

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
 Southampton City Council
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 SO14 7LY



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 Please ask for: Sandy Hopkins

Date: 13th June 2019

Bob Jackson
 Chief Executive
 New Forest District Council
 Appletree Court
 LYNDHURST
 SO43 7PA

Dear Bob,

UK City of Culture 2025

At our annual Mayor-Making ceremony on 15th May 2019, I'm delighted to let you know that a joint motion was formally passed by the Administration and the Opposition group in our pursuit to become the first successful UK City of Culture bid in the South of the UK for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight area.

This was a passionate and galvanising pledge to work together with our stakeholders on behalf of our all communities to realise the economic and social potential of our places, and to encourage their involvement in shaping our villages, towns, cities and the region as a whole.

We are very grateful to the Leader of Portsmouth County Council for agreeing that Southampton could proceed with this prospective bid and that if we are not successful, we would support their ambitions around a bid in 2029.

The national evidence shows that when Culture in its broadest sense is truly part of the mix it contributes to delivering sustainable economic, social, health and wellbeing outcomes. These include: boosting civic pride, identity and community cohesion; supporting social, health and wellbeing benefits; attracting significant inward investment; creating new jobs, skills and learning opportunities; boosting the visitor and wider economy; developing the creative industries and artistic talent; and in the long term, better alignment of resources and partnership working to benefit residents, visitors and businesses.

We very much see this as an opportunity to raise the profile and share the benefits across the region which will be particularly important in the context of global positioning and long term sustainability. We recognise that given the financial challenges that we all face, this presents a unique opportunity to develop a shared and ambitious vision that will reap significant returns on investments made now for the future.

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To this end, we would welcome your support and willingness to work with us on this journey of transformation and to sustain the benefits beyond the lifetime of the programme for current and future generations across this area of the UK. We would welcome any commitment your Council can give in providing staff time and funds to support the infrastructure and delivery mechanisms that will ensure a prospective UK City of Culture bid in 2021 for the wider benefit of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

I very much look forward to hearing from you. In the meantime, if I can be of any further assistance in answering any questions you might have please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Sandy Hopkins
Chief Executive
Southampton City Council