

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



## **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT & SCRUTINY PANEL**

### **YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

### **REPORT BY HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REGENERATION**

#### **A. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To update the Panel on the plan for engaging young people in the development of the Climate Change Strategy, as agreed at a meeting of West Lothian Council on 17 March 2020.

#### **B. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Panel:

1. Note the contents of this report.

#### **C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>I</b>	<b>Council Values</b>	Being honest, open and accountable; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
<b>II</b>	<b>Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)</b>	The council is legally bound to comply with duties for public sector bodies within the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. The duties require that the council must, in exercising its functions, act: (a) in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of the targets set in or under Part 1 of the Act; (b) in the way best calculated to help deliver any programme laid before the Scottish Parliament under section 53; (c) in a way that it considers is most sustainable.
<b>III</b>	<b>Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers</b>	None
<b>IV</b>	<b>Impact on performance and performance Indicators</b>	There are a number of performance indicators related to climate change and emissions reduction. Emissions are reported to the Scottish Government in November each year.
<b>V</b>	<b>Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement</b>	Outcome 8 - We make the most efficient and effective use of resources by minimising our

impact on the built and natural environment

<b>VI</b>	<b>Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)</b>	Engagement will be carried out within exiting resource
<b>VII</b>	<b>Consideration at PDSP</b>	This is the first consideration at PDSP.
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Other consultations</b>	Community Education Worker (Youth Participation), West Lothian College, Developing Young Workforce, Children's Parliament

## **D. TERMS OF REPORT**

### **D.1 Background**

Following West Lothian Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in September 2019, a short term, Cross-Party Working Group was established to formulate a way forward which involves the wider public, business and other public bodies. The Working group reported back to Council on 17 March 2020 with a set of recommendations and proposals, including a number of reports to be presented to Environment PDSP and Council Executive. This report is one of those requested and details how young people will be engaged in the development of the new West Lothian Climate Change Strategy.

### **D.2 Youth Participation**

Every child has the right to be heard in matters affecting them and to participate in the life of their family, community and society, under Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Children and young people often have fresh and unique perspectives on current issues as well as new ways of addressing them. By engaging with them, they have the opportunity to influence the community that they live in today and in the future.

Activities have already been carried out to engage our young people in issues around the Climate Emergency. Pupils from James Young High School attended the Community Planning Partnership's (CPP's) Climate Change seminar in October 2019 and took part in discussions, which informed a set of CPP actions which will help shape the new Local Outcomes Improvement Plan. The feedback will also be used to inform the new Climate Change Strategy.

A workshop was also held as part of West Lothian College's Sustainability Summit in early March 2020. As part of this, engagement was carried out using the Mentimeter survey tool. The feedback gathered will also inform the new Climate Change Strategy.

Youth participation actions will form part of a wider community engagement approach to developing the Climate Change Strategy.

### **D.2 Youth Participation Plan**

It is important to be clear on the purpose of any engagement carried out. The purpose of the engagement set out in this report is to gain the views, attitudes and ideas of young people in relation to climate change, to inform the priorities and actions of the new Climate Change Strategy.

A youth participation plan has been developed and is set out in Appendix 1.

Discussion has taken place with the council's Community Education Worker (Youth Participation) to identify the most appropriate ways to effectively engage young people. Given the ongoing challenges of working in schools and engaging people face-to-face, it was agreed that an online survey would be developed in order to gather views. This is to be sent out to schools and the other groups highlighted in the plan in January 2021. Links have been made with Developing Young Workforce board, who have agreed to assist in distributing the survey to all relevant groups.

The survey will be focused on identifying young people's priorities in relation to the Climate Emergency. Additional questions will be included for secondary school pupils to complete, to gather views specifically on the future workforce and the green economy. The ISM model, a practical tool to examine the effectiveness of environmental behaviour change interventions, will be built into the survey. Discussion with one of the leads of the ISM model from SSN will inform how this will be used.

Young people will also be invited to attend online focus groups, to be held once the survey results have been analysed, in order to discuss the results and potential actions. All groups set out in the plan will be invited to attend. The number of sessions held will depend on interest. There is currently just one MSYP in West Lothian and they will be invited to complete the survey and take part in the online session.

Early discussions have taken place with West Lothian College on how to build better engagement with those taking subjects around the green economy/future green jobs. Engaging with those with an existing understanding on the subject and what actions are required will provide an additional layer of feedback.

Discussions have also been held with the Children's Parliament, who are currently supporting the participation and engagement of children under 16 in the Climate Assembly, to ensure their views, experiences and ideas are part of the discussions and calls to action going forward. To capture the diversity of children's views and experiences, and to echo the process of the Assembly, Children's Parliament is working with 100 children across Scotland from 10 schools, including Deans Community High School. The children are a mixed gender, income and ethnicity group representing both urban and rural communities. The initial results of the first survey already carried out are to be shared in order to inform the Climate Change Strategy. The full report of all of this work will also be shared with the council in March 2021. It is also proposed that the council's Energy Manager will meet with the three pupils involved in this work from Deans Community High School to share the work already going on locally in schools.

This report sets out the various mechanisms that will be used to engage young people in the development of the Climate Change Strategy. This will also allow us to build contacts to ensure ongoing youth participation in climate activity.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

This report sets out the plan for engaging young people in the development of the Climate Change Strategy. This plan builds on activity already carried out to involve young people in discussions on the Climate Emergency, links in with partners and existing work underway and sets out further activity that will be carried out between January-April 2021. The Panel is asked to note the plans.

## **F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES**

Climate Emergency Working Group Recommendations – West Lothian Council 17

March 2020

Climate Emergency Declaration Motion – West Lothian Council 24 September 2019

Appendices/Attachments:

1. Youth Participation Plan

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2 February 2021

## **Appendix 1 – Youth Participation Plan**

<b>Method of engagement</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
Online survey	Send to all secondary schools and P6/P7s, promote via Developing Young Workforce links/school websites, etc Send to CLD youth groups, mental health group, wider children and young people organisations (e.g. Children 1 <sup>st</sup> ), MSYP Sent out via VSGWL and regeneration steering groups Link on Young Scot website, CLD Facebook page, WLC social media	January 2021
Online Focus group(s)	Invite out with online survey, to schools (secondary schools only), promote via Developing Young Workforce links, CLD youth groups, mental health group, wider children and young people organisations (e.g. Children 1 <sup>st</sup> ), MSYP	To be held in April 2021
West Lothian College	Discuss appropriate mechanism to engage with students	TBC
Children's Parliament	Link in to activity already underway and use the results of the three surveys being carried out to inform the development of the Climate Change Strategy. The Energy Manager will also meet with the young people involved from Deans CHS.	From January 2021