

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

8 June 2015

ITEM 7(b)
Response to Overview
and Scrutiny Report on
Young Women and STEM

Portfolio(s): Children, Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Ian Grayson

Report from Service Area

Children, Young People and Learning

Responsible Officer:

Jean Griffiths, Head of Children, Young People and Learning

Tel: (0191) 643 8783

Wards affected:

All

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to seek Cabinet's approval to a proposed response to the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Report on Young Women and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and maths) presented to Cabinet in April 2015.

In accordance with Section 21B of the Local Government Act 2000, Cabinet is required to provide a response to the recommendations of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee within two months.

In providing this response Cabinet is asked to state whether or not it accepts each recommendation. Cabinet must also indicate what action, if any, it proposes to take.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet notes and accepts the responses to the recommendations of the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee detailed in Appendix A.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Although 28 days notice of this report was not given, it had been agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 13th April that Cabinet would respond by June to the Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee's recommendations.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report supports the following Our People and Our Economy themes within the Our North Tyneside Council Plan:

Our People: Be supported to achieve their full potential, especially our children and young people.

Our Economy: Have local people that have the skills that businesses need.

1.5 Information:

Background

- 1.5.1 In November 2014, the Children, Education and Skills Sub-Committee established a sub-group to look at the issue of how to encourage more young women to study STEM subjects.
- 1.5.2 As a result the sub-group identified six recommendations aimed at increasing the number of young girls studying STEM related subjects and accessing better information in order to encourage greater take up of STEM related careers.
- 1.5.3 The report of the sub-group has been considered and approved by the Children, Education and Skills Sub-Committee and Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee.
- 1.5.4 The report was presented to Cabinet on 13th April 2015.
- 1.5.5 The report recommendations are that Cabinet requests the Head of Children, Young People and Learning to:
1. Organise a programme of events/resources for teachers, particularly for teachers of Years 7 to 9. The programme will include up to date information on what opportunities and careers can be expected by anyone with STEM qualifications and an understanding of how to access these, including the vocational route.
 2. Ask all schools to review existing information for parents of children aged 11-14 to provide an increased focus regarding the opportunities and careers available to anyone with STEM qualifications, and particularly for women, and an understanding of how to access these, including the vocational route.
 3. Ask each school in the borough to assign the responsibility for promoting STEM to a named member of staff and a governor. These individuals will have the responsibility to promote STEM as a subject and particularly focus on ensuring the participation of girls and young women.
 4. Improve the existing school and local authority STEM network for the STEM leads/co-ordinators and ensure it meets regularly to share practice, co-ordinate ideas and organise regular events.
 5. Ask all schools to consider holding girl only science, maths and IT clubs or if this is unfeasible advertise the girls only clubs which are held elsewhere.
 6. Consider what support and advice would need to be offered to all middle/secondary schools to enable them to pilot single sex classes for STEM subjects and to explore these options at a meeting of the STEM Network.
- 1.5.6 In addition three additional points were recommended for further consideration. These are:
- a) STEM Hubs for each tier, (first, primary, middle, secondary and high) created at schools with the facilities to be used by all schools in the borough. There are already excellent facilities in the borough at Marden High School and Norham High School and these will be added to by the STEM Innovation Centre being established by Tyne Metropolitan College at the former Skills and Enterprise Centre on Embleton Avenue. Having a place to go to access STEM events and meet others will be a motivating factor for young people and allows all to have the opportunity to use the high quality facilities.

- b) An evaluation of the information available in careers libraries and the understanding of those giving careers advice of the current and future possibilities that STEM subjects open up for students.
 - c) Working with the North Tyneside Learning Trust to ensure a co-ordinated approach particularly with regard to engaging with the business sector.
- 1.5.7 The success of the implementation of many of the recommendations will be influenced by our schools' leadership teams. The Head of Children, Young People and Learning will lead a debate regarding these recommendations to ensure they are fully considered both as part of the ongoing school review and by individual schools.
- 1.5.8 This will ensure that full consideration is given to how the recommendations can be implemented and the resultant improved outcomes for girls studying and achieving related qualifications that will increase their access to STEM related careers.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Cabinet accepts the 6 recommendations and additional points raised as set out in paragraphs 1.5.5 and 1.5.6 of this report, notes the officers' suggested actions and suggested additional activity to support their implementation.

Option 2

Cabinet approves some of the recommendations in this report, and requests officers to look at other options and suggest additional activity to support progress.

Option 3

Cabinet rejects the recommendations and suggests additional work to be undertaken.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

North Tyneside continues to have a lower number of girls undertaking STEM subjects and moving on to STEM related careers. The recommendations will enable schools to raise aspirations of girls to access STEM subjects and employment opportunities.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix A – Proposed Cabinet response to Overview Scrutiny and Policy Committee recommendations

1.9 Contact officers:

Jean Griffiths, Head of Children, Young People and Learning; tel (0191) 643 8783.
Shona Duncan, Principal Manager for Employment and Skills; tel (0191) 643 6065
Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner; tel: (0191) 643 2430

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information has been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the officer of the author:

- 1) Overview and Scrutiny Report: Young Women and STEM
http://october.northtyneside.gov.uk:7778/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=560417
- 2) Cabinet Report 13 April 2015
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=559824

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

There are no financial implications directly arising from this report, any additional work will be undertaken by existing officers utilising available resources.

2.2 Legal

There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

- 2.3.1 Consultation has been carried out with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

Any resultant actions will be aimed at improving young girls' access and attainment in STEM related subjects therefore improving equality for opportunity for these girls.

2.6 Risk management

Any proposals agreed would be appropriately risk managed to ensure the Authority and any partners are not exposed to unmanageable operational risks.

2.7 Crime and disorder

The proposals to increase attainment and employment of our young people in North Tyneside will positively impact on crime and disorder rates.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environmental and sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive X
- Head of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Head of Corporate Strategy X