

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 29 JUNE 2011**

### **GLOBAL SCHOOLS EXCHANGE AND PARTNERSHIP WITH SRI LANKA**

#### **Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on the Global Schools Partnership between East Ayrshire Council schools and Gampola, Kandy District, Central Province, Sri Lanka and seek approval to continue links with the Province.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Cabinet approved a paper on of 17 November 2010 – ‘Global Schools Exchange and Partnership With Sri Lanka’ regarding a Global Schools Partnership between East Ayrshire Council schools and Gampola schools.
- 2.2 Elected Members will recall that the British Council approached East Ayrshire, as one of six Scottish Local Authorities Education Departments whose schools were under-represented in existing southern hemisphere school partnerships funding programmes.
- 2.3 East Ayrshire and Gampola were awarded the maximum Local Authority grant of £6,300, to create international relationships to broker and support 10 school partnerships with a focus on global education. This was funded by Ukaid from the Department for International Development and managed by a consortium of the British Council, Cambridge Education Foundation, ‘UK One World Linking Association’, and Voluntary Services Organisation. No Council financial contribution was required.

#### **3. DEVELOPMENTS**

- 3.1 Three Sri Lankan delegates (Mr Chandraratne Sendanayake, Mr Shyamtha Dehigalage and Mrs Hemanthika Gunardarwane) visited East Ayrshire between 22 January and 29 January. They toured all 10 East Ayrshire schools in the partnership, meeting pupils and staff. During the tours similarities and differences in educational culture and provision were discussed. Common themes were agreed on action points to help build future partnerships
- 3.2 The school partnerships are:

Loudoun Academy- St Andrew’s College; St. Josephs Academy- Holy Trinity College; Auchinleck Academy- Wickramabahu Secondary; Park School- Kurunduwatte Royal College; Patna Primary- Zahira College; Shortlees

Primary- St. Josephs; Hurlford Primary- Baudhha; Ochiltree Primary- Jinaraja Boys College; Dalmellington Primary-Kathiresan Ladies College; Onthank Primary- Jinaraja Girls College

- 3.3 Three East Ayrshire Delegates (Willie White, Outdoor Education, Sharon Yorston, Patna Primary and Shona McLaughlin, Loudoun Academy) visited Gampola, Central Province between 12 February and 20 February.
- 3.4 The Scottish delegation launched the programme in all 10 Gampola schools in a colourful ceremony with speeches, brass bands, traditional dancing and several hundred flag waving children and parents. During each visit the Sri Lankan schools exchanged information on curriculum programmes and resources with suggestions to further develop projects with linked schools in East Ayrshire. This exercise was invaluable in establishing realistic expectations and goals.
- 3.5 Two teacher development events were delivered by British Council representatives during the reciprocal visits in Kilmarnock and Gampola. These were attended by staff from all 20 local partner schools as well as the foreign delegates. Information was given on the Global School Partnership Teacher reciprocal grant scheme, promoting Global Citizenship within schools, and in addition, ideas were presented on how to develop the projects between link schools. In Gampola the East Ayrshire staff presented on the Scottish Education system and Scottish Culture.
- 3.6 Lead staff from the 10 participating East Ayrshire schools have established a collegiate support group have met on three occasions to track progress on the partnerships and share issues and ideas. They have established a GLOW space for this group.
- 3.7 A range of staff in all 10 school partnerships have now communicated. Many have embarked on a range of curriculum projects with pupils with plans to expand these projects next session. The projects vary across establishments but all integrate Curriculum for Excellence experiences and outcomes across a range of key areas including literacy, technology, health and wellbeing, science and social studies. The aim is to support young people develop knowledge, skills and values so they better understand Scotland, the world, and their role within it. As 'successful learners' who understand the global context they will be better equipped as 'responsible citizens' to understand that their actions locally have implications globally and indeed that global issues have local implications. The curricular projects also aim to make young people feel confident that they can contribute effectively to debate and communicate in a global world.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Additional British Council funding is available to the school partnerships subject to bids for agreed project. Reciprocal Visit grants are also available for partnerships that are laying the foundations for long term collaborative work to embed a global dimension in the schools' curricula through short

teacher exchanges. Global Curriculum Project grants to enable well established partnerships to further develop joint curricular activities with a global dimension theme are also available.

- 4.2 Currently three of the school partnerships are intending to apply for teacher reciprocal visit grants in June 2011. The other seven establishments are proposing a November 2011 application deadline.

## **5. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 All visits and exchanges are subject to scrutiny, taking account of Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice, and must be approved within the Council's risk management arrangements.

## **6. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no policy or legal issues associated with this proposed partnership.

## **7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 This proposal supports the priorities of the Community Plan: Promoting Lifelong Learning.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) approve the continued link between the Gampola Region of Sri Lanka and East Ayrshire Council;
- (ii) seek annual update reports on progress in further developing the Global Citizenship links; and
- (iii) otherwise, note the contents of this report.

Graham Short  
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

AS/WW  
May 2011

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Cabinet Paper – 17 November 2010 - Global Schools Exchange and Partnership with Sri Lanka

Members wishing further information should contact Andrew Sutherland, Head of Service: School on Tel: (01563) 576126 or Willie White, Outdoor Education on Tel: (01563) 551457

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