

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**  
**ALNESS ACADEMY REPLACEMENT - STAKEHOLDER GROUP**

**Minute of Meeting No. 6**  
**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017, 6.30PM**  
**Heritage Centre, Alness**

<b>Attendees:</b>	<b><u>Highland Council - Members</u></b>	
	Maxine Smith	<b>MS</b>
	Mike Finlayson	<b>MF</b>
	<u>Chair:</u> Carolyn Wilson	<b>CW</b>
	Pauline Munro	<b>PM</b>
	<b><u>Highland Council - Officials</u></b>	
	Brian Porter, Head of Resources	<b>BP</b>
	Susannah Irvine, Estates Officer	<b>SI</b>
	Gavin Allday, Project Co-ordinator	<b>GA</b>
	Derek Martin, Care and Learning Manager	<b>DM</b>
	<b><u>School Representatives</u></b>	
	Laura Gordon, Head Teacher Alness Academy	<b>LG</b>
	Kathy Sutherland, Alness Academy Parent Council	<b>KS</b>
	Claire Corr, Alness Academy Parent Council	<b>CC</b>
	Pamela Camery, Bridgend Parent Council	<b>PC</b>
	Katie Christie, Bridgend Parent Council	<b>KC</b>
	Mandy Gill, Bridgend Parent Council	<b>MG</b>
	Hazel Mackay, Alness Academy Parent Council	<b>HM</b>
	Fiona Fraser, Kiltearn Parent Council	<b>FF</b>
	Gordon Robertson, Alness Parent Council	<b>GR</b>
	Kathryn Roberts, Bridgend Parent Council	<b>KB</b>
	Robert MacKay, Coulhill Parent Council	<b>RMack</b>
	Mandy Robertson, Alness Academy Parent Council	<b>MR</b>
	Morag Wright, Coulhill Primary	<b>MW</b>
	Shirlee O'Reilly, Ardross Parent Council	<b>SO</b>
	<b><u>High Life Highland</u></b>	
	Fiona Hampton, Head of Business	<b>FH</b>
	<b><u>HUB North</u></b>	
	Andrew Low	<b>AL</b>
	<b><u>JM Architects</u></b>	
	Stewart Davie	<b>SD</b>

	<b><u>Community Representatives</u></b> Brian Ross, Alness United Mary MacDonald, Alness Community Council	<b>BR</b> <b>MMacD</b>
<b>Apologies:</b>	Robert Campbell Ewan Scott, Bridgend Parent Council Craig Paton, WSP Group Theresa Swayne Tommy Regan, Alness United	
<b>Minute:</b>	Gavin Allday	
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>DISCUSSION/COMMENT</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>APPOINT A CHAIR</b>	
<b>1.1</b>	<b>CW</b> chaired the meeting.	<b>Note</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	<b>CW</b> welcomed everyone to the meeting.	<b>Note</b>
<b>2.2</b>	<b>BP</b> gave a quick summary of the project, including funding info.	
<b>2.3</b>	<b>SI</b> ran through some keys aspects of the new school. Capable of handling expected increase from 424 to 600 pupils with additional space to increase capacity further if required. The current spec includes 6 lane pool, 2 synthetic pitches and one grass pitch, with grass running track.	<b>Note</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>PRESENTATION BY HUB NORTH</b>	
<b>3.1</b>	<b>AL</b> from Hub North outlined the various project stages. Hub North Scotland expected to approve involvement in project early next week. Stage 1 will commence and continue until August, with early involvement of the contractor and the planning department. Contractor will be from HUBs framework Robertson's, Balfour Beatty, or Keir.  Stage 2 – Work on Mechanical and Engineering packages begins. Procurement team go out to tender, aiming to sign contracts in March 2018 and begin work in May 2018.  Current school will continue to operate during construction phase. New school is due be handed over for 2020 intake, with the current school being demolished later that year, ready for final groundworks.  Currie and Brown will offer external Project Management	<b>Note</b>

	<p>expertise, working alongside numerous internal project managers throughout the project.</p> <p><b>BP</b> added that THC was one of three councils who approached the Hub as part of a joint venture, collaborating with Aberdeenshire Council on Inverurie Academy and Moray Council on Lossiemouth High School in order to maximise economies of scale. It may be difficult for one contractor to deliver all three schools, so final award may be spread across multiple contractors. JM are the Architects on both Lossiemouth and Alness.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<b>GENERAL DISCUSSION</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<p><b><u>BP invited feedback and questions:</u></b></p> <p><b>Qu.</b> Will there be a publicly released timeline?  <b>Ans.</b> Yes. More info would be available once contractors were involved. Opportunities to visit the site would also be arranged throughout project.</p> <p><b>Qu.</b> What type of work could begin in May 18 following the tender process?  <b>Ans.</b> Enabling work and contractor mobilisation</p> <p><b>Qu.</b> Will there be a pitch available during the build?  <b>Ans.</b> Yes, one of the new pitches will be made available prior to main building works.</p> <p><b>Qu.</b> Will the football club be able to use the new pitch during building works?  <b>Ans.</b> Yes, the pitch will be made available to the community outside school hours.</p> <p><b>Qu.</b> How will problems experienced during Inverness Royal Academy (IRA) project be avoided?  <b>Ans.</b> The main contractor has agreed not to tender on this project. Their sub-contractor will not be considered for any future projects. There are always teething problems with projects of this size and complexity. However, the IRA project experienced more than can reasonably be expected. THC have learned lessons and will not commit to moving into a new building until completed to an acceptable level and signed off, even if this means delaying the entry date.</p>	<b>Note</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>SD</b> invited attendees to share views on how the school should look. Responses included :	<b>JM</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't want a square box</li> <li>• No flat or grassed roof</li> <li>• Don't want it to look like a factory when approaching</li> <li>• Don't want very dark walls like IRA</li> </ul> <p>Attendees also invited to bring images to next meeting for discussion. Pupils will also be encouraged to get involved and may be asked to present their views at the next meeting.</p> <p>JM Architects to present examples of previous school projects for discussing at the next stakeholders meeting.</p> <p>SD believed that Alness had the advantage of being a smaller school, similar in size to some Primary schools.</p> <p><b>CW</b> pointed out that Parent Council involvement was essential. <b>LG</b> reported that parents were being emailed and called to encourage new members to the Parent Council. <b>CW</b> suggested that parents may be put off if they know that roles within the Parent Council need to be filled and recommended using an external provider as secretary.</p>	
4.3	<p><b><u>Further feedback and questions:</u></b></p> <p><b>Qu.</b> <b>CW</b> asked for more detail on future expansion.  <b>Ans.</b> <b>BP</b> confirmed that the generous site and the orientation of the building would allow for expansion in the future. THC was already considering how recent government changes to required nursery provision would impact nursery size. <b>SD</b> confirmed that a corridor with an open connection, similar to the one included in IRA design, would allow for additional classrooms to be added to the end of the building if required in the future.</p> <p><b>Qu.</b> Will there be a running track?  <b>Ans.</b> Yes, 400m over grass pitch.</p> <p><b>Qu.</b> Will there be a drama room?  <b>Ans.</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>Qu.</b> Will there be an ASN block?  <b>Ans.</b> Yes.</p>	<b>Note</b>
4.4	<p><b>CW</b> invited a discussion on provision of lockers. Opinions appear divided. <b>LG</b> mentioned that younger pupils (S1-3) wanted them, but older pupil (S4 – 6) did not feel they were beneficial. <b>CW</b> warned that there would be no provision for</p>	

	common rooms in the new school. When asked, <b>SD</b> confirmed that locker provision would not impact on classroom sizes, as classroom sizes are 'sacrosanct'. However, it is worth noting that the provision of lockers would form part of the overall space metrics, so locker provision would decrease space available for other areas, like communal areas. Locker provision is optional and varies by school. Further stakeholder discussion is recommended.	
<b>4.5</b>	<p><b>CW</b> asked how many attendees were interested in the offer of the Wick Campus visit offered by THC at the previous meeting. <b>SI</b> reported that email response had been low. Many attendees reported that they had not been made aware of the offer.</p> <p>Note: If you are interested in attending, please suggest preferred dates by email and we will try to accommodate you. The suggestion to visit at a weekend may prove difficult, so weekdays are recommended.</p>	<b>ALL</b>
<b>4.6</b>	Any email addresses missing from the circulation list please advise.	<b>ALL</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</b>	
<b>5.1</b>	The next meeting will be held at 6.30PM on Wednesday 12 <sup>th</sup> July in the Heritage Centre, Alness.	<b>Note</b>