

Agenda Item	12.
Report No	CLH 10/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Care, Learning and Housing

Date: 30 May 2018

Report Title: **Statutory Consultation – Creation of a 3-18 campus for Tain**

Report By: Director of Care and Learning

1. **Purpose/Executive Summary**

1.1 This report seeks Members' agreement to conduct a statutory consultation proposing the establishment of a 3-18 campus in Tain, on one of two site options. The new campus will replace the existing Tain Royal Academy, Craighill Primary, Knockbreck Primary and St. Duthus Special School buildings, and will involve a merger of the two primary schools and St. Duthus School.

2. **Recommendation**

2.1 Members are asked to agree to proceed to statutory consultation on the proposal set out at **Booklet A (pages 2-24)** to this report, to establish a new 3-18 campus in Tain, with a consequential merger of Craighill Primary, Knockbreck Primary and St. Duthus School, on one of two site options.

3. Background

- 3.1 In November 2012 the Council's Adult and Children Services Committee approved the principle that a 3 to 18 campus should be created in Tain to replace existing education provision at Tain Royal Academy, Craighill Primary School, Knockbreck Primary School, and St Duthus Special School.
- 3.2 A statutory consultation exercise was carried out on the above proposal during 2014 and 2015. In addition to proposing the merger of the schools, the Proposal Paper issued for consultation also specified that the new campus should be built on the site of the existing Tain Royal Academy. The proposal was approved by Highland Council on 12 March 2015 and by Scottish Ministers on 1 May 2015.
- 3.3 During the pre-planning application consultation process, earlier in 2017, there were a significant number of concerns raised by the community with regard to the suitability of the existing Academy site for the Campus. Arising from that feedback, the Highland Council's People Committee agreed, at its meeting of 21 June 2017, to commence a new site selection review for the Tain 3-18 Campus, the outcome of which would be reported back to the Committee. It was also agreed that project design and project activity on the current Tain 3-18 Campus be paused pending this review.
- 3.4 Since that time the Council has also reviewed its capital programme, and at present there is no specific budget allocation for a Tain 3-18 Campus project. The Council has identified the Campus as one of a number of key priorities for bids to Scottish Government for capital investment. It is expected that there will be clarity on the funding position for the project over the course of 2018, and prior to any final decision being made on this consultation proposal.

4. Site Options

- 4.1 In 2014, there were 3 sites considered, Tain Craighill, Tain Kirksheaf and Tain Royal Academy, with the Council deciding to proceed to Statutory Consultation on a single site option, Tain Royal Academy.
- 4.2 On further appraisal over the course of 2017, a further site was identified for consideration during the current site options review, that being Tain Burgage. Some amendments were also made to the areas of land assessed as part of this review for the Craighill and Kirksheaf sites. In discussion with the local Stakeholder Group in October 2017 there was consensus that the Council's review should proceed on the basis of assessing these 4 sites for the purposes of a 3-18 Campus.
- 4.3 Further informal consultation has taken place over the course of March – May 2018 on those 4 site options, including presentations to and discussion within the local Stakeholder Group, feedback forms provided by Parent Councils, and a public drop in day held in Tain on 10th May. **Booklet A, pages 29-75** sets out the site options presentation used for these discussions. The feedback provided through informal consultation, is included as **Booklet A, pages 76-**

- 4.4 It was the view of Officers that the list of 4 site options should be reduced to 2, to progress forward for formal statutory consultation. A summary assessment of the 4 sites is set out at **Booklet A (page 1)** to this report. There were sufficient risks and concerns in relation to access and infrastructure requirements for the Burgage and Kirksheaf sites, and also the cost and risk given neither were in Council ownership. As a result, and with the support of the majority of those on the Stakeholder Group, it was proposed to move forward on the basis of 2 site options; Craighill PS and Tain Royal Academy. To engage wider with the community, a drop in day was also used to gather views. Those views set out very strong support for the Craighill PS site, far and above expressions of support for any of the other site options. Paragraph 4.11 of the proposal report sets out community views on site options.
- 4.5 Despite the relatively limited public support for the Tain Royal Academy site, given that it represents the Status Quo position from the 2014-15 consultation, and also to allow for objective comparison against the Craighill PS site, it is recommended that both Craighill PS and Tain Royal Academy proceed to statutory consultation. The intention to move forward on this basis has been fully discussed with local stakeholders.

5. The Proposal

- 5.1 It is proposed to proceed to statutory consultation on the basis of the Proposal Paper at **pages 2-24**, and its associated appendices set out within **Booklet A**. Two site options are proposed for the location of the new campus.
- 5.2 Subject to a Committee decision to proceed to statutory consultation, a public meeting will be held to discuss the Council's proposal, and there will be considerable opportunity for stakeholders to submit views to the Council in advance of any final decision being made. At this stage, it is expected the statutory consultation timeline would see a final recommendation being considered by the Committee in December 2018, with a decision being made by Scottish Ministers in February 2019. This timescale may however be subject to change to ensure the Council has sufficient time to consider and respond to matters arising from the consultation, and also subject to clarity on the funding position for the project.

6. Implications

- 6.1 Resource – There will be revenue and capital implications arising from a new school, and these are set out on **page 185 of Booklet A**. At this time there is no specific capital provision for the Campus capital project, however it is expected this matter will be clarified over the course of 2018.
- 6.2 Legal - the statutory consultation will be taken forward as per the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 6.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) - None
- 6.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever - The new school will be constructed to modern standards of energy efficiency. The Council's expectation is that the CO² equivalent emissions from the new building will be much reduced from the

emissions from the 4 current schools.

- 6.5 Risk – If suitable capital funding is not identified, the Council would not be able to progress with the 3-18 Campus proposal. As highlighted above, it is expected the funding position will be clarified during the course of this year, and that no decision on this proposal would be made until funding was confirmed. Until such time as a new Campus is in place, the Council will have to consider any urgent maintenance or capital requirements in the existing Tain schools.
- 6.6 Gaelic - Craighill Primary currently offers Gàidhlig Medium education. This will continue within the proposed new campus.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 24 May 2018

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Background Papers: Proposal Paper and Appendices