

Scotland's Schools for the Future
Update on Campbeltown and Dunoon Schools Projects

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides members with an update on the Campbeltown and Dunoon schools projects and outlines proposals for next steps.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Members:-

- a) Note the current position.
- b) Agree officers take forward the Campbeltown Grammar School project in accordance with the process set out in Paragraphs 3.8 and 3.9 of this report.
- c) Determine whether to:
 1. Pursue the provision of a new Dunoon Area Shared Primary Campus on the basis of the business case previously agreed; or
 2. (a) review whether there are other options that may be preferred in regard to the new build, refurbishment, amalgamation or otherwise of the current Dunoon, St Mun's and Kirn Primary Schools, as set out in paragraphs 3.14 to 3.18 of this report; and

(b) take forward the review of the project governance arrangements, and liaise with the SFT and Scottish Government, as set out in paragraphs 3.20 to 3.25 of this report.

3.0 DETAIL

Project Background

3.1 The Council has previously approved outline business cases for the establishment of a new Campbeltown Grammar and Dunoon Area Primary Joint Campus (to replace the existing buildings housing each of St Mun's Primary, Kirn Primary and Dunoon Primary schools and

Clyde Cottage Nursery) on the basis that these would be Capital funded projects.

- 3.2 The Scottish Government on 22 March 2011 advised the Council that funding awarded from the “Scotland’s Schools for the Future” project (SSF) for the proposed new school facilities at Campbeltown Grammar and Dunoon Area Primary Joint Campus is now to be provided on a revenue basis. They have set out the key conditions and guidance for procuring bodies receiving revenue finance and these have been accepted by the Council.
- 3.3 The Scottish Futures Trust (SFT), on behalf of the Scottish Government, have confirmed that the projects for the proposed improved school facilities will be procured through the hub Design, Build, Finance and Maintain (DBFM) model.

Campbeltown Grammar School

- 3.4 The agreed business case was based on the proposal to replace the existing Campbeltown Grammar secondary school with a new build facility.
- 3.5 Work has been undertaken on the selection of a long list of sites for the new grammar school. 11 potential sites have been identified. The intention is to develop a site options appraisal process that will identify the optimum site having regard to a number of factors which may include: Educational benefit; Community Access; Synergies with the Council’s CHORD objectives; Affordability relating to the potential costs associated with each site and; Deliverability taking into account the complexity of delivering the project on any given site. A process has been undertaken to ingather information in relation to all of the sites. This process has included liaison with SEPA, Scottish Water and the HSE. The information is now being examined to assess how preferred sites might be shortlisted.
- 3.6 It is expected that the Council will wish to seek as broad and deep a view on any preferred sites as possible. Cambeltown Grammar School management have expressed a clear wish for the school to lead the process of public consultation with assistance from other Council staff. In this way the School would be, and be seen to be, the owners of and drivers in the process.
- 3.7 Work is underway on the compiling of the educational and technical brief for the new school. Feedback is being received from the evaluation of the recently completed “Try Before You Buy”, open plan teaching area that was constructed in the top floor of the existing school building. In addition a “Champions Group” has been established to work with Pupils, Teachers, and others to establish the requirements of key stakeholder groups. This work is ongoing.

Next Steps

- 3.8 It is recommended that officers:
- Develop the option appraisal process that will produce preferred site or sites;
 - Develop a consultation process, in liaison with Campbeltown Grammar School, in respect of the preferred site, or sites; and
 - Report to the Council on the proposed process in respect of the above.
- 3.9 It is further recommended that officers continue the development of the educational and technical brief for the new school in consultation with the existing Champions Group and Architecture and Design Scotland on the understanding that the progress of the development of this document will be reported to the Council.

Dunoon Area Shared Primary Campus

- 3.10 The agreed business case was based on the proposal for a new build primary school which brings together on one site, the Kirn, St Mun's and Dunoon Primary Schools along with the Clyde Cottage nursery.
- 3.11 Following approval of Initial and Outline Business cases, plans are advanced to a stage sufficient to allow a Planning Application (in principle) to be made for a shared campus school on the site of the existing Kirn primary school and adjacent council owned rugby pitch. The necessary statutory consultations under the Pre Application Consultation (PAC) process have been completed and the PAC report has been finalised. Further work however is needed to finalise proposals for compensatory measures to offset the loss of the existing grass rugby pitch to meet the requirements of sportscotland as a statutory consultee. This work would require a separate planning application to be made.
- 3.12 Following extensive consultations with staff, pupils, parents and specialist external agencies, including Architecture and Design Scotland, through the Champions Group process, a draft educational and technical brief for the new school is nearing completion.
- 3.13 The proposal has met with significant levels of opposition within the Dunoon community. In view of this, at the request of the Lead Councillor for Education and Lifelong Learning, Members are asked to determine whether they wish to pursue the provision of a new Dunoon Area Shared Primary Campus on the basis of continuing the process set out above. Alternatively, Members may wish to consider reviewing all other options to improve the school estate in Dunoon. In the event that Members agree to carry out a review this will be managed by Facility Services on

behalf of, and in liaison with, the Council's Education Service in terms of the process set out in paragraph 3.14.

Possible Scope of Review

3.14 The options for the future provision of primary education within Dunoon can be summarised as follows:

- Refurbish 3 existing schools and Nursery Accommodation
 - Dunoon Primary
 - Kirn Primary
 - St Mun's Primary and Clyde Cottage Nursery
- Provide a new build school at Kirn replacing all 3 Schools and Nursery as per the current shared campus proposals
- Provide a new build school replacing all 3 Schools and Nursery as per the current shared campus proposals but on alternative sites (if such sites are currently available)
- Provide new build school replacing Dunoon Primary and Kirn Primary *only* on the Kirn site, or an alternative site if available, with a refurbishment of St Mun's.

Possible Review Process

If Members require that officers undertake the review it is recommended that it follows the process below:

- Assess current information including drawings and reports on the existing school buildings
- Commission/carry out in depth surveys as required to provide detailed information on the condition, suitability and sufficiency of the existing school buildings. This will include reports on the soundness of the existing structures and associated services.
- Provide outline plans to alter and adapt as required, the existing school buildings and associated external areas to meet the requirements of the Argyll and Bute Educational and Technical Brief and the requirements of the Governments "Building Better Schools: Investing in Scotland's Future Document.
- Provide estimated, costed solutions for all recommendations, both refurbishment and new build. This will include estimates of both capital and life cycle costs over a 30 year period.

- Set out the relative merits of all options using the primary criteria of:
 1. condition
 2. suitability
 3. sufficiency

This process would also have regard to a number of other measures including energy efficiency, running costs, and compliance with the Government's Vision and Aspirations for the School Estate. In addition all options must consider the likely availability of government funding.

- 3.15 Following development and agreement of the scope of the review, competitive fee bids will be obtained through a competitive tendering process managed by the councils Procurement team.
- 3.16 Whilst difficult to estimate the level of fee bids that will be obtained it is expected that the cost for this study would be in the range £25,000 to £50,000. Members are asked to note that no specific budgetary provision has been made for this work.
- 3.17 It is anticipated that fee bids could be obtained before the end of July. This would allow disruptive survey works to be undertaken during the schools' October break with the final report being made available before the end of the year.
- 3.18 Following completion and reporting to the Council on the results of any review process, it is expected that the Council will wish to carry out a public consultation exercise. Proposals on this will be reported to Members for their consideration. This will include a projection of the likely cost of the exercise as Members should note that no specific funding provision has been made for this at this point in time.
- 3.19 In the reporting of any review of the proposed schools for Dunoon, officers will also report on progress in relation to the new Campbeltown Grammar. These projects are currently considered by the Scottish Future's Trust to be a single project, for procurement purposes, and may have related interdependencies.

Review of Governance Arrangements

- 3.20 The Executive previously agreed governance arrangements for the project on 9 April 2012. To meet the key governance arrangements outlined in the key requirements and guidance, previously issued by the SFT, it was agreed that the Council constitute a special committee, consisting of nominated Members, with specific responsibility for the delivery of this project. The Special Committee would receive reports and recommendations from a Project Board, consisting of the members of the Special Committee along with nominated third parties. In turn the Project Board would receive reports and recommendations from a Project team comprising Council officers. These governance

arrangements were in compliance with key requirements and guidance issued by the SFT.

- 3.21 This is a similar governance structure to that utilised in the Council's NPDO Project, a revenue funded project, and has been utilised in other Council Projects and is compliant with the key requirements and guidance.
- 3.22 As part of the review process the matter of the suitability of these governance arrangements will be considered and reported upon to Members.

Proposed Liaison with SFT and Scottish Government

- 3.23 To provide appropriate context of the relationship between both projects discussions will require to take place with the SFT and, possibly, the Scottish Government in relation to a number of matters to include the following:
- How any alteration in the current proposal for Dunoon will affect the allocated funding from the Scottish Government. The view of the SFT is that any suggestion to alter the proposal will require specific approval from the Scottish Government.
 - The SFT will likely require to consider whether either of the projects would individually be of sufficient financial scope to be deliverable on their own as revenue funded projects.
 - Whether revenue funding would be suitable and / or available to complete a refurbishment project. The SFT's view is that not many revenue funded refurbishment projects have taken place to date.
 - The SFT's advice is that if the refurbishment projects were not deemed to be suitable for revenue funding, capital monies would then need to be identified. If the projects were required to be delivered through capital, the SFT have advised that they consider such funding may not become available to fund refurbishment projects until 2017/18 at the earliest.
 - How the key objectives of the Scotland's Schools for the Future programme will be achieved through a refurbishment route. A refurbishment option would have to demonstrate a clear business case that meets these objectives.
 - Whether the same funding will be available for a refurbishment option as for a new build. The SFT view is that, any funding for a refurbishment option is unlikely to be offered at the full m2 rate. Historically, a refurbishment option would be restricted to approximately two thirds of the new build option as, beyond this, the level of Value for Money would be questioned.

- 3.24 In reporting to members on the results of any review process, officers will set out the advice received from the SFT as to the possible impact on Scottish Government funding in respect of the options considered.

Timescale for completion of the review

- 3.25 It is expected that the review will be completed by the end of 2012 and the conclusions of the review reported to the first available Council thereafter. In the meantime, officers would report any matters arising having a significant bearing upon the project to the Council.
- 3.26 It should be noted that design work on the Dunoon Primary Campus project has been suspended pending consideration of this report.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The recommendations provide a mechanism for a transparent and inclusive way forward for the implementation of both schools projects. In the case of the Dunoon Primary schools/ nursery the availability of an independent investigation into a range of refurbishment and new build options will inform an educated debate on the potential way forward.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy Acceptance of this report may ultimately alter the policy previously agreed by the Council's Executive on 19 April 2012.
- 5.2 Financial - The general financial impact of this report will be assessed as part of the review proposed in the report. At this point in time, the cost of the feasibility work is estimated at between £25,000 and £50,000 although additional financial provision will have to be made in due course for any future public consultation exercise.
- 5.3 Legal – None at present.
- 5.4 HR – None at present.
- 5.5 Equalities – None at present.
- 5.6 Risk – The main risks resulting from the report are set out in para 3.23 above.
- 5.7 Customer Service – None at present

Executive Director of Community Services
Executive Director of Customer Services

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