



Title of paper:	Update on Science City engagement work	
Report to:	Children's Partnership Board	
Date:	4 th October 2011	
Relevant Director:	John Yarham, Director of Economic Development, Nottingham City Council	Wards affected: All
Contact Officer(s) and contact details:	Jon Rea, Engagement and Participation, Nottingham City Council Tel. 0115 8764817	
Other officers who have provided input:	Alison Simpson, Economic Development, Nottingham City Council	
Relevant Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) objectives(s):		
Stronger safeguarding	– With a key focus on ensuring that there are high standards of safeguarding across all agencies and that the Partnership takes a proactive approach to the elimination of domestic violence.	
Healthy living	– With a key focus on increasing the proportion of children and young people who have a healthy weight.	
Reducing substance misuse	– Partnership work to lessen the impact on children of parental drug and alcohol misuse and to reduce drug and alcohol misuse amongst children and young people.	
Raising attainment	– Raising the attainment levels and increasing engagement in employment, education and training.	x
Improving attendance	– Improving rates of attendance at both Primary and Secondary as a key foundation of improving outcomes.	
Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):		
Update on the development of public engagement activities to promote Science City and Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects for children and young people in Nottingham.		
Recommendations:		
1	The Board: notes the progress made in developing plans to promote a science culture in Nottingham, including promoting the Science City brand	
2	Agrees in principle the benefits of the award programme and supports the idea of a pilot scheme as a way of testing the efficacy and outcomes of the approach	
3	Notes the benefits of the PLACES programme and considers the impact this will have on future partnership work	
4	Considers the resources needed to ensure effective Science City engagement and promotion work	

1. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

Background

Improving public engagement and in particular public engagement with children, young people and families has been a consistent theme of Science City partners for some time and pre-dates the current governance arrangements.

A number of partners are currently active in promoting the Science City brand and/or STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths). However opportunities have been identified to improve how partners work together to build a pro-science culture and encourage more young people to pursue STEM careers

Visioning the future

Earlier this year a number of partners including representatives from industry, education, government and young citizens came together for a visioning day at BioCity to look at ways of improving the engagement of children, young people and families in Nottingham Science City. Participants were asked to explore ways in which the city could better promote STEM learning and training to these groups, with the ultimate aim of increasing the number of entrants into STEM careers, particularly at level 3 attainment.

The resulting headlines from this visioning exercise were:

- schools and colleges are positive about developing stronger, more collaborative partnerships with STEM companies, while STEM companies would like more opportunities to bring real-life practice into the classroom;
- young people respond positively to the Science City brand, seeing it as aspirational and motivational, and want to be involved in developing a pro-STEM culture in the city through shared planning and decision-making;
- to encourage greater participation in STEM learning and career training Nottingham would benefit from having a focal point in schools and colleges to promote the Science City brand;
- Nottingham would benefit from a co-ordinated and strategically joined-up partnership plan for engaging children, young people and their families in STEM training and careers

The headlines from the visioning exercise have been taken up by the Advisory Council's Education and Training sub-group, who have initiated two strands of work in response: an award scheme for schools and colleges working with STEM companies; and the PLACES science communication programme to develop a local action plan for promoting science culture.

Science City Award scheme

Work to establish the scope of a Science City-branded award scheme is currently in progress, with tasks managed through the sub-group.

The purpose of the proposed scheme is to recognise work undertaken by participating schools in developing a pro-active relationship with one or more local STEM companies. In gaining the award the school would have to demonstrate it has implemented a series of guidelines to establish a pro-STEM culture across the school family, including engagement with parents. Schools meeting the criteria would be eligible for an award, subject to validation from the sub-group. The benefits of the award can be summarised thus:

- a) improving engagement in STEM subjects with a view to encouraging greater uptake of STEM career routes;

- b) helping schools and colleges build a strong pro-science culture within the curriculum and across the school community;
- c) enabling industry to build stronger links with schools and colleges;
- d) promoting awareness of the Science City brand in Nottingham.

Initial ideas for the award envisaged a structured kitemark-type programme with different levels of engagement for primary, secondary and further education stages. However it was felt that the resource implications of this were unrealistic at this time so a less prescriptive, more self-guided approach is being considered.

A pilot of the award is being planned for launch this term, subject to resources being available. A variety of sub-group partners are willing to contribute to this work, including Ignition and STEMnet (the STEM ambassador network) and a number of STEM industry partners, including Science City advisory Council board member Dr. Shahid Mian from Sambigen have put themselves forward to take part in the pilot. The Children's Partnership will need to play a role in driving the project forward and co-ordinate the pilot programme plan.

PLACES

The Science City award programme will have significance to the second engagement strand being developed through the sub-group, the European-funded PLACES programme, which was launched earlier this year.

This programme (managed through Nottingham Trent University's Center for Effective Learning in Science with Nottingham City Council as a programme partner) will see the development (to 2014) and implementation (from 2015) of a comprehensive local action plan for science communication, with the aim of building a pro-science culture in the city.

The programme is being run in conjunction with other European partner cities and is funded by two European science promotion agencies EUSCEA and ECSITE.

The aim of the programme is to enable the city to develop a coherent plan for promoting science by bringing together relevant partners, policies and activities and co-ordinating our approach to achieve better outcomes and improved resource efficiencies.

The programme will integrate the relevant strategic objectives of Economic Development and Cultural and Communities with those of the Children's Partnership and develop an outcomes-based science engagement plan with key partners including the two universities, schools and colleges, BioCity, Nottingham Science Park, Ignition, Education Business Futures, Game City and private sector agencies. Public engagement activities to enable children, young people and families to share in the design and delivery of the plan will be an integral part of the whole programme.

2. RISKS

(Risk to the CYPP, risk involved in undertaking the activity and risk involved in not undertaking the activity)

- Limitations of resources to support implementation of kite mark programme beyond pilot stage
- Lack of significant buy-in by partners (particularly education and industry) to establish an effective quality standard
- Uncertainty over long-term status of Science City designation

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Award programme

1. A small budget allocation needs to be identified to support
 - a) purchase and distribution of award toolkit materials such as certificates and plaques
 - b) establishment and maintenance of web pages to promote scheme and host downloadable resources
2. Need to agree the allocation of sufficient officer time to support development of pilot programme, co-ordination of partners and manage administrative duties arising

PLACES

The PLACES programme has a budget of approximately 15k euros per annum to support engagement activities and projects; and facilitate the development of the plan and partner involvement. The budget holder is CELS at NTU.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified at this stage

5. CLIENT GROUP

Children, young people and their families

6. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES ISSUES

None identified at this stage

7. OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES AFFECTED

Raising attainment – Raising the attainment levels and increasing engagement in employment, education and training.

8. CONTACT DETAILS

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