

DUNOON AREA PRIMARY SCHOOLS – OPTION SELECTION

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**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out the proposed approach and methodology for engaging in consultation with the public in respect of the shortlist of options for the improved Dunoon area primary schools.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended the Area Committee agree the proposed process for engaging in consultation with the public in respect of the shortlisted options for the improved Dunoon area primary schools in compliance with the delegation to the Executive Director of Community Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Education and Lifelong Learning and local Members.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 23 May 2013, the Council agreed that two options for the improved Dunoon area primary schools and pre 5 provision should be taken forward for detailed appraisal and public consultation. These options were:
1. Formation of a new Kirn PS and nursery on the existing Kirn site by retaining the existing 1881 building and its extension with minimal refurbishment, demolishing the 1950's extension; formation of a new Dunoon PS at the existing Dunoon primary site by retaining the existing primary facade and constructing a new build school behind. St Mun's and Clyde Cottage Pre 5 Establishment to be refurbished. All schools to meet Grade A condition and suitability standards.
  2. The construction of a new build shared campus and Pre-5 provision to replace Dunoon, Kirn and St Mun's primary schools, and the Clyde Cottage nursery, on the site of the existing St Mun's PS, the existing Dunoon library site, part of the Dolphin Hall grounds and the Rose Garden site.
- 3.2 The detailed appraisal process was agreed by the Council at that meeting and the provision of the detailed arrangements for the public consultation was delegated to the Executive Director of Community Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Education and Lifelong Learning and local Members. The paragraphs below set out the proposed approach to the consultation resulting from this process and closely relate to the arrangements

agreed by Council for the newbuild school projects at Campbeltown and Oban.

### Proposed Public Consultation Methodology

- 3.3 It is expected that the Council will wish to seek as broad and deep a view on the shortlisted options as possible. The schools' management have expressed a clear wish for the schools to lead the process of public consultation with assistance from other Council staff. In this way the schools would be, and be seen to be, the owners of and drivers of the process.
- 3.4 The principal objectives in consulting on the shortlisted options would be to:
1. Ensure that everyone in the community has an opportunity to contribute to the consultation process;
  2. Provide a sufficient, and clearly defined, period for the process;
  3. Provide contextual information in relation to, and the considerations the Council has had, in identifying these as preferred options.

### *Contextual Information*

- 3.5 To achieve the objectives above, the Council would intend to provide contextual information in relation to the long list of options and the reasons why this was reduced to the short list.
- 3.6 It will be made clear to the public that the outcome of the consultation will be a material consideration which will inform the debate on the final selection of the site to be taken by the Council. . The clear message would be a positive one that the Council is proposing to provide improved Dunoon, Kirn and St Mun's primary schools and Clyde Cottage pre 5 provision. The choice is one where the Council wants to obtain the optimal solution that will bring the most benefit to the Dunoon area, having regard to a range of determining factors. While the Council requires to balance considerations such as cost and affordability it wishes the public to contribute their view to help inform the Council's thinking. This would allow the public to form a reasoned opinion in relation to the preference for one of the options.

### *Proposed Process*

- 3.7 Information required to support the consultation:

Identification of the initial long list of potential options, including location maps that was considered in the option selection process.

Information would also be provided in respect of the short listed options in order to demonstrate their comparative:

- Educational Benefit;

- Deliverability – size, ground and other specific site conditions including any data/commentary from statutory bodies where appropriate;
- Accessibility; and
- Affordability.

### 3.8 Short listed options:

The Public will be asked for their views based on the information above for the preferred option. The public view would be a material consideration taken into account when considering the preferred option.

#### *Public Consultation Period*

### 3.9 It is proposed that the public consultation will commence on 16 September and conclude on 4 October 2013. Further information on the timing of the consultation can be found in the Appendix of this document and has been influenced by several factors, including:

- Council approval of which options will be subject to consultation
- Time to produce information required for displays, website creation, response forms
- Availability of facilities for open events
- Holiday periods. Consultation should not fall during the holiday periods and/or not to start or end within the holiday period.
- Time to collate and analyse responses
- Date to report back to the Council.

#### Key features:

### 3.10 The schools will host the initial meeting in the Queens Hall. An evening event is proposed.

#### This meeting to focus on:

- The good news story for Dunoon
- Option selection process
- Consultation process
- Background to funding, timescale of new/improved school development.

### 3.11 This meeting would provide also the first opportunity for the public to view the detailed option information as listed above. Thereafter, during a 3 week consultation period, the same option information would be available in the following ways:

- School and Council websites
- In addition, Public viewing of the option information would be available over two and a half open days hosted by the schools but held within the Queens Hall in order to avoid disruption to school activities. The detailed

option information would be available for viewing within a convenient Town Centre location such as the Queens Hall throughout the consultation period. The Open days are proposed as a Thursday all day from 10am – 8pm, Friday 10am – 4pm and Saturday morning 10am -12 noon. The use of a current empty shop premises to be investigated as a permanent window display during the consultation period, and beyond.

- At the same time continued publication of the consultation process would take place through websites, school newsletters, text reminders, local press and radio, displays in the schools and the Queens Hall, Dolphin Hall and Library.
- During the suggested 3 week period opportunity will also be taken to meet with a focus group to discuss the option selection. The focus group would encompass a selection of the Council's Community Planning Partners as well as other representative community groups.

### *Consultation Responses*

- 3.12 Consultation responses to be made through links on school/council websites, using some form of electronic survey tool, a dedicated e-mail to Education, hard copies received by post to each of the primary schools or handed into the local schools.
- 3.13 It is proposed that the consultation process may be assisted by an independent third party, such as Architecture and Design Scotland, who could assist in mediating the focus group and the open days.
- 3.14 At the end of the consultation period the schools, assisted by the Project Team, would collate the results of the consultation responses in relation to the preferred options. This would then be reported to the Council in the context of the considerations in relation to impact, affordability, deliverability and risk. This would allow the Council to determine which would be the preferred option.

### *Relationship to other projects*

- 3.15 As previously reported to the Council, it is expected that the Dunoon area schools will be included in a single project with the new Campbeltown Grammar School and Oban High School in accordance with the request by the Scottish Futures Trust. It is intended that the conclusions of the option selection and subsequent public consultation process for the improved Dunoon area schools will be reported to the Council around the same time as the conclusion of the preferred site selection process for the new Oban High School. The new Campbeltown Grammar School site selection process has been concluded.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The Council made a decision on 23 May 2013 that the process for consulting with the public in respect of the options of the improved Dunoon area primary schools should be delegated to the Executive Director of Community Services in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Education and Lifelong Learning together with local Members. The proposed process set out above will provide a robust, transparent methodology for engaging with the public to inform the process for arriving at a preferred option.

#### **5. IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Policy: The recommendations in this report are in line with the Council's decision of 23 May 2013.
- 5.2 Financial: It is anticipated the costs of the public consultation can be met from within existing departmental budgets.
- 5.3 Legal: None at present
- 5.4 HR: None at present
- 5.5 Equalities: None at present
- 5.6 Risk: If the Council do not have a clear and transparent process for the option selection and consultation it is less likely that effective engagement will happen.
- 5.7 Customer Service: Implementation of these measures will enable the community engagement in the selection of the preferred option of the improved Dunoon area primaries.

Cleland Sneddon  
Executive Director of Community Services

6 August 2013

## APPENDIX

### Proposed Timescale

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Council consideration of shortlist of options to take to public consultation	29 August 2013
Press advert and leaflets ready	9 September 2013
Public Consultation – web-based questionnaire and newspaper advertising	16 September 2013 to 4 October 2013
Consultation commences with launch event at the Queen’s Hall, 7pm to 9pm	16 September 2013 – 7pm to 9pm
Open days at the Queen’s Hall :	19 Sept – 10am - 8pm 20 Sept – 10am – 4pm 21 Sept – 10am – 12pm
Reminder tweets	September/October 2013
Focus group meetings	During above period
Closing date tweet	Late September 2013
Consultation period closes	4 October 2013
Collation of consultation results	October 2013
Report to council with preferred options	31 October 2013
Outcome press announcement	31 October 2013