

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education Operational Delivery Committee
DATE	26 January 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	How children and young people want to address climate change
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/22/015
DIRECTOR	Rob Polkinghorne
CHIEF OFFICER	Eleanor Sheppard
REPORT AUTHOR	Stuart Craig
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 At its meeting of 23 September 2021, the Education Operational Delivery Committee instructed the Chief Education Officer to liaise with children and young people in city schools to capture their ideas to help address climate change, and to bring forward a report of any new initiatives and / or ideas in order for the Council to consider any further exploratory work before any agreed implementation.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee: -

- 2.1 note the work already being undertaken in schools to address climate change;
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Officer – Education and Chief Officer – City Growth to progress the development of accessible information for children and young people relating to Net Zero; and
- 2.3 consider the suggestions on how to address climate change from our children and young people and decide which can be taken forward to be looked at in more detail.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1.1 Schools operate a range of pupil committees where children and young people have an opportunity to set and influence improvements across their school and local communities. All structures are different and the exact make up is often driven by the thinking of children and young people.
- 3.1.2 A survey of pupil groups and school leaders was conducted to help gather up to date information on the changes that had already been made in response to suggestions from children and young people. The survey also aimed to capture

the ideas of children and young people on how the school and Council could further improve their response to the Climate Change agenda.

- 3.1.3 1635 children and young people from across all city schools responded to the pupil survey and 40 nominated staff Eco contacts returned the staff survey.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE TOLD US ABOUT THEIR WORK

- 3.2.2 Despite the challenges of the last 2 years, 40% of pupil committees continued to meet during periods of school closure to ensure that pupils were able to continue to drive improvement. 78% of the children and young people who responded felt that they had influenced positive change in their school community.
- 3.2.3 Pupil committees have driven a range of improvements over the past few years with some impacting only on the school community and some extending into the local community.
- 3.2.4 An impressive array of improvements to their school community were shared by our pupils including initiatives to improve the natural environment, those designed to increase waste collection and recycling and those designed at making the school environment sustainable. Full details are available in Appendix A.

AWARNESS OF NET ZERO AND COP26

- 3.3.1 Children and young people are very connected to the Climate Change agenda and 80% of those who responded to the survey were aware of COP26. The survey has made it clear that COP26 has provided a stimulus for learning across all Aberdeen City Schools with all schools having used COP26 as a context for learning.
- 3.3.2 Although children and young people have been sharing their thoughts about climate change at school level as they work to become global citizens, only 38% of children and young people were aware of what is meant by Net Zero. This demonstrates a need to ensure that our young people are fully informed of how the city will change over the coming years to address the ambition plans held by the Council. There are implications for the Council in terms of how strategies are made accessible to our young people given their interest and ambitions in this area.

3.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGES AT CITY LEVEL

- 3.4.1 Suggestions for change were received from all city schools. Analysis of the responses shows several key themes emerging. These include:
- Environmental improvements
 - More recycling and a reduction in waste
 - Greater investment in clean and renewable energy production
 - Buying local produce and reducing consumption

Further details of the pupils' ideas can be found in Appendix A.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report from an educational perspective as schools have all already established ECO groups with future work linking in with these interested pupils and staff. Depending on which of the pupil recommendations are implemented would likely lead to broader financial implications for the local authority.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Authority has many legal duties including those of:

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980

- Duty of Education Authority to provide adequate and efficient school education for our area

The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000

- Raising standards
- Requirement that education be provided in mainstream schools
- Education Authorities are under a duty to endeavour to secure improvement in the quality of education of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them and to carry out the duty with a view to achieving the strategic priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

- Duties regarding meeting the needs of children and young people with additional support needs.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	N/A	N/A	N/A
Operational	Risk of not having capacity in all schools to engage pupils in environmental activities and awareness raising.	L	Mitigated by schools having all already established ECO groups with future work linking in with these interested pupils and staff.
Financial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputational	Risk of local authority not engaging with environmental responsibilities and awareness raising.	L	Mitigated by policies and commitment to Net Zero and environmental concerns.

Environment / Climate	Risk of local authority not being seen to contribute positively to the environment and reducing emissions and larger environmental impact.	L	Mitigated by policies and commitment to Net Zero and environmental concerns and by schools having all already established ECO groups with future work linking in with these interested pupils and staff.
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7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of Children & Young People Stretch Outcome 7 in the LOIP: Child Friendly City which supports all children to prosper and engage actively with their communities by 2026.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 14: Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 42.5% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	<p>The Education (Scotland) Act 1980</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duty to provide adequate and efficient education for our area. <p>The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duties with regard to meeting the needs of children and young people with additional support needs. <p>The Equality Act 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duty to ensure we are not discriminating disabled learners <p>The Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising standards Requirement that education be provided in mainstream schools <p>The National Improvement Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education Authorities are under a duty to endeavour to secure improvement in the

	quality of education of school education which is provided in the schools managed by them and to carry out the duty with a view to achieving the strategic priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework.
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8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A – School Climate Change Update

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Stuart Craig
Title	Quality Improvement Officer
Email Address	StCraig@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	