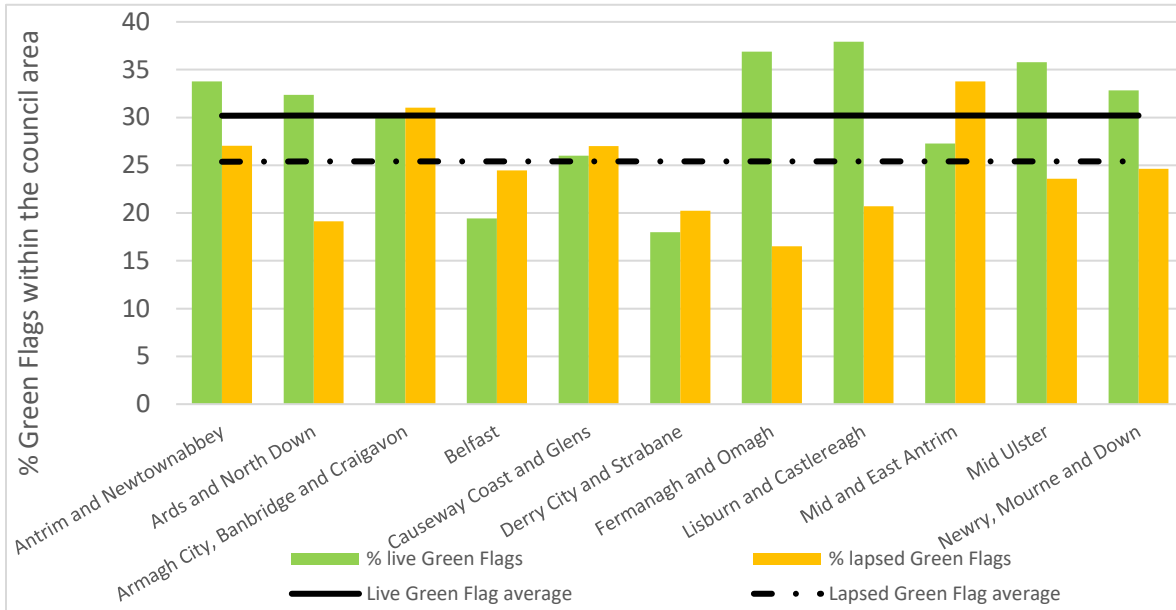


Report on	Eco-Schools Programme Support 2021/22
Date of Meeting	8 th December 2020
Reporting Officer	Mark McAdoo, Head of Environmental Services
Contact Officers	Mark McAdoo, Head of Environmental Services

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To seek approval to continue providing financial support to the Eco-Schools Programme
2.0	Background
2.1	Eco-Schools is an international award programme that guides participating schools on their sustainable journey, providing a framework to help embed these principles into the heart of school life. The Eco-Schools programme is an internationally recognised Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) programme now operating in 68 countries worldwide, representing more than 59,000 schools and 20 million pupils. In addition to Eco-Schools, FEE runs Green Key, Young Reporters for the Environment, Blue Flag for Beaches & Marinas and Learning about Forests as well as supporting other initiatives such as Single Use Plastics and Wrigleys Litter Less Campaign.
2.2	Eco-Schools in Northern Ireland is administered by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (KNIB) with financial support from DAERA and 10 local Councils. It is also supported by 5 sponsors and 32 Delivery Partners without whose practical support the programme could not have achieved the success and recognition it has received.
2.3	The programme encourages and directs young people to think about litter, waste and recycling, energy saving, water conservation, transport options, biodiversity, the natural environment they are custodians of, and make positive choices for a better future.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	On 31 st March 2020, the programme had 1,135 schools registered in Northern Ireland which is 100% of schools. The number of schools in Northern Ireland has decreased since last year due to closures and mergers (the new schools have all been registered with the programme). The total number of live Green Flag awards is 332 which represents 29% of schools (this figure has reduced as many were up for renewal and are awaiting to be assessed).
3.2	In addition to the Eco-Schools Green Flag, schools can also achieve intermediate accreditation by obtaining Bronze and Silver self-assessed award status, with at present 123 schools having achieved a <i>maximum</i> of Bronze level and 168 having achieved a <i>maximum</i> of Silver level. KNIB assessed and awarded 116 schools with Green Flags in

Northern Ireland from April 2020 – September 2020. The graph below shows the percentage of live and lapsed Green Flags within each of the supporting council areas:



3.3 Mid Ulster Council’s Recycling Officer team support schools wishing to gain Eco-School status as a means of assisting with the delivery of recycling and waste education in schools and the wider environmental message through a range of other topics e.g. litter.

3.4 Detailed metrics for Eco School activities in Mid Ulster are provided as an appendix.

3.5 Mid Ulster District Council has financially supported the Eco-Schools programme in Northern Ireland since 2015. KNIB has presented a number of funding options for continued support in 2021/22 ranging from £1,700 to £10,942 for the year. However due to the ongoing challenges due to Covid19 it is not proposed that we increase our level of support beyond the current annual contribution of £1,700 (which equates to an investment of approximately 6 pence per pupil in Mid Ulster).

4.0 Other Considerations

4.1 Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications

Financial: The expenditure of £1,700 can be met from Environmental Services budget

Human: The Recycling Officers assist in the delivery of the programme and are trained Eco Schools assessors

Risk Management: None

4.2 Screening & Impact Assessments

Equality & Good Relations Implications: None

Rural Needs Implications: None

5.0 Recommendation(s)

5.1 It is recommended that approval is granted to continue providing financial support to KNIB for delivery of the Eco Schools Programme to the amount of £1,700 in 2021/22.

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Letter from KNIB outlining Eco-Schools Support Request for 2021/22
6.2	Mid Ulster District Council Eco-Schools Metrics (as at September 2020)