

INVERNESS ROYAL ACADEMY STAKEHOLDERS GROUP

Meeting No 1

Note of meeting on the 17th April 2012.

Those attending:

David Henderson (Chair), Alastair McKinlay, Janet Hackel, Fraser Parr, Norrie Donald, Kath Black and Ron MacKenzie

Apologies received : Clifford Cooke

1. Approved funding for Inverness Royal Academy within the current Highland Council Capital programme

RM confirmed that the following position remained after the approval of the current Capital programme at the Highland Council meeting on 05/04/12.

Firm programme - £2.97M

Indicative programme – £11.70M

The Highland Council will review its Capital commitments for the next 5 years during autumn 2012 when the new Council is up and running.

2. Scotland's Schools for the Future – Phase 3 (SSF3)

The Scottish Govt. has invited all Scottish local authorities to submit funding bids for SSF3 by 21/07/12. The Government has committed to announce the award of funding by September 2012.

ECS has been asked to identify projects by 10/05/12 that could be included within any SSF3 bid submitted by the Highland Council

The details of the criteria which will be used by the Scottish Government to determine the successful applications are appended to this Minute.

The key criteria are:

- The investment must deliver Condition and Suitability ratings to category A
- The Government funding should augment, not replace, local authority funding in their educational Capital programmes
- The investment must deliver key national school estate priorities including – the school estate strategy, Climate Change Act and value for money
- Commitment to working towards the programme metrics, in terms of area per pupil and cost per square metre
- Commitment to joint working with other partners to achieve a greater commonality of approach, where practical.

It was noted that any significant investment at IRA would satisfy a number of the above criteria

RM reminded the Group that the Government's funding contribution for Secondary School projects is based on 66% of what the Government thinks that the project should cost (a formula based approach). Also and critically, if the Government providing a funding contribution, the project would become a "quasi PPP contract".

On the basis of the relatively short timescales which have been truncated by the timing of the local government elections a decision re which Highland bid should be submitted will be taken at a Highland Council meeting in late May or early June 2012.

3. In parallel there is a meeting on 03/05/12 of the Sustainable School Estate Review group gathering intelligence on future educational provision in Inverness city and the A96 corridor. This meeting should produce recommendations for the new ruling Council Administration to consider. These recommendations will include where to invest and what adjustments may be required in relation to school catchment areas

4. A key concern for the Group is the timing of any proposed investment at IRA. RM used the current Wick High School replacement project as an exemplar which suggested that 3 years from a decision to handover would be the minimum timescale in which a new school could be constructed, although this could be longer if any project to replace IRA is partially funded by the Government and the related contractual arrangements

5. The next meeting of the Stakeholder Group should take place late May/early June. Proposed dates will be advised after local government election outcomes known.

Ron MacKenzie

April 2012