

Ness Castle stakeholder group meeting 10 minutes

Microsoft Teams

1 December 2021 at 6:30pm

In attendance

Councillors

Cllr Alasdair Christie (Chair)

Parent Council Representatives

Andrew Martin, Holm Parent Council

Community Representatives

Murray McCheyne, Holm Community Council

Gail Beveridge, Holm Community Council

Maria De La Torre, Lochardil & Drummond Community Council

Scott McRoberts, Resident

Holm Primary

Janine Webb, Acting Head Teacher

Lochardil Primary

Audrey Kellacher, Head Teacher

Highland Council Representatives

Robert Campbell, Estates Strategy Manager

Dorothy Gibb, Principal Estates Officer

Alan Paul, Estates Officer

Fiona Sangster, Estates Co-ordinator

Fiona Shearer, Area Care & Learning Manager

Ian Graham, Road Safety Officer

Evelyn Miller, Cleaning & Facilities Management Manager

Kier Construction

Steve McRoberts

Finlay Niven

Apologies

Donna Grant, Lochardil Parent Council

| Item | Discussion and comment | Action |
|------|---|--------|
| 1. | Welcome | |
| 2. | Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Works are progressing as expected. Concrete floor works now coming to a close, roofing work starting and framing around the building envelope. The nursery car park and access road have been formed.• Out of hours work on the concrete floor is complete. An additional day was required but went without incident.• No further requests for after hours working anticipated. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> THC continue to work with Kier on concluding planning conditions and requirements. DG confirmed that approval from Planning was received on 29 November to remove the oak tree and beech tree as discussed at a previous meeting. This will be recorded in the minutes and posted on the THC website and available to the public in January. DG noted tree removal will progress as soon as feasible in order to avoids bats and nesting birds. | |
| 3. | <p>Safer Routes to School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft online survey had been distributed to the Stakeholder Group for comment but IG received no comments on any changes/amendments required. As noted at this meeting, the Stakeholder Group is happy with IG going ahead and issuing the survey. IG is working with planning on creating the School Travel Plan and the results of the online survey will help with that. MD asked to see the draft Travel Plan. IG to send through FS. | IG IG/FS |
| 4. | <p>Staffing and migration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fiona Shearer was delighted to share the news that a Head Teacher for the new school has been appointed - Craig Connon. Craig is currently a Quality Improvement Officer based in South Lanarkshire. Craig is in discussions with his current authority regarding a notice period but it is hoped that he will be able to start his new role in 6-8 weeks. A job description for the Depute Head Teacher position is being drafted and the post will be advertised to coincide with Craig's start date to allow him to be part of the interview panel. Helen Mudie has been appointed as the Principal Teacher. Helen was an Early Years Officer for The Highland Council and recently redeployed to a Principal Teacher post. She is currently based at Merkinch Primary School to cover maternity cover and will begin her role at the new school after the 2022 Easter holidays AC asked about plans to liaise with existing catchment schools. Fiona Shearer confirmed that once the new HT is in post, staffing would be looked at first. Letters will go out to parents of Holm and Lochardil Primaries in January to enquire as to preferences. P1-5 will be expected to go to their catchment school with P6-7 expected to remain at their current school. However, every pupil will have a choice. Placing requests can be submitted but it is hoped that people will choose to go to their catchment school. Placing requests have already been received for the new school. Hope to have better idea of numbers in January – February next year. The new HT will also engage with the Estates Team and also link in with parents and children from the catchment area. A name for the new school and a uniform is required so HT will engage with pupils about that. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new school is now registered with the Scottish Government and is currently being set up in SEEMis. RC noted that transition groups are usually set up for new schools to include Catering Staff, FM staff etc. Fiona Shearer noted a shortage of laptops had been identified so these need to be ordered as soon as possible. AC noted that rumours were still circulating that Charleston would be the secondary catchment school despite this being discussed at the last meeting and confirmed as incorrect. A press release is to be issued regarding the appointment of the new Head Teacher so suggestion that it could also be mentioned within that the secondary catchment school is definitely Inverness Royal Academy. JW noted that she had raised this at the last meeting and reported back to staff and parents that the rumours were incorrect. Some staff are anxious about possible redeployment so this could be a reason for speculation. Fiona Shearer noted that staffing will be looked at as part of the annual staffing allocation carried out in January each year. Staff to be reassured that the procedure will be the same to include the new school. MMC noted that the public seem to think that because IRA is close to capacity, there will not be room for additional pupils from the new school. Fiona Shearer noted that the pupils who will attend the new school currently attend either Holm or Lochardil and therefore are already accounted for in projected rolls for IRA. | |
| 5. | <p>Community benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kier have appointed a new Community Benefits staff member to their team. Lindsey MacNaughton. Lindsey plans to visit the school site on 16 December. A meeting is being arranged with the Estates Team and it is hoped that Lindsey could attend the next Stakeholder meeting. MD asked if there were any plans for infrastructure for community activities as part of the Community Benefits such as a pump track for the local children. DG confirmed that suggestions would be welcome. We currently have a note that the Botanic Gardens were hoping to work with schools and have some assistance to do this through the scheme. MMC had asked for notice boards to be provided Any further suggestions should be sent to the CLEEstates@highland.gov.uk mailbox. DG noted that for now the focus was on construction of the main building and nursery. The Oak tree had put limits on the site and the position of the pitch and MUGA. Now that the oak tree is to be removed, we are to revisit the pitch and MUGA locations, with potential relocation leaving more space for community use and access. It was originally intended that the bottom end of site could be used for community allotments and the Council's Climate Change Team had been enthusiastic about this. | |

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| 6. | <p>AOCB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MMC had a question from a resident about street lighting on the Dores Road to be installed between the bus stop at the roundabout and the Brodie Road access road to the Ness Castle housing developments. This is a planning condition and MMC asked when this was planned for in the programme of works. DG confirmed that this is a pre-occupation condition and will be in place prior to the school opening. | |
| 7. | <p>Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday 19 January 2022 at 6.30pm | |