

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education, Culture and Sport
DATE	31 January 2013
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT	City Campus – Travel Afternoons
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/13/005

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update, following the first full year of implementation, of the Travel Afternoon initiative. An interim report was taken to the ECS Committee on 23 February 2012.

The Travel Afternoon initiative is part of a wide range of approaches to enhancing learning opportunities for pupils, through the City Campus, initially in the upper stages of secondary school education.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Committee

- notes the content of this report;
- instructs officers to continue to develop the City Campus project which will open up learning opportunities for pupils, particularly in the upper stages of secondary schools;
- instructs officers to complete a further evaluation of travel afternoon provision following the completion of the courses in 2013.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are none at this stage, other than the costs of completing a further review which can be met from existing budgets.

4. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

In session 2011-12, fourteen Advanced Higher courses in addition to courses at Higher, Intermediate 1&2 and Access level in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) were offered to pupils attending all city secondary schools and delivered at Aberdeen Grammar School and Harlaw Academy.

This was intended to enhance curricular choice for pupils and these courses were provided in addition to those offered in each 'home' school.

In order to facilitate planning for courses in session 2012-13, an interim review of the provision of these centrally delivered courses was carried out in December 2011 and January 2012. As courses had been running for only half the school year, this review was limited in its scope although a range of positive and negative issues were raised.

As part of the delivery of the Senior Phase within *Curriculum for Excellence*, it is intended that pupils are provided with access to a far broader range of appropriate courses and options than a single school could provide.

These include working in partnership with

- immediate neighbouring schools in four local consortia;
- local providers from business and industry as well as the voluntary sector;
- schools across the city, such as in the travel afternoon initiative;
- other educational providers – Aberdeen College, Aberdeen University and Robert Gordon University;
- schools in other Local Authorities – e.g. a partnership with Shetland Islands Council has already been established.

It is intended to provide equity of access to these opportunities by ensuring that they will be open to all pupils, regardless of their 'home' school or where they live.

For session 2012-13, the same courses were on offer as in 2011-12 and a range of others were added, including Mandarin at Advanced Higher, Higher and Int 2 levels; Advanced Higher Accounting & Finance; Advanced Higher German; the Access to Creative Education in Scotland (ACES) Project delivered by RGU and an employability option delivered by Station House Media Unit (SHMU)

5. IMPACT

This report is likely to be of interest to the public. It will affect those with children and those working in schools. It will also be of interest to those involved in lifelong learning and to other public provider partners.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Evaluation (Appendix 1) describes the views of participants from 2011-12 and progress made by the ECS service following recommendations made in the interim evaluation of January 2012.

In summary, the aim of ensuring equity of access to AH courses was supported and welcomed by staff and students across all schools and the introduction of the Travel Afternoon initiative did widen subject choice significantly for young people. Students attending courses were generally positive about the experience.

7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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