

**Consultation on the establishment of nursery provision in Auchinairn**

**Consultation Report**

**22<sup>nd</sup> October 2015**

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## **SECTION ONE: BACKGROUND**

In January 2014, following extensive consultation, East Dunbartonshire Council decided to close Auchinairn and Woodhill Primary Schools, Auchinairn Nursery and Cleddens Learning and Childcare Centre, and establish a new school and early years facility on the Woodhill Primary School site.

The site of the new build school and nursery will be located 1.3 miles from the site of current nursery class. During the consultation, it was suggested that this could increase barriers to families in Auchinairn accessing nursery provision and this could have a potential impact on the uptake of nursery places. To ensure families in Auchinairn continue to have access to early learning and childcare, the Council decided to establish a nursery in Auchinairn.

In May 2014, the Scottish Government gave conditional consent to Council's decision. See **Supporting Document 1** for relevant council report.

One of the conditions of the Scottish Government consent was for a formal consultation to be held on the establishment of a nursery. In May 2015, East Dunbartonshire Council officers began the consultation process for a nursery provision in Auchinairn.

The Council propose to provide a separate nursery provision in the Auchinairn area, and wants to:

- a) As of the closure of the existing school in early 2017: Establish provision of 48 three to five year old places, and 10 two to three year old places, from 8am to 6pm, 50 weeks of the year. This would be provided in accommodation to be located on the existing Auchinairn Primary School site.
- b) Develop a new, purpose built nursery building, as part of the Council's investment in a new community facility in Auchinairn.
- c) As of spring 2018: Relocate nursery provision in new build facility, and expand to include a further 10 places for young children. Childcare and early years education will be an important part of the 'Place' work in Auchinairn, which will provide wide range of services in one new build facility.

For the full text of the proposal document, please see **Supporting Document 2**

## **SECTION TWO: CONSULTATION PROCESS**

This is a proposal to provide a separate nursery provision in the Auchinairn area. As such, a consultation is required under Schedule 1 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The process for consultation to meet the requirements of the Act was established as below.

A proposal document was developed that included information on:

- The rationale;
- The current provision;
- The proposal to provide separate nursery provision in Auchinairn;
- Educational benefits; and
- Timeline for consultation.

The consultation information was sent to all stakeholders identified. The pack included a proposal document and a letter from the Chief Education Officer explaining the process for response. The consultation paperwork included a return slip which invited stakeholders to indicate their agreement or disagreement on the proposal and space available for any comments to be made. Stakeholders were also invited to indicate their agreement or disagreement on the proposal by email or telephone.

The consultation period commenced on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015 and concluded on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2015. This provided 30 school days for consultation. An additional reminder was sent to all staff, parents and carers of Auchinairn Primary School and Nursery to respond to the consultation within the allocated time period.

The Director of Education and Children's Services facilitated a public meeting on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 in Auchinairn Primary School and all stakeholders were invited to attend.

### **SECTION THREE: CONSULTEES**

Consultees were identified according to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The consultees contacted include:

(N.B. Within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, 'school' can also refer to nursery/nursery class.)

#### **Parent Council**

The Parent Council chairperson of Auchinairn Primary School was provided with a copy of the covering letter and the consultation document.

#### **Parents of pupils at the schools involved**

Each pupil in Auchinairn Primary School and Nursery class was provided with a copy of the covering letter and consultation document for the attention of their parent/carer.

A further reminder to complete the consultation document was sent by the Head Teacher to all parent/carers through a text message.

#### **Parents of any children expected by the education authority to attend the school involved within two years**

The contact information was unattainable for this group as children are too young to register for nursery and therefore unknown to the authority.

#### **Staff at affected schools**

Each member of staff within Auchinairn Primary School and Nursery Class were given a copy of the covering letter and the consultation document.

A further reminder to complete the consultation document was sent by the Head Teacher to all staff

#### **Any body which has been established by a local authority, whether formally or informally, for the purpose of assisting it in carrying out its functions under Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003**

Members of the Community Planning Partnership Board were contacted.

#### **Any other education authority that the education authority considers relevant**

Glasgow City Council, Stirling Council, North Lanarkshire Council and Falkirk Council were contacted as authorities bordering East Dunbartonshire Council.

#### **Any other users of any affected school that the education authority considers relevant**

Partnership nurseries in the area were contacted.

### **Community Councils**

Auchinairn does not have a community council.

### **Trade Unions**

The Convenors of the EIS, UNITE, GMB, UNISON, NASUWT and SSTA unions were contacted.

## **SECTION FOUR: RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION**

All consultee representations received were logged and recorded using a database tool developed by East Dunbartonshire Council's technical support team. This database was used to record all relevant correspondence received by either the Primary School Improvement Programme team, or through direct correspondence to officers such as the Chief Education Officer, the Director of Education and Children's Services, and the Chief Executive.

178 consultation packs were distributed and 3 statutory responses were received.

1 additional representation was received from a member of the public who was not a statutory consultee.

### **Analysis of responses received**

This analysis shows that the 3 statutory consultees who responded, all 3 agreed with the proposal.

1 additional representation received from a member of the public who was not a statutory agreed with the proposal.

### **Public Meetings**

A public meeting was held in Auchinairn Primary School on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 and was chaired by the Director of Education and Children's Services. Twelve people attended.

A presentation was provided which introduced the proposal and this was followed by a question and answer session. The meeting lasted approximately two hours.

For the full note from the public meeting, please see **Supporting Document 3**.

## **SECTION FIVE: EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT**

### **Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by East Dunbartonshire Council to establish a new Early Learning and Childcare setting in the Auchinairn area.**

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of East Dunbartonshire Council's proposal to establish an Early Learning and Childcare (ELCC) setting in the Auchinairn area. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

#### 1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people and families of the ELCC setting; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- The educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

#### 1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 3 June 2015 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and

- visits to the site of Auchinairn Primary School and Nursery Class, including discussion with relevant consultees.

## **2. Consultation Process**

2.1 East Dunbartonshire Council undertook the consultation on its proposal with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 In January 2014, East Dunbartonshire Council made a decision to close Auchinairn Primary School and Nursery Class, Woodhill Primary School and Cleddens Learning and Childcare Centre and establish a new school and ELCC setting on the Woodhill Primary School site. This decision was made following a statutory consultation process. In the course of this consultation, stakeholders suggested that the council's proposal may increase barriers to families in Auchinairn accessing an ELCC setting. In response to these concerns, the council expressed a wish to establish a new ELCC setting in Auchinairn. In May 2014, the Scottish Ministers gave conditional consent to the council's decision. One of the conditions was that the council was required to hold a formal consultation on the establishment of an ELCC setting in Auchinairn. The current consultation fulfils the council's duties in respect of this requirement.

2.3 The formal consultation ran from 11 May 2015 until 25 June 2015. The council posted the consultation document on its website. It issued packs containing copies of the document to identified stakeholders, including local community groups. The packs included a return slip to gather views and comments on the proposal. In addition, stakeholders were encouraged to give their views by telephoning or emailing the council. A public meeting held on 3 June 2015 explained the background and rationale for the proposal and gave information about the consultation process. The council received four written responses to the proposal. All of these were in favour.

## **3. Educational Aspects of Proposal**

3.1 The proposal has potential educational benefits for families living in Auchinairn who may access the provision in future and for the community. It will build on the strong community identity that exists within Auchinairn and form an important part of the council's strategy to support the development of the Auchinairn community through the Place approach. It will help families to access early learning and childcare without having to travel the 1.3 miles to the new build school and ELCC setting on the site of Woodhill Primary School.

3.2 The proposal document gives details of how the council will develop the setting over time. Initially, it will put in place 48 three to five year old places and 10 two to three year old places from 8 am to 6 pm, 50 weeks of the year. This will be in accommodation located on the site of the existing primary school. This is a significant improvement on the current ELCC provision in Auchinairn which has 58 places available only during term time.

3.3 The council will then develop a new purpose-built ELCC setting as part of its investment in a new community facility in Auchinairn. As of spring 2018, the ELCC setting will relocate to a new build facility and expand to include a further ten places for young children. This combination of ELCC and community services has the potential to enhance the health and wellbeing of local families. The co-location of services including ELCC, health, family learning and employability will make it easier for families to access the support that they need.

3.4 Stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors were very positive about the proposal. They felt that the council had listened to their views and had responded appropriately. They considered that an ELCC setting in Auchinairn would be a valuable asset which would help meet the needs of local families as well as helping the community to maintain its strong sense of identity. Staff from Auchinairn Nursery Class were confident that the council would use their knowledge and expertise when developing plans for the new provision.

#### **4. Summary**

East Dunbartonshire Council's proposal has potential educational benefits for pupils who may attend the provision in future and the local community. It will improve significantly the current ELCC offer in Auchinairn by providing a 50 week service in place of the current term time facility. On the closure of the current Auchinairn Primary School and Nursery Class in early 2017, it will allow local families to continue to access early learning and childcare without having to travel 1.3 miles to the new build on the site of Woodhill Primary School. It will build on the strong community identity that exists within Auchinairn and form an important part of the council's strategy to support the development of the Auchinairn community through the Place approach. In taking forward its proposal, the council needs to engage with individual families whose children may access the new provision and ensure that appropriate transition plans are in place. It also needs to continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that their views are heard and taken into account as it develops its plans in more detail.

**HM Inspectors  
Education Scotland**

**August 2015**

## **SECTION SIX: SUMMARY OF ISSUES RAISED**

Education Scotland reported no issues with regard to this proposal. It noted that the continuation of engagement with stakeholders is essential in the successful transition to the new facility. Officers will work closely with stakeholders during the design and development for the early years facility in Auchinairn.

One of the issues raised during the public event was with regard to the employment of staff for the new centre. Any change to staffing would be managed through the 'principles of change' process that applies to all Council employees. 'Principles of change' is the process that governs changes to employment for all council employees. It has been agreed with Trade Unions and formally endorsed by the Council.

Responses received were overwhelmingly positive, with respondents emphasising the benefits of such a facility being in place following the closure of the school.

## **SECTION SEVEN: INACCURACIES AND OMMISIONS**

No inaccuracies or omissions were identified during the course of the consultation.

## **SECTION EIGHT: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

During the course of the consultation, East Dunbartonshire Council held separate engagement sessions with the local community of Auchinairn to explore the development of a joint sport and community wellbeing facility as part of the Place initiative.

The engagement events were well received by the local community and based on this positive response, East Dunbartonshire Council and Glasgow City Foundation, the charitable element of Glasgow City Football Club, have formally entered into agreement to consider this development which would be in addition to the nursery provision in Auchinairn

Benefits of this combined facility will include:

- The combination of nursery provision, community services, and sports facilities will provide an environment that will support family's needs.
- This proposal will make services more effective, more easy to use, and will support all aspects of the development of young children. This is will help ensure that all young people in Auchinairn are "safe, healthy and ready to learn".
- The community centre and potential addition of a sports facility will further the support the health and wellbeing of families in Auchinairn, and would bring a wider group of users to the community facility.
- Families will be able to combine early learning and childcare with health, sports, as well as parenting support, employability advice, and community and social activities.

## **SECTION NINE: FINDINGS AND REVIEW OF CONSULTATION**

Following the statutory consultation process, there are a number of findings that can be identified:

- 178 consultation packs were distributed, and 3 statutory responses received, and one additional representation received from a non-consultee.
- The consensus of consultees who responded agreed with the proposal and recognised the benefits for the community.
- The co-location of a sports facility is expected to provide a number of additional benefits for the Auchinairn community.
- There are clear educational benefits to the proposal. The report from Education Scotland lays out a number of benefits for current and future pupils of East Dunbartonshire Council by significantly improving the current provision by providing a 50 week service in place of the current term time facility. The report states: **On the closure of the current Auchinairn Primary School and Nursery Class in early 2017, it will allow local families to continue to access early learning and childcare without having to travel 1.3 miles to the new build on the site of Woodhill Primary School. It will build on the strong community identity that exists within Auchinairn and form an important part of the council's strategy to support the development of the Auchinairn community through the Place approach.**