

Draft Pending Decision: 11 September 2013

West Dunbartonshire Council

Educational Services



**A Proposal Document
for
Primary Education and Early Education and Childcare Provision
within the Bellsmyre area of Dumbarton**

**The following schools and Early Education and Childcare Centres are
affected by this Proposal Document:**

**AITKENBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL
ST. PETER'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
ANDREW B CAMERON EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE CENTRE
ST. PETER'S EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE CENTRE**

**This document has been issued by West Dunbartonshire Council for
consultation in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010**

1. Introduction

1.1 At its meeting on 11 September 2013, the Educational Services Committee of West Dunbartonshire Council agreed to:

- a) approve the launch of statutory consultation by the Executive Director of Educational Services under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) Scotland) Act 2010 on the proposal to construct co-located replacements for St Peter's Primary School and Aitkenbar Primary School, together with a new EECC to replace Andrew B Cameron and St Peter's EECCs, the new campus to be located on the site of the current St Peter's Primary School;
- b) approve a recommendation that the consultation period should run from Monday 16 September 2013 to Friday 8 November 2013, a total of 32 days when the schools are open for pupils; and
- c) agree that a report outlining the results of the consultation and making appropriate recommendations be presented to the meeting of the Educational Services Committee on Wednesday 4 December 2013.

2. The Proposal

2.1 West Dunbartonshire Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the consultation process:

- to discontinue educational provision at the existing Aitkenbar and St Peter's Primary schools and at Andrew B Cameron and St Peter's Early Education and Childcare Centres (EECCs);
- to establish a new educational campus on the Current St Peter's site comprising co-located new-build replacements for Aitkenbar and St Peter's Primary Schools and a new EECC to replace Andrew B Cameron and St Peter's EECCs;
- to temporarily decant the pupils and staff of St Peter's Primary to Aitkenbar Primary and the children and staff of St Peter's EECC to hatted accommodation on the Aitkenbar Primary campus during the construction period of the new campus;
- the new campus to open in January 2016 or as soon as possible thereafter.

2.2 A map identifying the locations of the 4 affected establishments is included as Appendix 1.

3. Background to the Proposal

- 3.1** West Dunbartonshire Council's Schools Estate Strategy identified the replacement of the existing school and EECC buildings in Bellsmyre as one of its three top priorities. This decision was based on the poor condition and suitability of the four buildings and significant underoccupancy in the two primary schools. There was also a strong desire to retain pre-school and primary education provision within the community of Bellsmyre.
- 3.2** During an extensive consultation with all the primary school communities in West Dunbartonshire, conducted in 2008 and 2009, widespread support was expressed across the Bellsmyre community for the idea of a co-location of denominational and non-denominational primary schools in the area.
- 3.3** On 6 February 2013, Council approved a ten year capital plan which included an allocation of £9.311m for the Bellsmyre schools/EECC project: £600k from the Scottish Government's enabling fund via the Scottish Futures Trust and £8.711m from the Council's Capital Programme.
- 3.4** On 15 May 2013, the Educational Services Committee agreed to:
1. 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;
 2. note that the project will be procured through Hub West Scotland;
 3. note that the present St Peter's site has been identified as the most appropriate site;
 4. authorise that site investigations be undertaken on the St Peter's site;
 5. note that, following completion of site investigations, a further report will be tabled at a future Educational Services Committee detailing the results of the site investigations and seeking authority to commence statutory consultation under terms of the Schools (Consultation) Scotland) Act 2010; and
 6. 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.
- 3.5** Site investigations at the St Peter's Primary School site have now been completed and revealed no issues which would prevent the construction of the new campus on that site.
- 3.6** At its meeting on 11 September 2013, the Educational Services Committee agreed to:

- a) approve the launch of statutory consultation by the Executive Director of Educational Services under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the proposal to construct co-located replacements for St Peter's Primary School and Aitkenbar Primary School, together with a new EECC to replace Andrew B Cameron and St Peter's EECCs, the new campus to be located on the site of the current St Peter's Primary School;
- b) approve a recommendation that the consultation period should run from Monday 16 September 2013 to Wednesday 13 November 2013, a total of 32 days when the schools are open for pupils; and
- c) agree that a report outlining the results of the consultation and making appropriate recommendations be presented to a future meeting of the Educational Services Committee.

4. Current Position

- 4.1** Aitkenbar Primary School is located in Whiteford Avenue in the Bellsmyre district of Dumbarton. It was constructed in 1959 and has a capacity of 339. Its roll at the last census date of September 2012 was 147, an occupancy rate of 43.4%.. However, projections indicate that this figure is likely to rise over the next 5 years. The building is a traditional school structure in poor physical condition (condition rating C). Its inflexible design makes it less than ideal for modern learning and teaching methods and the delivery of a 21st century curriculum (suitability rating B).
- 4.2** St Peter's Primary School is located in Howatshaws Road in the Bellsmyre district of Dumbarton. It was constructed in 1966 and has a capacity of 392, Its roll at the last census date of September 2012 was 133, an occupancy rate of 33.9%. However, projections indicate that this figure is likely to rise over the next 5 years. The building is a traditional school structure in poor physical condition (condition rating D). Its inflexible design makes it less than ideal for modern learning and teaching methods and the delivery of a 21st century curriculum (suitability rating B).
- 4.3** St Peter's Early Education and Childcare Centre is located within the St Peter's Primary School campus. It was constructed in 1966 and has a capacity for 50 three and four year olds (morning and afternoon). The building is in poor physical condition (condition rating D, suitability rating B).
- 4.4** Andrew B Cameron Early Education and Childcare Centre is located in Broomhill Drive in Bellsmyre. It was constructed in 1975 and has a capacity for 60 three and four year olds (morning and afternoon). The building is in poor physical condition (condition rating C, suitability rating B).

5. Proposed new Campus

5.1 Proposed site

5.1.1 Following careful consideration of a range of options, the Council has identified the current St Peter's Primary School/EECC site as the preferred site for the new campus.

5.1.2 The main reasons for the choice of this site are:

- the site is already within the Council's ownership;
- the suitable size, ground conditions, topography and the availability of utility services on the site;
- the fact that the site is located next to St Peter's RC church, with which St Peter's Primary School has long-standing and strong connections;
- the fact that the Aitkenbar site is likely to be more attractive to potential purchasers and is likely to realise a larger capital receipt for the Council than the St Peter's site, given Aitkenbar's adjacency to existing private housing.

5.1.3 In order to make maximum use of the St Peter's site, and to ensure that the new building is located in the most appropriate area of the site, it will be necessary temporarily to decant the young people and staff from St Peter's Primary and EECC to facilitate the demolition of the existing buildings in advance of the commencement of construction of the new campus.

5.2 Temporary Decant Arrangements

5.2.1 Pupils and staff from St Peter's Primary School will transfer to the Aitkenbar Primary School building from April 2014 for a period of 21 months until the new school opens in January 2016. There is sufficient classroom, office, storage, toilet and other facilities to accommodate the additional personnel, although there will be some minor adaptations required, the cost of which has been factored into the overall programme. The two head teachers have already been consulted about these arrangements and they are confident that there should be no educational or social detriment to the children involved. The two schools will continue to be managed as separate establishments during this period,

5.2.2 Pupils and staff from St Peter's EECC will transfer to hatted accommodation on the Aitkenbar campus from April 2014 for a period of 21 months until the new school opens in January 2016.

5.3 Proposed Facilities

5.3.1 Facilities will require to accommodate 110 3 and 4 year olds (morning and afternoon) in the EECC and 200 pupils in each of the two primary schools (to allow for a projected rise in primary school rolls).

5.3.2 The draft accommodation schedule for the new campus is currently under development.

5.3.3 The two primary schools will continue to operate as separate establishments, with their own teaching and support staff. Discussions with the Archdiocese of Glasgow will ensure that the plans for the co-location of the two schools are in accordance with the Catholic Church's protocols for co-located establishments.

5.3.4 The new Early Education and Childcare Centre, the name of which is still to be determined, will operate as a single establishment, managed separately from the two schools.

6. Educational Benefits Statement

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 West Dunbartonshire Council believes this proposal will provide a range of educational benefits and enhance the Council's efforts to meet statutory obligations enshrined in:

- the Education (Scotland) Act 1980;
- the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000;
- the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003;
- the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004;
- the Educational (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009; and
- the Equality Act 2010.

The proposal will also help to ensure compliance with the terms of the Children and Young People Bill currently progressing through the Scottish Parliament in relation to the young people attending the new Bellsmyre campus.

6.1.2 The new building will provide modern, fit-for-purpose educational facilities which are specifically designed to create a stimulating learning environment. This will be in stark contrast to the four school and EECC buildings which the new facility will replace; these buildings are poor in terms of both condition and suitability.

6.1.3 The new building will be designed to provide a fully accessible and inclusive environment to accommodate the needs of all users of the building, especially young people with additional support needs, whose needs can only be accommodated with difficulty in the existing establishments.

6.1.4 The facilities will support the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence by providing an environment conducive "to nurturing successful, confident and responsible young people who are able to learn and apply their learning in ways that will help them to apply their learning in ways that will help them to reach their full potential and respond to the variety and pace of change they will encounter in today's and tomorrow's world". The facilities will be

constructed in accordance with the latest building standards and regulatory requirements relating to building design.

6.1.5 West Dunbartonshire Council has a proven track record in delivering high quality, well designed primary schools and EECCs, having opened three primary schools and one EECC over the last four years. The Council will bring to bear this recent experience to ensure that the Bellsmyre campus is also designed to a very high standard.

6.2 Likely effect of proposal on pupils currently attending St Peter's and Aitkenbar Primary Schools and Andrew B Cameron and St Peter's EECCs

6.2.1 There are a number of educational benefits associated with the design of the two new primary schools:

- modern, purpose-built classrooms and break-out spaces, designed to deliver Curriculum for Excellence and to encourage innovative and flexible teaching and effective learning;
- education in a comfortable, environmentally efficient, wind- and water-tight environment in which the use of natural light is maximised;
- access to enhanced internal and external sports and play facilities;
- well planned external areas of the site designed and developed to provide safe, secure and educationally stimulating outdoor environments, where landscaping has been carefully planned to support recreational and play activities, including suitable areas of soft and hard landscaping incorporating seating, all weather sports pitch, differentiated play areas and areas capable of being developed by staff and pupils as part of 'grounds for learning' initiatives and other environmental education and outdoor learning projects;
- use of well designed social and circulation spaces within the building;
- use of modern and safe toilets and washing facilities;
- an integrated ICT infrastructure, including wireless capability, designed to maximise the use of the latest technology to enhance learning;
- specially designed general purpose and library areas, designed to encourage independent and collaborative learning;
- provision of furniture that is ergonomically designed, age appropriate and provides flexibility to change configuration and support a variety of learning and teaching approaches;
- attractive indoor and outdoor dining facilities, serviced by a modern catering kitchen;
- management, office and staff facilities, suitably located in order to support staff in delivering the curriculum and facilitate a positive school ethos and collegiate working culture;
- integrated infrastructure and storage space, designed to ensure that the functional areas of the school are not compromised and are fully available and accessible for learning and teaching purposes;
- dedicated resource base space incorporating reprographics

equipment and other facilities for use by teaching and support staff to support the production of pupil resources;

- a safe and secure campus with controlled entry and CCTV.

Young people attending the new Aitkenbar and St Peter's Primary Schools will benefit from all of the above features. Their learning and their social experience of school will greatly improve as a consequence.

6.2.2 Aitkenbar and St Peter's Primary Schools already enjoy excellent relationships with each other and have engaged in a number of joint sporting and anti-sectarian projects. Whilst the two schools will continue to operate as separate establishments, the fact that they will share a building will facilitate the development of similar projects in the future.

6.2.3 There will also be educational benefits from the fact that professional dialogue among the staff of the two schools will be enhanced by the fact that they share the same building. For example, teachers of P7 classes in the two schools will be able to share ideas for learning and teaching approaches.

6.2.4 The design of St Peter's Primary School will contain specific elements aimed at stressing the Catholic ethos of the school and the spiritual dimension of its work.

6.2.5 Benefits for pre-school children will be similar to those benefits listed in 6.2.1 for primary pupils. In addition, the EECC will be designed to facilitate structured play both within the building and in the external play areas.

6.2.6 Transition from pre-school to Primary 1 will be enhanced by the fact that the two schools will share their building with a large EECC. For instance, it will be a simple matter to organise multiple visits to the primary schools for children in their pre-school year.

6.2.7 The fact that the new EECC will be much larger than the two establishments it is replacing will afford the head of centre greater flexibility in the deployment of staff and the grouping of children for educational and structured play activities.

6.3 Likely effect of Proposal on Other Users of the Schools

6.3.1 As part of West Dunbartonshire Council's efficiency measures, the Council has greatly reduced the number of external lets in primary schools, instead concentrating lets in secondary schools which are generally already open in the evenings.

6.3.2 Currently, the following regular lets take place in the two affected primary schools:

- Special Needs Group (St Peter's Primary School)
- Lennox Church 5.45 Group (Aitkenbar Primary School)

- Active Schools (Aitkenbar Primary School)
- Councillors' surgeries (Aitkenbar Primary School)

6.3.3 All of the above lets could be accommodated within the new campus building. The one regular let currently using St Peter's Primary School could be accommodated within Aitkenbar during the period of the temporary decant.

6.3.4 Early Education and Childcare Centres are not used by community groups.

6.4 Likely effect of Proposal on other pupils across West Dunbartonshire schools

6.4.1 The likely effect of the proposal on other pupils across West Dunbartonshire Council schools will be minimal. The proposal for the Bellsmyre campus will assist the Council to direct the Education revenue budget towards learning and teaching resources and the provision of high quality space, rather than supporting the over provision of space and higher running costs associated with older buildings.

6.4.2 The proposal may result in additional placing requests for St Peter's and Aitkenbar Primary Schools. It is anticipated that any additional requests be accommodated within the potential spare capacity of the new primary schools.

7. The Consultation Process

7.1 At its meeting on 11 September 2013, West Dunbartonshire Council authorised the Executive Director of Educational Services to undertake formal consultation in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 in relation to the Proposal specified in section 2 above and the arrangements noted below have been made to discharge that instruction.

7.2 The initial aspects of the consultation process are specified in the following table:

Item	Date/Details
Issue Proposal Document to notify consultees (in advance of start of required consultation period)	Monday 16 September 2013
Public notices to be advertised in Lennox Herald and Dumbarton Reporter and placed on notice boards in relevant West Dunbartonshire Council buildings and West Dunbartonshire Council Website to be updated with relevant information	During week commencing Monday 16 September: notices displayed, newspaper adverts in Lennox Herald and Dumbarton Reporter and Council website
Formally commence consultation period (the formal Date of Publication)	Thursday 19 September 2013
Public meeting	Wednesday 2 October 2013.
Consultation period ends (over 6 weeks since commencement, including 32 school days)	Wednesday 13 November 2013

Comments/representation submitted to the Director of Education during the consultation period forwarded to HMIE to allow preparation of their report	By Monday 18 November 2013
HMIE provide the Director of Education with report (3 weeks from submission of information)	Monday 9 December 2013

7.3The Proposal Document will be issued by the Executive Director of Educational Services to the consultees included in the following list:

- Education Scotland;
- The Archdiocese of Glasgow of the Roman Catholic Church;
- the Parent Councils of St Peter's and Aitkenbar Primary Schools;
- the parents/carers of pupils attending St Peter's and Aitkenbar Primary Schools;
- the parents/carers of any children expected by West Dunbartonshire Council to attend either St Peter's and Aitkenbar Primary Schools within two years of the date of publication of this Proposal Document (with that date of publication being defined in the table included in section 7.2 above), including those pupils attending all private and voluntary pre-school nurseries in the Dumbarton area;
- the pupils attending St Peter's and Aitkenbar Primary Schools (insofar as this is possible and taking cognisance of the age and maturity of the pupils);
- the teaching and support staff at St Peter's and Aitkenbar Primary Schools;
- the trade union representatives of the above staff;
- user groups or individuals who currently utilise the facilities at St Peter's and Aitkenbar Primary Schools;
- Dumbarton Community Council;
- the constituency MSP;
- the constituency MP; and
- the constituency MEP.

7.4The Proposal Document will also be published on the West Dunbartonshire Council website and copies will also be available from the reception point at the following West Dunbartonshire Council buildings:

- Aitkenbar Primary School, Whiteford Avenue, Dumbarton G82 3JL
- St Peter's Primary School, Howatshaws Road, Dumbarton G82 3DR
- St Peter's EECC, Howatshaws Road, Dumbarton G82 3DR
- Andrew B Cameron EECC, Broomhill Drive, Dumbarton G82 3HQ
- Dumbarton Library, Strathleven Place, Dumbarton G82 1BD
- Educational Services, Second Floor, West Dunbartonshire Council HQ, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU

7.5The Proposal Document can also be made available in alternative formats or in translated form for readers whose first language is not English. Please make contact with West Dunbartonshire Council's Educational Services, Second

Floor, West Dunbartonshire Council HQ, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU, Tel: 01389737303, e-mail: education.centralregistry@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

- 7.6** A public notice to advertise the consultation will be placed in the Dumbarton Reporter and Lennox Herald and the same notice will be displayed on the reception area notice boards in the above noted West Dunbartonshire Council buildings.
- 7.7A** A public meeting will be held at St Peter's Primary School on Wednesday 2 October 2013 at 7pm, at which representatives of West Dunbartonshire Council's Educational Services Department will be in attendance to present the details of the Proposal, answer questions and record comments/representations from those in attendance at the meeting.
- 7.8** Comments/representations may also be made by using the Council's Contact Centre (tel: 01389 738282; email contactcentre@west-dunbarton.gov.uk) by writing to the Executive Director of Educational Services at West Dunbartonshire Council HQ, Garshake Road, Dumbarton G82 3PU or by e-mailing education.centralregistry@west-dunbarton.gov.uk
- 7.9** At the end of the consultation period, the Executive Director of Educational Services will submit a copy of all written comments/representations, together with oral comments/representations made at the public meeting, to Education Scotland who will prepare a professional and independent report on the educational aspects of the Proposal.
- 7.10** The Executive Director of Educational Services will consider all written and oral comments/representations received in relation to the Proposal which have been received during the consultation period, together with Education Scotland's report, and prepare a Consultation Report.
- 7.11** The Executive Director of Educational Services shall publish the Consultation Report which shall be issued (either in full or as a summary document) to the consultees specified in section 7.3 above; be made available on Council's website; be available in printed format from the reception points at West Dunbartonshire Council buildings specified in section 7.4 above; and be issued to all those who responded and provided contact details through the consultation process.
- 7.12** The Consultation Report shall be published to allow a period of no less than 3 weeks prior to the Council's Decision to either implement or reject the Proposal.
- 7.13** The Executive Director of Educational Services shall immediately notify Scottish Ministers if the Council's Decision is to implement the Proposal which would relocate Aitkenbar Primary School to the new site.

- 7.14** Representations (from consultees) can be made to Scottish Ministers within 3 weeks of the Council Decision to request Scottish Ministers 'call-in' the Council Decision.
- 7.15** West Dunbartonshire Council can only implement the Council Decision 6 weeks after the date of the Council Decision or in the event such earlier notification is received from Scottish Ministers.
- 7.16** West Dunbartonshire Council cannot implement the Council Decision if 'called-in' by Scottish Ministers during the 6 week period after the Council Decision and Scottish Ministers will then adopt the position of making the decision to either implement or reject the Proposal.

