

## **Note of Public Meeting held at Tain Royal Academy, 7pm on 8 October 2014**

Chairperson	Maurice McIntyre, Area Education Manager
Officials	Jim Steven, Head of Education Bill Couston, Senior Education Officer Ruth Binks, Quality Improvement Manager James Cook, Literacy and Assessment Development Officer
Attendees	28

Maurice McIntyre welcomed and thanked all present for their attendance. Maurice McIntyre explained that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the educational benefits of the proposed 3-18 campus for Tain in more detail with the community. He noted that it had been agreed with Councillor Alasdair Christie (Chair of the Education, Children and Adult Services Committee) that the consultation process should be expanded to include this further meeting (in addition to the public consultation meeting that took place on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014) to gain more detailed views and comments from the community regarding the educational benefits of the 3-18 campus arrangement proposed.

Maurice McIntyre introduced the officers present and confirmed that Jim Steven (Head of Education) would join the meeting as soon as he could after his previous commitment. Maurice McIntyre further reminded the audience of the previous confirmation from Councillor Christie that a decision would be made at Committee in February 2015 to decide on progression with the Tain 3-18 Campus and only after that time would it be appropriate to start to have detailed discussion about the school design/layout etc.

Maurice McIntyre then invited Ruth and James to make their presentation (Powerpoint presentation attached as Appendix 2 with narrative from speakers included).

Maurice McIntyre thanked Ruth and James for their presentation and invited questions and/or comments from the assembled audience.

### **Ruth Allan – Senior Pupil at Tain Royal Academy**

**Q1** - What will the benefits of the 3-18 campus be for S5 and S6 pupils?

**A1** – *Ruth Binks – Older pupils will have further opportunities in the 3-18 model for leadership roles/responsibilities. An example of sports leaders for younger pupils was provided.*

**A1** – *James Cook – There will be no issues around the logistics of sports leaders and leadership roles for older pupils given the shared campus arrangement.*

**A1 – Jim Steven –** *There would be a fantastic opportunity for senior pupils to set the tone and standard of behaviour in the campus. The opportunities to build better relationships between older and younger pupils would certainly assist in positive whole school behaviour/ethos. This would also link with the community and provide leadership skills for senior pupils that would be of benefit to them progressing to university and into the world of work.*

**Nigel Jones – Parent**

**Q2 –** Will the new campus have clear benefits/opportunities to attract teachers/staff?

**A2 – Ruth Binks –** *We are constantly promoting employment opportunities for staff in the Highlands via teacher training colleges and there will be further attraction because of the development opportunities between colleagues in literacy/numeracy/health and wellbeing in the 3-18 setting.*

**A2 – James Cook –** *An advantage for primary teachers will be the opportunities to access secondary specialist staff for on campus development particularly for the broad general education phase.*

**A2 – Maurice McIntyre –** *The new General Teaching Council for Scotland Professional Standards for teachers will be greatly facilitated within the 3-18 model allowing the creation of a 3-18 internal learning community.*

**A2 – Jim Steven –** *The new 3-18 campus would benefit from the most recent and up-to-date technology for ICT in education and this would be a further draw to the campus for staff. We are also keen to produce our own teachers in the Highlands and with links to businesses and the wider community the 3-18 structure supports this will make the campus attractive to internal as well as external staff.*

**Dave Macrae – Teacher and Parent**

**Q3 –** Is there any research on the impact of a large 3-18 campus model on pupils traditionally coming from small rural primary schools?

**A3 – Ruth Binks –** *There is no research as such I am aware of but we need to be mindful of this factor in the transition planning for the new 3-18 campus and ensure there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to make new friends through a number of planned transition activities.*

**A3 - James Cook –** *The Associated School Group approach will be key to assist in effective transitions.*

**A3 – Maurice McIntyre –** *James is quite right to point to the success of the Tain Associated School group as staff groups are very supportive and collegiate and very effective in organising transitions for pupils from smaller primaries into the secondary at present. Pastoral transitions are particularly effective and there would be no concern that pupils coming from a smaller and more rural school than others would be disadvantaged in any way coming into a larger 3-18 campus arrangement.*

**Lorna Morgan – Parent**

**Q4** - Would the timetabling for specialist facilities within the 3-18 campus be prioritised for secondary pupils i.e. Home Economics (accepting certificate examination requirements)?

**A4** – *Ruth Binks - It will be important to ensure there is a parity of access to such facilities taking into account the needs of the wider curriculum and certificate classes.*

**A4** – *Jim Steven – We will need to ensure there is a timetable that is sensibly constructed to meet all needs in the campus. If we invest resources in our early stages it pays great dividends in later years. The fundamentals of pupils feeling safe and being happy at school are key for pupils to achieve and attain to their fullest potential.*

**Angela Main – Parent**

**Q5** - Is the 3-18 model being proposed slightly short sighted in that it only covers the Tain town primary schools and not the outlying primaries in the wider associated school group such as Hilton of Cadboll etc? Are we potentially disadvantaging those pupils from the rural areas by not including them in the campus model?

**A5** – *Ruth Binks and James Cook – For curricular and out of school opportunities the campus will still be available to schools in the wider Tain Associated School Group and therefore they will still benefit from the new facilities.*

**A5** - *Maurice McIntyre – We have to be mindful that the funding for this project is tightly defined on the basis of a finite budget and also on the basis of the condition and suitability of schools as a priority. The Tain town schools and wider education provision has been assessed as the poorest condition in surveys carried out by our colleagues in our Housing and Property department and therefore that is why they are included in the proposal. There are also additional transport considerations when looking at the wider primaries in the ASG and issues relating to journey times for younger pupils.*

**Mhairi Miller – Parent**

**Q6** – Would there be funding put in place for transport costs associated with pupils from outlying areas of the Tain Associated School Group accessing the new 3-18 Campus facilities?

**A6** - *Maurice McIntyre – We would consider what funding was required to support appropriate access and this could be included within existing budget frameworks that support the running of the integrated Associated School Group.*

**A6** - *Ruth Binks – We currently have a number of initiatives for small schools to share good practise and project work across associated school groups that are funded and work very well.*

**A6 - Jane Mackay (Head Teacher of Knockbreck and Inver primary School Cluster)**  
- *At present Inver primary school accesses the facilities/resources of the larger cluster partner (Knockbreck primary School) and associated school group resources. This happens effectively at present.*

**Niamh Murray – Senior pupil Tain Royal Academy**

**Q7 -** Would pupils miss out on the experience of the bigger transition from primary to secondary in the new 3-18 campus model that would detrimentally effect their ability to cope with future transitions (i.e. university)?

**A7 - Ruth Binks –** *I wouldn't agree with the view that you could cope with one transition better (i.e. to university) because you've had three previous transitions. Minimising the impact of the transitions through planning and being prepared for next phases of life/education are more key. The main reason for drop out rates in the first year of university is down to pupils not having the required self directed learning skills.*

**A7 – Maurice McIntyre –** *There is a responsibility on senior pupils to indicate to staff what support they feel they need to assist in their particular transition. The new campus will assist in this process given the integrated nature of staff/services.*

**A7 – James Cook –** *The recent 'Wood Report' discusses life skills developed at school for work/post school destinations and confirms the importance of transitions and development of these skills through primary and into the senior phase of education. The 3-18 campus will strongly support the attainment of these skills and develop confidence for pupils.*

**A7 – Jim Steven –** *The 'Wood Report' emphasises the importance of bringing the reality of work into school and to support young people making positive progress to future destinations with increased confidence and aspirations. We need to embrace this with the new 3-18 campus and further develop positive links with the community and businesses. The new UHI campus in Inverness will also allow us to develop partnerships and opportunities more locally for young people.*

**Nigel Jones – Parent**

**Q8 -** Can I confirm the decision making process to make the new 3-18 school a reality? Does the Council require the parents to say they wish for the new school to ensure it becomes a reality?

**A8 - Maurice McIntyre –** *Yes, the more positive the response we receive from parents the better. I would encourage the community in Tain to demonstrate their support for the proposal.*

**A8 - Jim Steven –** *This is a wonderful opportunity for the broader community to benefit from such a proposed provision.*

**Comment – Nigel Jones – Parent**

**C8** - I feel we should use this meeting as an opportunity to confirm formally that the Tain community fully supports the new 3-18 school campus proposal.

**Comment - Angela Main – Parent**

**C9** - I did have concerns previously regarding the proposal but after this evenings discussion I now think it is a great idea.

**David McAllister – Tain Community Council**

**Q10** – I feel tonight you are preaching to the converted as the majority of people are in favour of the project. One of the issues is with the site for the school and community concern about getting such a large building or group of buildings onto the existing school footprint. There is concern over the detail of this.

**A10** – *Maurice McIntyre – The detail of this would take us into the next phase after a decision has been made early next year on the project. We will be advised by our specialist teams in our architects and property sections.*

**A10** – *Bill Couston – The previous information provided by our architect/property staff at the first consultation meeting confirmed that the designs they provided at the time were for illustrative purposes only on the basis that they were demonstrating that the building footprint/required space for the new 3-18 campus could fit onto the existing site. Aspects of the detailed design and layout will be subject to future discussion and planning requirements.*

**Comment - Martyn Ross – Teacher**

**C11** – The 3-18 campus proposal will be of great benefit to the pupils and community of Tain. The existing school facilities throughout the town are in urgent need of replacement and upgrading.

**Lorna Morgan – Parent**

**Q12** - The roll has increased at Knockbreck Primary School over recent times and the concern is with a growing school population in Tain will the new school have enough space to cope with all pupils aged 3-18?

**A12** - *Bill Couston – The planning for the capacity of the new 3-18 campus includes roll projections which factors in new house building in the area and estimates the numbers of pupils that would result from the new housing. Therefore it is expected there will be adequate space for future pupil numbers.*

**A12** – *Maurice McIntyre/Jim Steven – The roll projection information we have provides a clear indication of pupil numbers that we are required to accommodate.*

**David McAllister – Tain Community Council**

**Q13** - The consultation document states that the highest roll projected for the secondary school will be 634 pupils and the capacity is indicated at being just over

that figure at 650 are you sure there will be enough space as that seems like only a slight margin of extra capacity?

**A13 - Bill Couston** – *The design of the school will be as flexible as possible to allow for future needs and this would also take into account any future requirement for additional space. This means that general purpose rooms/areas could be converted into future curricular purposes if need be.*

#### **Michael Bremner – Pupil – School Captain TRA**

**Q14** – I am concerned that specialist areas of the school could be lost in future if there is a need to convert them to classrooms.

**A14 - Bill Couston** – *I can reassure you that it is not normal practise to convert specialist provisions for general classroom accommodation. The school will be designed to accommodate the number of expected future pupils and if there was a need for further space then general areas would be looked at for expansion. That is what has happened in my experience in the past.*

#### **Lorna Morgan – parent**

**Q14** – I would re-emphasise the need to retain specialist facilities in the 3-18 campus to ensure all pupils had access and were not disadvantaged.

**A14 - Maurice McIntyre/Jim Steven** – *We can reassure you that the design of the new 3-18 campus will have the necessary capacity built in to accommodate planned pupil populations and to ensure it is fit for purpose for all curricular/community requirements. Please remember that this will all be within a definitive amount of capital funding.*

#### **George Trimble – Principal Teacher TRA**

**Q15** - One of my recollections of a rewarding provision that previously existed at this school was adult education can we reintroduce this as part of the new community campus?

**A15 - Jim Steven** – *Yes, the proposal is for a 3-18 provision at the heart of the community offering appropriate facilities and opportunities. Such adult education programmes do need the community to engage and much of this is organised via partners such as High Life Highland.*

Maurice McIntyre thanked everyone for their attendance and for their valued contributions to the evening. It was noted that the meeting ended at 8.20 pm.