Item 6
7th March 2023

Glasgow City Region Education Committee

Report by: Carol McArdle, Workstream Lead Officer

Contact: Carol McArdle, Workstream Lead Officer

Keep Scotland Beautiful: Upstream Battle on the Clyde

Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on the 'Upstream Battle on the Clyde' Programme across the West Partnership and share its development for 2023-2024.

Recommendations :

The committee is asked to:

- note and discuss the progress of the 'Upstream Battle on the Clyde' programme; and
- note the development of the work for the 2023-24 Improvement Plan.

1. Background

1.1 West Partnership have worked with Keep Scotland Beautiful to extend to the 'Upstream Battle on the Clyde' project. Funding of £40,000 has allowed the West Partnership to have a Development Officer to lead four key projects between March 2022-March 2023.

1.2 This current phase (phase three) of Upstream Battle built on the successful education programme delivered as part of the first phase in 2019.

1.3 Phase 3, which ran March 2022-March 2023 included four key projects within the programme:

- **Project 1**
  Marine litter art competition opened to all ELC settings, primary schools and ASN establishments across the West Partnership where children were challenged to investigate the journey of marine litter from source to sea in their own community and express their findings creatively;
- **Project 2**
  Career-long Professional Learning course which supported teachers, across the West Partnership, to use 'Source to Sea Litter' as a context to nurture STEM skills;
- **Project 3**
  STEM the Flow-An engineering challenge in partnership with BAE systems – where children and young people were challenged to research and develop ideas to either tackle litter already in the river or design ways to prevent it from entering; and
- **Project 4**
  Young Reporters for the Environment - a media skills challenge aimed at secondary schools using marine litter and the Clyde as the context to develop research, presentation and reporting skills and produce a short written report or video clip.

2. Upstream Battle on the Clyde 2022-23

2.1 Upstream Battle presented a relevant and accessible context for developing STEM skills, learning about sustainability, and deepening understanding of the climate emergency and circular economy.

2.2 The four projects within the programme have so far resulted in engaging with 63 schools, across all education sectors and in all 8 local authorities of the West Partnership, with this number projected to increase with additional programme strands being delivered in the spring term.

3. Evaluation of the projects:

3.1 Marine litter art competition

There were 19 final entries to the competition, of which 4 were from ELC settings, 13 from Primary schools and 2 from ASN establishments. A total of 326 pupils took part in the project, as over 80% of the submissions were from whole year group entries.

3.2 Career-long Professional Learning course

52 educators registered to take part in the CLPL course from July – September. The course set out to provide educators with the knowledge and confidence to integrate Learning for Sustainability topics into their teaching practice. This was most evident in the second twilight session, which covered climate change, the Sustainable Development Goals and plastic production. 100% of evaluation respondents recorded participation in the session had resulted in an increase in knowledge and confidence.

3.3 STEM the Flow

32 teams of (up to 6) young people from 21 schools are currently taking part in the activity, equating to 128 pupils directly involved in the project. 19 industry STEM ambassadors were recruited from 3 industry partners - BAE Systems, Jacobs Engineering and Scottish Water- to offer one-to-one mentor support to the participants, by providing expertise in STEM skills and confidence in putting concepts into practice.

3.4 Young Reporters for the Environment

Involvement in the project supported young people's collaboration with peers in advocating environmental conservation and improved their confidence in being climate ambassadors, particularly when discussing such topics with adults.

3.5 In addition to the four key projects, the programme has encouraged schools to engage with the campaign generally by undertaking clean up activity in their local area. During the spring and autumn term, 20 schools requested a school visit for pupils to engage in classroom and outdoor activities to raise awareness and improve knowledge of source to sea litter topics. 14 school visits, across 6 local authorities, were achieved in the same period. This resulted in engaging with 301 pupils directly and over 2000 indirectly, through increased awareness of litter and climate action topics in the schools. Pupils took part in 10 litter picking activities in the school grounds and local communities, along with activities to raise awareness such as making displays and posters.

4. Development of Upstream Battle on the Clyde

Moving into session 2023-2024, it is important to review the added value of the Keep Scotland Beautiful offer. Evaluations (see Appendix One) would lead us to suggest the following as next steps in meeting the needs of local authorities and establishments across the West Partnership.

4.1 A development officer continues to be part-funded from Keep Scotland Beautiful to lead the programme, specifically to establish a sustainable model for STEM THE FLOW Programme, which had the most impact on WP young people.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note and discuss the progress of the ‘Upstream Battle on the Clyde’ programme; and
- note the development of the work for the 2023-24 Improvement Plan.