

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Executive Director of Educational Services

Educational Services Committee: 15 May 2013

Subject: Regeneration of the Schools Estate: Bellsmyre schools and EECC co-location

1. Purpose

- 1.1** This report asks that members approve processes required to allow the Council to proceed with a project to construct new buildings and campus to replace the existing Aitkenbar Primary School, St Peter's Primary School, St Peter's Early Education and Childcare Centre (EECC) and Andrew B Cameron EECC.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that the Educational Services Committee:

- a) approve the construction of new buildings and campus to replace the existing Aitkenbar Primary School, St Peter's Primary School, St Peter's Early Education and Childcare Centre (EECC) and Andrew B Cameron EECC.
- b) note that the project will be procured through Hub West Scotland;
- c) note that the present St Peter's site has been identified as the most appropriate site following informal consultation;
- d) authorise that site investigations be undertaken on the St Peter's site;
- e) note that, following completion of site investigations, a further report will be tabled at a future Educational Services Committee detailing the results of the investigations and seeking authority to commence statutory consultation under terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010; and
- f) authorise the Executive Director of Educational Services, in consultation with the Executive Director of HEEDS, the Head of Finance and Resources and the Head of Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services to procure the necessary technical, legal and financial support through the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) Framework Agreement.

3. Background

- 3.1** A detailed business case was prepared in November 2011 which was approved by a CMT challenge panel in December 2011 as a priority project for funding consideration under the Council's Income Securitisation proposals. The project consisted of Aitkenbar Primary, St Peter's Primary and EECC and Andrew B Cameron EECC coming together on the St Peters site as one building, retaining individual school identities but creating a single EECC. The Council later decided not to implement the Income Securitisation proposals at this time.
- 3.2** The business case contained an initial design to planning stage C and a detailed cost plan for the project.
- 3.3** Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) is currently developing a reference design that all authorities should consider when designing any new Primary School projects. The project team is considering this alternative design and is working with SFT to ensure this meets with our project objectives and budget.
- 3.4** Following approval by Council on 29 February 2012 and agreement with the Scottish Futures Trust that this should be a "qualifying" project, the SFT has approved £600,000 of funding to assist this project – provided the project is procured from the local hubco (Hub West Scotland). The procurement route will therefore be through Hub West Scotland and the process for appointing the design team will begin in May 2013.
- 3.5** The design process will continue to involve the Bellsmyre schools and EECCs community and a representative of the Archdiocese of Glasgow to ensure the final co-location design is agreeable to all stakeholders.
- 3.6** As the new school will be built on the current St Peter's site both schools will require to be accommodated within the Aitkenbar building during the construction phase. A plan of how this will be implemented has been prepared and agreed with both schools.
- 3.7** Funding for this project has been approved within the 10 year Capital Programme totalling £9.311m (including £600,000 from the SFT) with a site start planned for financial year 2014/15 (see Appendix 1 for Outline Project Plan).

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** The site selection process has been concluded with the St Peter's site being the preferred option as per the detailed business case. This results in an extensive decant process to accommodate both schools within the Aitkenbar building.
- 4.2** Planning officers will be required to be consulted through the design stage process to ensure planning approval is achieved.

- 4.3 Roads officers will be required to be consulted throughout the design process to ensure any roads network issues are factored into the design.
- 4.4 Statutory consultation for the construction of the new Bellsmyre Co-location under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 will be required as the preferred location is the St Peter's site and requires Aitkenbar Primary to move from there existing location.
- 4.5 It is important that the design team considers all recently completed school designs including the primary schools reference design supported by SFT.
- 4.6 The final design will require to be agreed by the Archdiocese of Glasgow representative to ensure that all proposed shared space such as dining, playground and staffrooms etc are in accordance with the current policies of the Archdiocese in relation to the co-location of denominational and non-denominational schools.

5. People Implications

- 5.1 This is a complex project and the Council will require to employ additional human resources in the form of consultants and/or secondees to assist, for example, with architectural, planning, legal and educational issues and to deal with the large amount of paperwork likely to be generated by the two statutory consultation processes. These requirements have been factored into the capital sums allocated to the project. The SFT has established a framework of professional advisers to assist with these processes.
- 5.2 There will be implications for a small number of staff involved in the Bellsmyre co-location. In these cases, the terms of the Council's Organisational Change policy will apply. It should be noted that, because Aitkenbar Primary and St Peter's Primary will remain separate schools, the terms of the Council's policy for the amalgamation and closure of schools will not apply.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The sums identified in the Capital Programme approved by Council on 6 February is anticipated to cover the costs of this project.
- 6.2 The capital cost of the projects is estimated as £9.311m (£600k from the Scottish Government enabling funding via the SFT and £8.711m from the Council's Capital Programme)
- 6.3 The Council's capital programme assumes a capital receipt of £950,000 from the sale of the land at the current Aitkenbar site.
- 6.4 The business case referred to at 3.1 above identified that this project should generate a revenue saving of £190,000 per year following the opening of the new campus. This has been utilised in the recently agreed capital plan to

support prudential borrowing which assists to fund the capital programme to the value of £2.8m.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 The key risks are as follows:

- the unknown outcome of statutory consultation as required by Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010;
- the views of the Archdiocese of Glasgow on specifications for co-located schools;
- the capacity of HubCo West, a relatively new organisation, to deliver on multiple procurement projects;
- the securing of planning permission
- ground conditions.

7.2 These risks will be mitigated by the following means:

- a consultation process which fully complies with the terms of the 2010 Act and which builds on the experience of Councils which have carried out similar consultations since 2010;
- effective project management and governance;
- the allocation of sufficient human and other resources to each of the projects; and
- detailed ground conditions survey.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 An Equalities screening indicated no negative impact. This project will impact positively on the young people affected.

9. Consultation

9.1 As detailed elsewhere in this report, statutory consultation under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 will require to be conducted with reference to this project.

9.3 This project has been subject to extensive discussion by the Strategic Asset Management Group and the Corporate Management Team.

9.4 Legal Services, the Section 95 Officer, and the Executive Director of Housing Environment and Economic Development have been consulted on the content of this report.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 The Bellsmyre project will make a significant contribution to the delivery of the Council's strategic priorities of Economic Regeneration and Improved Outcomes for Children and Young People.

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Date: 30 April 2013

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Appendices: Appendix 1: High Level Project Plan

Background Papers: Equalities Impact Screening
Council Report 6 February 2013: 10 Year Capital
Programme

Wards Affected: Ward 3