

The Highland Council

Tain 3-18 Campus - Stakeholder Group

Minute of meeting No. 13 held on Monday 23 September 2024 at 7 pm

Via Microsoft Teams

Attendees	Initials
Highland Council - Members	
Derek Loudon, Chair	DL
Laura Dundas	LD
School Representatives	
Nikki Campbell, Head Teacher, Hill of Fearn & Tarbat Old	NC
Mel Carson, Head Teacher, St Duthus	MC
Eileen Henderson, Head Teacher, Craighill Primary	EH
Heather Lowe, Teacher, St Duthus School	HL
Jane MacKay, Head Teacher, Knockbreck Primary	JM
Gavin McLean, Head Teacher, Tain Royal Academy	GM
Parent Council Representatives	
Lindsay Aitchison-Shah, Knockbreck Primary	LA
Lorna MacIver, Craighill Primary	LM
Chris Ross, Tain Royal Academy	CR
Community Representatives	
Graham Nutt, Senior Youth & Community Worker, Tain YMCA	GM
Highland Council - Officials	
Robert Campbell, Service Lead – Capital Planning & Estate Strategy	RC
Susannah Holmes, Estates Team Leader	SH
Annika Jansson, Area Education Manager	AJ
Finlay Macdonald, Chief Officer – Property and Assets	FM
Anne McPherson, Head of Resources	AM
Pauline Pearson, Education Support Officer	PP
Callum Sinclair, Estates Officer	CSI
High Life Highland	
Rob Parkes, Youth Development Officer	RP
Simon Swanson, Head of Service	SS
Kier Construction	
Cameron Stewart, Project Director	CST
WSP	
Mark Boyle, Project Manager	MB
Apologies	
Councillor Maureen Ross, Philip McDowell, Steven McRoberts and Phillip Shannon	
Minute	
Callum Sinclair	

Item	Discussion and comment	Action
1.	Welcome	

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1.1	DL welcomed everyone to the meeting asked them to introduce themselves.	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting	
2.1	CST advised that work in the neighbour's gardens will be carried out in the next 3 to 4 weeks, and they will be contacted to advise them of dates.	
3.	Construction programme update	
3.1	RC: Kier have produced a revised programme which the project team is reviewing. This is showing a handover date of June 2025 which would be a 6-month delay from the original completion date.	
3.2	RC: There are still some risks associated to achieving this date as there is a lot to catch up on and work remaining to complete. This is the Council's first new build Passivhaus project and it must be delivered to meet the required standards and meet the outcomes necessary to secure the revenue funding from the Scottish Government. We will only take over the building once it meets the required standards and achieves the Passivhaus certification. This is disappointing for all involved, but we must make sure that we get the quality of building that we require.	
3.3	CR: Is there a risk of not getting the Scottish Government funding at risk if we are late to complete the project? RC: We work closely with the Scottish Futures Trust, the Scottish Government's funding agency, to keep them updated. One of the conditions of the funding award is to meet the target completion date, but as we have been keeping them informed, we do not anticipate any loss of funding due to the delay in completion.	
3.4	CR asked about rumours concerning problems with the roof. RC: We are closely monitoring the building to ensure that work is completed to the required standard. CST: The roof isn't finished yet but once completed it will be to standard.	
3.5	GM raised a concern about missing the June deadline and the potential requirement for two timetables at the Academy, one for the existing building and one for the new build, which would involve a lot of extra work. AJ: Comment noted, and we will work together through this.	
4.	Progress report	
4.1	CST introduced a presentation, drone footage and an update on community activities. There are currently 150 operatives on site rising to 190 in January. The playing fields are being formed, roof cladding should be finished by the end of October, utilities are being installed, and internal fitout is progressing.	
4.2	RC: A stakeholder visit could be arranged once the project is further on.	
4.3	RP: Could the youth worker team also have a visit arranged? CST agreed to arrange that.	CST
5.	Education update	
5.1	AJ provided an update on the recent visit to the site with representatives from all schools.	
5.2	AJ has had regular updates with all the Head Teachers about operational issues, the transition to the new campus and the two Primary Schools coming together.	
5.3	AJ: Tain Royal Academy (TRA) and St Duthus will retain their names, but the combined Primary School will require a new name. There is a meeting with	

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	the two Parent Council (PC) chairs tomorrow. There has been a competition with pupils and Members will be involved. There will be a further discussion about when to merge the two PC's.	
5.4	AJ: The deadline for the Head Teacher post for TRA has been extended by another week and has been advertised in the Times Educational Supplement. Will liaise with PC and Members in due course.	
5.5	AJ: The new Primary School Head Teacher post will be ringfenced initially for the two current Head Teachers to express an interest. If not, then it will be advertised.	
5.6	AJ: Interviews will be held this week for a member of staff from one of the schools to be seconded to the building project for two days a week as a liaison between the schools and the project team.	
5.7	CR: Has there been more interest in the Head Teacher post for TRA this time? AJ: Yes, there has been more interest which is encouraging.	
5.8	LM: Will the internal building design be changed as there will now be three separate schools? SH: There will be minor changes in terms of the layout, there is now an office space in the Primary School and security arrangements has been varied for pupil and visitor access. There is a shared staff room and sports facilities so the management of those will have to be agreed between Head Teachers, it is too late in the process to make any major changes.	
5.9	LM: Who will ultimately be responsible for management of timetables, use of halls etc and has this been taken into account? SH: In terms of the space allocation, the internal and external spaces were designed for the 3 separate schools with some sharing. AJ: Other schools have shared spaces and facilities and there has been some discussion with staff in these schools. It will be down to the Head Teachers to work together to decide how spaces are used and when.	
5.10	CR: What spaces were sacrificed for the Primary School office? CS: A small meeting room and store were combined to form the space so there is no impact on classroom space.	
5.11	GMC: There are a lot of questions about operational issues and unsure what would be the correct forum to raise these, particularly around the delivery of the curriculum. AJ: Will set up regular meetings to discuss operational issues or concerns and invite officers as necessary.	AJ
5.12	GMC: Would like to meet to go over the plans and review operational demands particularly at exam time. SH: Happy to meet to discuss concerns and include the new liaison person.	SH
5.13	LM: Asked about perimeter fencing around the pitches. SH: No change to where the fence lines are but some changes to access arrangements. Both of the 3G pitches and the 3 MUGAS are fenced in, the grass pitch has ball stop fences but isn't fully fenced.	
5.14	RP: Asked about community access and has it been discussed with stakeholders. SH: Yes, it has been fully discussed with stakeholders and High Life Highland and the access arrangements would be similar to those existing.	

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5.15	<p>LM asked about bike storage and paths.</p> <p>MB: Shared a site plan to show where the access routes and bike storage areas are as stipulated by the planning requirements.</p> <p>LM: Are the paths wide enough for bikes and pupils walking?</p> <p>MB: They are wide enough for this and the paths are also compliant with DDA legislation.</p> <p>GM asked about risk assessment and safeguarding with regard to public right of way.</p> <p>SH: The overall site is permeable to encourage walking and cycling to school from whichever direction, with the individual schools having their own secure fence lines.</p>	
5.16	<p>MC: Will the St Duthus playground be visible though the perimeter fence?</p> <p>SH: The fencing will be 1.8m high and will be close boarded with plant screening to ensure privacy.</p>	
5.17	<p>EH asked where the Primary School office had been formed.</p> <p>MB showed where this is located on the floor plan.</p> <p>SH: The main office is near the reception with the separate office in the Primary School wing.</p>	
5.18	<p>GM: Where has the expertise come from in relation to the separate schools operating on one building?</p> <p>SH: There have been school liaison officers throughout the design process with lessons learned from previous projects and there has been ongoing discussion with colleagues in Education.</p> <p>AJ: It was designed as a 3-18 campus, but all will need to work through the revised management arrangements going forward.</p>	
5.19	<p>LD asked about dining arrangements.</p> <p>SH: There is one main area with a separate area for younger primary pupils. St Duthus will have an area for dining in their wing. Lunchtimes will be staggered with primary pupils timetabled to start earlier than secondary pupils.</p> <p>AM: AJ will coordinate with the Head Teachers on how the 3 separate schools will operate and work through any issues.</p>	
6.	Swimming pool and library	
6.1	<p>RC provided a brief recap.</p> <p>When the new project was included in the Council's capital programme in 2020 it was purely for education facilities and did not include a swimming pool and fitness suite.</p> <p>It was agreed that an appraisal would be conducted for two options: a new build pool on the new campus or to upgrade the current TRACC building to a reasonable standard.</p> <p>An external consultant was appointed to review the work carried out by the in-house team to date and to look at the requirements for the TRACC building in more detail. This report was received a few weeks ago and will now be considered by senior Members and Council managers and apologised for the delay in getting to this point.</p> <p>Also, the recently approved Highland Improvement Plan strategy looks at all Council assets in a location, not just schools, which did not happen at the time for Tain. This is now underway and will be factored into the overall discussion.</p>	
6.2	CR: What is RC's gut instinct on the likely outcome?	

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	<p>RC: The information has been prepared and will be considered by senior Members and Council managers to decide on next steps. The technical aspects have now been reviewed by a third party with a more detailed examination, and this will be presented at a meeting to be arranged in due course.</p> <p>CR: What is the likely timeline for a decision?</p> <p>RC: This will depend on what is decided, and the outcome will determine the timeline.</p> <p>CR: Would the TRACC building remain operational until a new pool is built?</p> <p>RC: Again, this will depend on the eventual decision. It is not straightforward, but the necessary timelines will be factored into the outcome.</p> <p>DL has been chasing this up for some time but believes that the discussion is imminent.</p>	
6.3	<p>LD: When the decision was made in 2020 to build the new campus at the Craighill site was it explained to stakeholders that they might not end up with a swimming pool in Tain?</p> <p>DL: When the new project was approved there wasn't a suggestion that a new pool would not be built and the existing one lost, that wasn't the belief at the time.</p> <p>LD: When did it appear that there might be a real possibility that we may lose this invaluable service to our community?</p> <p>DL: All options are in the options appraisal, and he had not yet seen the report.</p> <p>LD: It's imperative that we get some answers to pass on to our community. This has taken far too long.</p> <p>DL: Has passed on his concerns to all the officers involved and now hoping that there would not be a further long delay before information can be released to the public.</p>	
6.4	<p>RP reiterated what DL has said, and a lot of young people are concerned about future access to pool and leisure facilities.</p> <p>Also commented on the relative costs of the two options and lack of public awareness.</p> <p>DL: Has tried to come up with solutions for a new pool and will continue to look at new ideas.</p>	
6.5	<p>LD: Is swimming part of the curriculum for either primary or secondary schools?</p> <p>AJ: It's not a compulsory part of the curriculum. Some schools may offer it where possible, but it is not being offered in Tain.</p>	
6.6	<p>RC: The school has been designed to include a space where a public library could be located at some point in the future. This will be assessed as part of the review of assets in Tain.</p>	
7.	<p>Date of next meeting</p>	
7.1	<p>It was proposed that the next meeting would be held on a Monday in November, the date will be confirmed.</p>	
8.	<p>AOCB</p>	
8.1	<p>There was no other business, and the meeting ended at 20:21.</p>	