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EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE PRIMARY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

MEETING: Consultation on Early Learning and Childcare in Auchinairn - Public Meeting
VENUE: Auchinairn Primary School
DATE/TIME: Wednesday 3rd June 2015
ATTENDEES: Gordon Currie, Director of Education and Children's Services
Jacqueline MacDonald, Chief Education Officer
Simon Mair, PSIP Programme Lead
Samantha Burke, PSIP Project Officer

MINUTE OF MEETING

The meeting was opened by the G Currie, who welcomed those present and introduced panel members. He then gave details of the agenda and the format of the meeting.

G Currie began the presentation by explaining the consultation document and advising of the statutory consultation process and who should be consulted as required by the School Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010.

S Mair advised that many of the participants may have been involved in the previous statutory consultation which looked at Woodhill and Auchinairn Primary Schools. During this statutory consultation, it came across very strongly the need for a nursery provision in Auchinairn. S Mair explained the Scottish Governments conditions following the approval of a new build school on the Woodhill Primary School site.

S Mair explained that the purpose of this meeting is to gather the views of consultees on a nursery provision as of 2017. When the school closes, a new nursery provision will be located on the Auchinairn site and this will be temporary accommodation. This will be 48 three to five year old places and 10 two to three year old places. This will be an extended year provision for 50 weeks of the year.

In 2017/18, the new nursery will be a part of the wider Place community facility. It is proposed that this will open in 2018 and may include a further 10 places for young children. S Mair advised that this will be an important part of the Place initiative in Auchinairn.

J MacDonald explained that access to early learning and childcare is extremely important and the way in which this will be developed will have a clear benefit to the Auchinairn Community.

J MacDonald advised that this will be a purpose build facility and will include additional rooms for work with the community. It will look to support the needs of the community including parenting support, employability with childcare and early learning on site. It will benefit the health and well-being of children and families in Auchinairn.

This will be bespoke to Auchinairn and centred on Early Years and people will be the heart of this facility. We will involve different partners including social care, health and social work which will be provided in the one

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locality.

J MacDonald explained that the facility will incorporate different services to coming together in one place. This is currently working well in Hillhead, although they do not have a nursery, but they do have a crèche. This will be a great opportunity to provide support for families in Auchinairn.

G Currie advised that any questions participants may have will be recorded and published. G Currie also encouraged feedback on the consultation document, either by the return form at the back of the consultation document or by telephone. Following the consultation period, which will conclude on the 25th June, Officers will provide a report to Education Scotland. Following this, Education Scotland will visit the school and speak with parents, pupils and staff to try and get an understanding of what the impact may be and the educational benefits of the proposal.

G Currie invited questions from the participants.

What space will the nursery have? Will the nursery be shared with Glasgow residents? Will the nursery be shared beyond the boundary?

G Currie: We have looked at the trends and we have considered the next two years and looked at figures for this area for space required for the nursery. During the previous consultation, parents expressed the need for a nursery in the area and parents felt the nursery in Woodhill was too far away.

With regard to working across the Glasgow border, if we do this, we will be working with cross budgets and this is when it can become difficult in terms of managing the nursery and the allocation of nursery places. East Dunbartonshire Council want to invest in Auchinairn and provide the Place facility for residents in Auchinairn.

Will there be baby spaces in the new nursery? It would make sense to have this here as there is a waiting list for Cleddens of about 15 months.

G Currie: This is something that can be considered. We are committed to and will continually assess the need of each area and this is also checked after the census every year. We have the luxury at the moment because we are still some time away from this and we can respond to this, if appropriate.

J MacDonald: We have considered babies but first we need to look at what is required to provide 600 hours and the introduction of two year olds and what we are required to provide through the Council's statutory duties. A playgroup could be an option to be considered within the Auchinairn Place initiative.

Introducing baby spaces will help people in the area getting back to work, I think this should be considered.

G Currie: The Place initiative will tie in with employability support through economic development. From a Council perspective, this will be considered as a wider part of the Place initiative and ensure the right provision for the area.

J MacDonald: In Lennoxton, officers are currently working with the playgroup as there is a need for this provision in the community. This is something we are looking to support. In Lennoxton, the playgroup is going to be provided in a different building. It is important to ensure that families are signposted to support available in the area.

Will the Architect work with staff when designing the new nursery? We will be able to help because we use the facility every day and we know what works and what doesn't.

G Currie: The facility you have here is excellent and I know it has recently been refurbished. The new facility will

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be bespoke and S Mair and the design team will hold design workshops with staff and parents to gather the views of the current users.

S Mair: It is really important that we gather the views of the current users and we will consult with you during the design phase of the facility. We will get you involved right from the beginning. We can also get you out to the nursery at Lenzie to give you an idea of what is currently being designed.

Additional Note: Staff in attendance asked for bi-folding doors to be considered when designing the facility.

When Auchinairn Primary School is closed, will the nursery still be here?

G Currie: At this moment in time we don't know what the scope of the building will be. There will be a nursery which will be part of Place facility. During the first year, the nursery will be in temporary accommodation and will have all of the necessary requirements. There are lots of things to work through at the beginning of the process but we will engage with current users with regard to the site development.

We currently have a garden for the nursery but we don't want it taken away. We don't want one like the one at Hillhead that can be used by the public. We need grass and a garden.

J MacDonald: The garden is now separate in Hillhead and gates have been installed to keep it separate. Anything that we do will be in partnership with the Care Commission while ensuring the safety of children is not compromised.

Will the new facility hold a potential partnership nursery?

G Currie: No, this will be an East Dunbartonshire run facility with East Dunbartonshire Council employees.

What will happen to the staff in the nursery at present? Will they move to the new nursery at Woodhill? And will staff only be employed term time?

J MacDonald: There will be a combination of contracts available. There is a process called 'Principles of Change' which is the policy for the management of change within EDC. This process is also used if contracts were to change and this would be discussed with Trade Unions and staff at an appropriate time.

Is there demand in the area for a 50 week nursery?

J MacDonald: Yes we recently conducted a survey which provided us with what was required in the area; this included a holiday provision in Cleddens. We would be looking to start the facility as 50 weeks and monitor the demand in the area.

G Currie: It is easier to start with the aspiration and then reduce if required.

Will there be the possibility for term time/ extended day for staff?

J MacDonald: This would depend on the staffing model used for the new facility, it could be like Cleddens. There would be opportunities for posts over the holidays.

Will there be another meeting after this?

G Currie: This will be the only public meeting during the consultation period but if you have any questions, please contact the team. We would ask for all responses to be returned to by the 25th June. Education Scotland will then visit the school and produce a summary of views from parents and staff. After which, officers will produce a final

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report for council approval.

What will happen if the Council reject the report?

G Currie: The Council have already committed to establishing this provision. By law we are required to complete a statutory consultation. If the council does not approve this proposal, this would have to stop and if this were to happen, every child from here would be accommodated in new build school on the Woodhill site. However, the Council is committed to providing an early learning facility here in Auchinairn and this is one of the conditions which is part of the ministerial consent granted.

When Education Scotland visits the school, what is their role?

G Currie: Colleagues from Education Scotland are required to independently check the information we have provided, like a safety check and the inspector will verify what comments were gathered during the consultation period. They have a verification role and after they have visited the school, they will publish a report which will also be published on the East Dunbartonshire Council website simultaneously.

Additional Note: A member of the meeting asked if a reminder can be sent out to parents to respond to the consultation.

G Graham, Head Teacher, advised that he will send out a reminder text to all parents.

G Currie encouraged everyone to respond to the consultation before the 25th June and advised that if anyone needed another copy of the consultation document, copies were available at the meeting. The team would also be able to provide copies by telephone or email.

Will contracts for staff be changed to term time or extended day? Will staff get a choice?

J MacDonald: There will be full engagement with staff and when appropriate, we would be able to provide you with a staff structure and the options which are available. This would be a part of the principles of change document, which you can find on the East Dunbartonshire Council intranet.

Will there be full time contracts in the future?

J MacDonald: There are always options which are available. There will always be posts available due to expansion, recently there were depute and team leader posts which were advertised.

Why are the posts which are advertised only part time?

J MacDonald: Due to the staffing structure, we always need to ensure we meet correct staffing ratio and this is what is required at the moment. We need to consider what best suits employees and what the best fit is for parents. At a later stage, we can consider full and part time posts through workforce planning.

G Currie thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged the return of the consultation document by the deadline date of 25th June 2015. If you have any other questions, you can email the Primary School Improvement Programme Team on primaryimprovement@eastdunbarton.gov.uk or telephone 0300 123 4510.