly City?**

"A child-friendly city (CFC) is a city, town, community or any system of local governance committed to improving the lives of children within their jurisdiction by realizing their rights as articulated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In practice, it is a city, town or community in which the voices, needs, priorities and rights of children are an integral part of public policies, programmes and decisions."

### **Broadly speaking, it is a city, town or community where children:**

- Are protected from exploitation, violence and abuse.
- Have a good start in life and grow up healthy and cared for.
- Have access to quality social services.
- Experience quality, inclusive and participatory education and skills development.
- Express their opinions and influence decisions that affect them.
- Participate in family, cultural, city/community and social life.
- Live in a safe secure and clean environment with access to green spaces.
- Meet friends and have places to play and enjoy themselves.
- Have a fair chance in life regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or ability.

The UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative provides a governance framework consisting of two pillars: goals and results to be achieved; and strategies to achieve these goals and results.

#### **Goals and Results**

1. Every child and young person is valued, respected and treated fairly within their communities and by local authorities.
2. Every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard and taken into account in public laws, policies, budgets, programmes and decisions that affect them.
3. Every child and young person has access to quality essential social services (this includes healthcare, education, nutrition support, early childhood development and education, justice and family support).
4. Every child and young person lives in a safe, secure and clean environment (this includes protection from exploitation, violence and abuse, access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene, safe and child-responsive urban design, mobility and freedom from pollution and waste).

**5. Every child and young person has opportunities to enjoy family life, play and leisure (this includes social and cultural activities, and safe places to meet their friends and play).**

<https://childfriendlycities.org/what-is-a-child-friendly-city/>

**Context in Cork**

Cork City received its current WHO Healthy City Designation in April, 2021. As part of the preparation for that designation, a 10 year Cork Healthy Cities 10 year Action Plan was developed by all the interagency and community partners and launched by Lord Mayor on 1st February 2021. The first action point in the Cork Healthy Cities Action plan commits to “Exploring the development of a Child Friendly City in Cork city by:

- 1.1 Publishing demographic data of children in the Cork City Profile
- 1.2 Engaging with the key stakeholders who will lead the Child Friendly City
- 1.3 Organising a Child Friendly City Seminar
- 1.4 Supporting the development of a Child Friendly City Steering Group
- 1.5 Supporting the delivery and implementation of a Child Friendly City Plan”

**At the March 2021 Council Meeting agenda item 8.3.2 CORK HEALTHY CITIES 10 YEAR STRATEGY**

An Chomhairle considered and noted the report of the Director of Services, Community Culture and Placemaking, dated 25th February 2021 on the following motion referred to Corporate Policy Group:- ‘That Cork City Council resolves to support the Cork Healthy Cities 10 year strategy to make Cork a child-friendly city and that the Council investigate including the recommendations of this strategy in the council's development plan as well as developing a City Council strategy towards complying with UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities Initiative.’ (Proposer: Cllr. L. Bogue 21/078)

The report of the Director of Services stated that... Cork City Council is committed to working in a collaborative manner with all main stake holders in Cork Healthy Cities to achieve the actions outlined in the 10- year strategy including ‘exploring the development of a Child Friendly City In Cork City’. The actions taken in this action will align to the UNICEF Child Friendly City Initiative and Cork city Council will engage with Cork Healthy Cities in consideration of this status. The Cork City Development Plan is currently under review, and the Draft City Development Plan will consider how best to plan for children and to ensure that Cork City is a family and child-friendly city.

**Cork Child Friendly City Forum**

Cork Child friendly city forum, is made up of a growing number of interested parties including local organisations and services, across multiple sectors and including children themselves.



## Cork Child Friendly City Forum Recommendations

We recommend the below amendments to the draft high level goals

1. A city valuing health and wellbeing **for all**.
2. A city built on partnership, **diversity**, inclusion, access, equality & rights **for all**
3. A city of **lifelong** learning, **participation**, **creativity** & culture **for all**
4. A city driving **sustainable** economic and enterprise development **for future generations**
5. A city of **safe, nurturing or supportive** \*\*\* **connected**, **vibrant** neighborhoods and communities.
6. A city leading on sustainability, **biodiversity**, **green and blue development** and **urgent** climate action.

\*\*\* we are concerned, that while the intention of the word safety here is very important, it can be utilized to target young people gathering as “antisocial behavior” and for reactive, excessive fencing, lighting and surveillance of vulnerable individuals and communities.

We recommend the following amendments to the draft Objectives

### Objective 1.1

To ensure Cork is a healthy city that connects to improve the health and wellbeing of all its people at all ages, reduces health inequalities and recognises the need for a holistic approach to health and wellbeing **by supporting the implementation of the Cork Healthy Cities Action Plan 2020 - 2030**.

### 1.2

Create a responsive, **inclusive** and **vibrant** city by building strong interconnected and sustainable local health **partnerships and** systems that can respond to local needs and threats to public health

### 1.3

Promote cross-sectoral working to achieve better health outcomes for the city through integrated health planning which addresses the social, **commercial and environmental** determinants of health and promotes health in all policies

4. Promote community development and participatory approaches to addressing health challenges that generate models of, evidence based, best practice.
5. To support the HSE led enhancement and restructuring of health services in Cork city to ensure access to quality health care for all.
6. To create spaces and places for health using a community placemaking approach
7. Ensure that health enhancing options are communicated in child friendly/accessible manner, and for those of different languages, cultures and backgrounds.

2.

1. Empower people and communities, increasing their capacity to become vital, creative and active participants and engaged communities.
2. Continue to strengthen the partnership model of working in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and communities to support sustainable approaches to policy and programme development and implementation.
3. Prioritizing the needs of communities experiencing exclusion and build on their strengths and opportunities
4. Demonstrate a commitment, -through training and capacity building and supporting campaigns and actions - to human rights, equality, integration and anti-discrimination, paying particular attention to the responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.
5. Strive to develop and implement national policies, strategies and indicators relevant to inclusion, integration and equality at a local level.
6. to support Cork in becoming a recognized Child Friendly City, to support wide stakeholder engagement in the process, support the development of a 5 year strategic plan and the inclusion of childrens voices in decision making which effects their lives.

3.

1. Sustain the development of Cork as a UNESCO Learning City, using Education and Lifelong Learning approaches to support the delivery of all UN Sustainable Development Goals. -this should be a separate point as the SDGS are not just about lifelonglearning but are cross cutting.
2. Sustain and grow Learning City partnership structures and networks that involve all stakeholders in lifelong learning: Formal, non-formal, and informal.
3. To empower and enable people of all ages, interests and abilities to participate in and enjoy lifelong learning, the arts and creativity.
4. To sustain and develop initiatives to remove barriers to participation in lifelong learning and cultural activities for marginalised and underrepresented groups.
5. To optimise and extend arts and cultural infrastructure in the city.
6. To animate our city centre, communities and neighbourhoods through art, learning and cultural events, and creative placemaking.
7. To advance the potential of Cork's arts, culture and creative industries, and Learning and Education Services to contribute to economic growth.

4. A city driving economic and enterprise development.

Objectives

1. Invest in and develop Cork City's communications, transport, and enterprise infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth.
2. Support Cork City's innovative ecosystem to develop new ideas, concepts, products and processes to contribute to sustainable economic growth.

3. Continue to work with other key enterprise stakeholders to create an enterprise-friendly ecosystem that supports Cork City's entrepreneurs, SMEs, and social enterprises through all stages of development.
  4. Continue to work with key city **stakeholders to cultivate local, indigenous industries** as well as to attract and retain Foreign Direct Investment in Cork City
  5. Develop and expand Cork City's tourism industry to support jobs and economic opportunities.
  6. Develop the skills base in Cork City to ensure there is an adequate supply of skills available to support economic and enterprise growth, **retention of our local young people in the city, giving them valuable career pathways.**
5. A city of safe, accessible, and resilient neighbourhoods and communities.

#### Objectives

1. Develop and support the structures and partnerships which underpin safety and wellbeing in our city.
2. Ensure there is support for local people to set up residents associations, that there is Parents Associations in all schools
3. A Placemaking approach will be taken to programme, policy and planning in Cork City Council.
4. **High quality, Parklets, green spaces, and design without fencing, should be incorporated into all new developments and right across the city. They should take account of young and old, mobility, neurodiversity and care needs.**
5. Promote local actions for built and natural heritage.
6. Promote partnership approaches to accessibility and services **-this objective is unclear.**
7. **accessible provision of information across sectors and services that make it easy for people to understand services, opportunities etc.**
8. **Support local communities to be proactive in the development and maintenance of public spaces in neighbourhoods throughout the city**
9. **Reduce vehicular speeds and implement traffic calming measures in city and town centres to increase safety for active travel modes and facilitate walking / cycling and play streets.**

6. A city leading on sustainability, **biodiversity** and **urgent** climate action.

#### Objectives

6.1  
Ensure our city, **communities and** infrastructure are resilient and adaptive to a changing climate

6.2  
Increase energy efficiency at **community level** and increase the proportion of energy from low carbon sources.

6.3  
Encourage **and proactively support a** modal shift to sustainable travel through walking, cycling and public transport

6.4

Manage waste sustainably by reducing, reusing, recycling and recovering waste while moving to a circular economy

6.5

Establish environmentally friendly systems that encourage and support biodiversity