
Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

7 March 2023

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor R Brown

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Interim Chief Executive (151 Officer)

Ward(s) affected:

N/A

Title:

Support for Pupils and Staff from Earlsdon Primary and Finham Park 2 Secondary Schools to attend the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Partner Schools 70th Anniversary International Peace Conference

Is this a key decision?

No - The proposals do not have a significant impact on communities in more than two electoral wards and do not reach the financial threshold for a key decision.

Executive Summary:

The report recommends that the Policy Contingency budget provides funding of £10,000 to support 10 pupils (5 from Earlsdon Primary school and 5 from Finham Park 2 Secondary school) and supporting staff members to attend the UNESCO Partner Schools 70th Anniversary International Peace Conference in Japan in September 2023.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is recommended to approve funding of £10,000 from the 2022/23 Policy Contingency budget to support pupil and teacher attendance at the UNESCO Partner Schools 70th Anniversary International Peace Conference to be held in Japan in September 2023.

List of Appendices included:

None.

Background papers:

None.

Other useful documents

None.

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Support for Pupils and Staff from Earlsdon Primary and Finham Park 2 Secondary schools to attend the UNESCO Partner Schools 70th Anniversary International Peace Conference

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The origins of the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) go back to November 1953 when UNESCO launched a project called the Scheme of Co-ordinated Experimental Activities in Education for Living in a World Community, with the participation of 33 secondary schools in 16 Member States. ASPnet was rooted in the mission to promote education for international understanding, co-operation, and peace, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) as well as interlinked with the 1974 Recommendation (concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms) as a model in the field of international education.
- 1.2 Today, the project has developed into the largest network of UNESCO, connecting more than 12,000 educational institutions from all levels of education in 182 countries. ASPnet continues to drive innovation and transformative learning experiences towards Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development and intercultural and heritage learning at schools worldwide.
- 1.3 To celebrate the 70th anniversary of ASPnet in 2023, and to best illustrate its history as an incubator of promoting a culture of peace and sustainable development through education and taking into the consideration of the many challenges that we are facing today the theme for the ASPnet 70th anniversary event is proposed to be “Fostering a Culture of Peace and Sustainability through Transformative Education”.
- 1.4 The Deputy Headteacher at Earlsdon Primary School has demonstrated a strong commitment to peace education and sits on the Lord Mayor’s Committee for Peace and Reconciliation. She has also had many years of building Japanese education in Coventry and led on many local initiatives including a pupil Japan conference for over 25 schools; the Flame of Friendship (40 schools) which mirrored the torch relay in Japan before the Tokyo Olympic Games; the creation and installation of the Japanese Peace Garden in the War Memorial Park; and a visit to Japan for primary school pupils from five Coventry schools in 2019.
- 1.5 Earlsdon Primary School is one of the leading schools in the city for peace initiatives. It was the first school in the city to be awarded the Lord Mayor’s Peace Award and it has national School of Sanctuary Status. Additionally, the school has recently been awarded the full British Council International School Award for work to link pupils around the world.
- 1.6 The Director of UNESCO partner schools in the UK has approached the Deputy Headteacher of Earlsdon Primary school (who has worked with UNESCO on school programmes since 2018) to invite five pupils from Earlsdon Primary School to represent UK schools at the Peace Conference in Japan. Through discussion, it is also proposed to take five additional pupils from Finham Park 2 Secondary School to enable a representation from both the primary and secondary phases. Finham Park 2 work closely with Earlsdon Primary School on a number of international projects.
- 1.7 We continue to build strong links with UNESCO, who are currently considering an application from Coventry for all our schools to join ASPnet.

- 1.8 Between now and the conference the deputy headteacher will be working on options that can increase wider school participation in the event. This includes an offer from Oxford University to lead ceramics workshops for up to 600 pupils, provide opportunities for pupils and families to visit their kilns situated in Oxford University's 1,000 acre ecological research estate and offer free bespoke packages for participating Coventry schools to take part in workshops at Oxford colleges.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 The recommended option is for the Council to identify funding to support the visit of 10 pupils and supporting staff to the UNESCO Partner Schools 70th Anniversary International Peace Conference. This is a unique opportunity for pupils from Coventry to represent the UK at the conference,
- 2.2 The money would contribute to the cost of travel, subsistence, and participation in educational activities whilst in Japan.
- 2.3 The alternative option is for the Council not to provide the funding, but this would be a lost opportunity for the City and the pupils involved.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 No consultation has been undertaken due to the relatively limited scope of the proposals within the report.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 An initial £15,000 must be raised by March 2023 to enable flights to be purchased to secure places at the conference.

5. Comments from Interim Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer

5.1 Financial implications

The Policy Contingency budget is £75,000 per annum. None of this has been committed or spent in 2022/23. The total cost of the project is estimated to be £25,000, of which the ask against the policy contingency budget is £10,000.

Finham Park 2 and Earlsdon Primary Schools have already been working together to raise funds to support the project, and a peace organisation in Nottingham have contributed £4,500.

Funding proposals will be submitted to other funding organisations, and 2 foundations that have been significant funders of previous projects have already been approached. The timing of an answer on these proposals is by the 31st May, but there is not a guarantee so other funders will be approached.

5.2 Legal implications

This money would be given to the project through the general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

Other implications

None.

5.3 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

This proposal is in line with the stated aims of the Council Plan of raising the profile of Coventry, increasing access to arts, sports, and cultural activities, and improving educational outcomes.

Coventry is also renowned as an international centre for peace and reconciliation, and this closely aligns with being the selected city to represent the UK at a global peace conference for young people.

5.4 How is risk being managed?

No key risks have been identified.

5.5 What is the impact on the organisation?

There are no key impacts on the organisation.

5.6 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Pupils from the two schools will be invited to apply for a place at the conference. They will be chosen based on their ability to represent the city of Coventry at an international event. They will have to demonstrate commitment to working with schools across the city.

To ensure that this opportunity is fully accessible, pupils will not have to fund their place at the conference, but they will be expected to contribute to fundraising. They will also be expected to disseminate the outcomes of the conference and help to lead on new peace initiatives on their return.

5.7 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

No implications.

5.8 Implications for partner organisations?

We work closely with all our schools in the city. The proposal is designed to support Education in the city and have wider benefits for pupils at a number of schools across the city.

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Director: Barry Hastie	Interim Chief Executive (Section 151 Officer)	Finance	21/02/23	24/02/23
Members: Councillor Richard Brown	Cabinet Member Strategic Finance and Resources		21/02/23	24/02/23

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