

11 December 2017

**School Carbon Reduction Programme and
other Outdoor and Sustainability Education
School Initiatives - Progress**

**Joint report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and
Partnerships and Ian Thompson, Corporate Director of Regeneration
and Local Services**

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members of the Environment & Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee with detail on the progress of a number of school programmes that engage pupils with outdoor and sustainability learning.

Background

2. The School Carbon Reduction Programme began in 2010 following research developed through the County Council Carbon Management Plan, which identified schools as a key sector and priority area with growing carbon emissions and associated costs.
3. The Outdoor and Sustainability Education Service was re-structured in 2012-13. It had previously been an informal partnership between DCC and two charities. During this period, DCC took the decision to close the residential outdoor centres that it ran in Richmond, Middleton-in-Teesdale and Westgate in Weardale. As part of this restructure, a new partnering agreement was negotiated and the service was rebranded as OASES (Outdoor and Sustainability Education Specialists). It is now heavily reliant on the charity partner with only one member of staff remaining with Education Durham working on this agenda.
4. Much of this work contributes to The Environment Partnership predominately through the Climate Change group, a multi-agency thematic group. Activities that support schools through initiatives such as the Eco-Schools programme and campaigns such as Earth Hour are discussed through this group and opportunities to add value through partnership working are identified.

Overview

5. Members of the Committee will receive a short presentation from the Education Development Advisor – Sustainability regarding some of the key schools programmes that has been undertaken.
6. The presentation will cover the following projects:
 - a. School Carbon Reduction Programme (SCRIP)
 - b. Projects associated SCRIP

- i. Energy Performance Contracting
 - ii. Rebus (EU funded programme)
 - iii. Salix Funding for schools
- c. Examples of other school projects led by OASES

School Carbon Reduction Programme

7. This programme has been operating since 2010 and is working with over 90% of the schools in the County. Schools engage through the Energy Management SLA. It has made a significant impact on energy use in schools through:
- a. Flexible learning sessions with pupils and teachers.
 - b. Support for School Business Managers, Premises Managers, Senior Management and Governors.
 - c. A focus on wasted electricity use
 - d. A focus on out of ours gas use
 - e. Investigating opportunities for investment in renewables and energy efficiency. A new round of schools are being approached working with the company Solar for Schools. Schools particularly along the east coast of the County are being focussed upon as the light levels are better.
 - f. Energy Performance Contracting for Schools. This project has taken longer than anticipated due to a number of reasons. Three schools were identified as potentially suitable and have had detailed surveys by Honeywell Engineers in late September. We are reviewing the proposals in November before engaging with the schools on funding options to take the options forward.
 - g. Salix funding for schools. This government funded programme provides zero interest loans for schools and academies for energy efficiency projects. The projects must pay back within 8 years so this limits the opportunities on what types of retro-fitting are appropriate. Schools payback the loan using the savings made from reduced electricity or gas use. Schools are being given support on an individual basis at present on how to apply for the funding.
 - h. Involvement with REBUS Interreg Europe programme
 - i. The programme has been well received by a number of the partner countries. The learning from the programme has and will be shared further with a number of the partner countries over the next 12 months.
 - i. The in-school support element of the SCRP programme is being procured at present. The initial phase of selection has been completed and the full application process is underway at present. The successful contractor will

be in place from April 2018, the contract will be for initially 2 years with a possible 2 year extension.

A Selection of Programmes Developed by OASES

8. The partnering agreement with Outdoor and Sustainability Education Specialists (based at Esh Winning Primary School) continues to thrive, it is currently working with schools on over 25 different themed projects. The organisation continues to provide schools across County Durham (and the rest of the region) with high quality learning opportunities through global sustainability projects and outdoor learning opportunities.

The projects they offer to schools are regularly updated as new funding opportunities are identified and using their charitable status applied for. In addition to funded projects, OASES charge for services such as teacher training.

9. Growing Together – This programme working through 4 schools with children and their families was successful. Children in Need have asked OASES to apply for further funding to work with a different group of schools over 3 years.
10. Lumiere 2017
 - a. Cosmoscope (14 schools). This programme has worked with Artichoke and Durham University linked to one of this year's installations about the Universe. It was kindly supported by a number of Councillors through their budgets.
 - b. Start (10 schools). This programme partly funded by Children and the Arts (with additional contributions from schools and Councillor budgets) will develop a legacy aspect to this year's Lumiere. Ten schools will attend this year's festival and will then work with the Oriental Museum and OASES to develop artwork over the coming year.
11. Active Learning – accredited teacher CPD promoting the benefits of outdoor learning on pupil achievement and wellbeing
12. Forest Schools Plus – this is a whole school approach to the implementation of Forest Schools which is widely supported by schools across the County
13. Street Trees – This new programme will work with schools and community organisations to investigate air quality and climate issues within Derwent Valley AAP.
14. Lost Landscapes and Learning – This new programme funded by the Heritage Lottery fund, is working in partnership with CEED and Durham Wildlife Trust initially for a year. If successful, it will be rolled out across County Durham and Sunderland.
15. Learning Licence with Hamsterley Forest – OASES continues to support schools to get the most out of their visits to the Forest. Sessions can be led by OASES staff or self-led by schools
16. Fruit-full Communities (with YMCA) – This national programme is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and is working with YMCA groups in Barnard Castle and Fencehouses supporting the young people to develop areas in their communities and plant fruit trees and bushes.

Recommendation

17. Members of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to note and comment on the wide range of initiatives being developed and offered to schools across the County.

Background Papers

A short presentation updated from the original session in April to be issued.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - None

Staffing – These programmes are staff intensive. The in-school support for the School Carbon Reduction programme is funded by schools buying into the Energy SLA. The other programmes are funded separately through various sources (external and DCC grants).

Risk – None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder – None

Human Rights - None

Consultation - None

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications – None