

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 17 October 2022

Report Title

Outcomes from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board relating to the Children’s Commissioner’s Takeover Challenge – Climate Change

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Children’s Commissioner’s Takeover Challenge (CCTOC) is a national initiative where children and young people take over an organisation or meeting and assume management/leadership roles.

The Children’s Commissioner’s Takeover was held on 16 March 2022 with climate change as the theme for this year’s takeover challenge, as it was one of the key priorities within Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC) manifesto for 2022 and identified through consultation.

RYC realise that Climate Change is a threat to communities now and action is needed and the RYC realise that the issue of Climate Change spans further than saving the planet and is primarily about caring for people who live on the planet.

This report outlines the issues raised by RYC at the Takeover Challenge and the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting on the 6 July 2022. This report also provides the proposed Cabinet response to the issues raised (in Appendix 1).

Recommendations

1. That the Cabinet response to the Children's Commissioners Takeover Challenge on Climate Change be approved.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Recommendations from the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge – Climate Change (16 March 2022)
Appendix 2 – Initial Equality Screening Assessment Form
Appendix 3 – Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

06 July 2022 Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge – Climate Change

Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, 16th March 2022 - Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge – Climate Change

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 06 July 2022

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 16 March 2022

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Outcomes from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board relating to the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge – Climate Change

1. Background

- 1.1 The Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge (CCTOC) is a national initiative where children and young people take over an organisation or meeting and assume management/leadership roles. As part of RMBC's commitment to the CCTOC, each year, with the exception of last year due to Covid-19, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) supports Rotherham Youth Cabinet (RYC) in undertaking a focused piece of work on a topic chosen by the young people.
- 1.2 The Children's Commissioner's Takeover held on 16 March 2022 was Chaired by Josie Brown, Rotherham Youth Cabinet. RYC chose climate change as the theme for this year's takeover challenge, as it was one of the key priorities in their manifesto for 2022 and identified through consultation.
- 1.3 RYC realise that Climate Change is a threat to communities now and action is needed and the RYC realise that the issue of Climate Change spans further than saving the planet and is primarily about caring for people who live on the planet.
- 1.4 By resolving the issues of Climate Change this could solve many interconnecting issues e.g. public transport improvements (focus on decarbonising means of travel), Youth participation in the democratic system (increasing number of young people engaged at the heart of the climate change movement), journey to net zero revitalises jobs and industries.
- 1.5 A number of members of the Rotherham Youth Cabinet are members of the Regional Youth Climate Assembly (RECA) created in April 2020 during lockdown.
- 1.6 Members of the RYC attended the COP 26 conference.
- 1.7 The Rotherham Youth Cabinet now wish to focus more on a local level as they understand this is a huge part in tackling Climate Change on a holistic level so that Rotherham and its communities can accelerate the journey to net zero and use it as a catalyst for further change.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Appendix 1 sets out the recommendations following the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge held in March 2022 and the proposed response for Cabinet to consider.
- 2.2 A series of questions were put by members of the RYC to Council Officers covering a range of topics associated with Climate Change. The questions are set out below:

- What is being done within schools and Council buildings to reduce the amount of energy being used? How can this be reduced further?
- What is the plan to combat plastic pollution across Rotherham and how is local action promoted?
- Locally, how much waste is being recycled? How do you plan on improving this?
- Most schools do not have recycling facilities, what is the Council doing to make recycling bins accessible for schools and is it possible to provide more recycling bins in streets and public spaces?
- How is the Council encouraging schools and academies to have a consistent and dedicated climate curriculum and what plans do you have to improve climate education for young people across Rotherham, who is responsible for implementing these plans and by when?
- How do you plan on involving the wider community ie adults, in tackling climate change and how are you raising awareness about the need to recycle and how to recycle?
- What action is taking place to improve the reliability, accessibility and affordability of public transport given the huge role it will play in decarbonising our travel?
- What has/is being done to improve the distribution of electric car charging points across Rotherham to ensure a smooth transition to net zero?
- What green jobs are available for young people to either take as a vocational pathway or being created in Rotherham?
- Can you explain what is being done in Rotherham to tackle the nature emergency and improve wildlife recovery?
- How is the Council working with other groups and organisations to tackle the intersectional factors around climate change?
- Are there plans for schools and Council buildings to have consistent approach to green technology such as solar panels?
- How are you ensuring that Council houses are environmentally friendly and energy efficient?
- What consideration has been made to introducing alternatives to single use plastics in school canteens and public buildings, for example leisure centre vending machines, cafes etc

2.3 In light of the responses to the questions provided by Council Officers, the Rotherham Youth Cabinet developed the recommendations contained in Appendix 1 specifically relating to Rotherham Borough. In summary these focus on:

- Enhanced action to reduce pollution and single-use plastics
- Strengthening inclusive engagement with young people on the climate and environment agenda for Rotherham including through the development of an Environmental Awards Scheme for Rotherham Schools
- Increased provision of carbon literacy training / awareness raising

In addition the Council has a Climate Emergency Action for 2022/23 and proposes to bring the next Action Plan to Cabinet in March 2023.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Option 1 – that Cabinet accepts the recommendations set out in Appendix 1 and provides a response to those recommendations, noting the actions that have already been taken. (Recommended option)
- 3.2 Option 2 – that Cabinet does not accept the Children’s takeover Challenge recommendations set out in Appendix 1. This is not recommended as this would be contrary to the Council’s declaration of a Climate Emergency on the 30th October 2019.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The appropriate Council Officers who are subject the recommendations set out in Appendix 1 have been consulted.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The CCTOC recommendations were considered by OSMB at the 6 July 2022 meeting and OSMB recommended these be considered by Cabinet. It is therefore recommended that Cabinet formally consider its response to its recommendations, in accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.
- 5.2 The timetable for implementing the recommendations is set out in Appendix 1.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 The contents of the report covering as it does questions and recommendations posed by the Rotherham Youth Cabinet does not commit the Council to additional resources. The activities included in the report were covered from existing approved budgets.
- 6.2 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report. However, where there is a need to procure goods, services or works in the delivery of the recommendations, this must be undertaken in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) and the Council’s own Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 There are no direct implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Whilst there are no direct measurable implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report, future actions that may arise from the recommendations could have an overall positive impact on reducing CO2 emissions and tackling climate change.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 Consideration should be given to the positive implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate change arising from the report's recommendations as part of Cabinet's response such as schools and other partners within the wider community.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 Officers have regard to the risks and mitigation factors associated with the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Challenge topic of Climate Change and have made recommendations accordingly

14. Accountable Officers

Paul Woodcock, Paul Woodcock, Strategic Director, Regeneration & Environment

Jonathan Marriott, Head of Asset Management

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	03/10/22
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	29/09/22
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	29/09/22

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