**Gartcosh Primary School Relocation**

**Public Meeting held Wednesday 8 March 2023 in Gartcosh Primary School**

**Notes/Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

**Q** **Question**

**A Answer**

**S** **Statement**

MD opened by meeting outlining and explaining the purpose of the statutory consultation, including the process and timeline.

MD introduced the officers present:

G McLaughlin, Chief Officer (Education – North)

M Dolan, Education & Families Manager

C MacDonald, Principal Officer (Contracts & Provisions)

M O’Halloran, Education & Families Manager

M McGorry, Education Project Manager

L Macpherson, Education Project Coordinator

D Lees, Education Project Administration Assistant

C McCabe, Hub Strategy Manager

MD introduced GMcL to present the educational benefits of the proposal.

GMcL presented the educational benefits to relocating the current Gartcosh Primary School to the new site at Woodneuk Avenue/Johnston Road. GMcL emphasised that an essential element of the consultation is gathering the views of stakeholders including parents/carers and pupils.

CMcC explained the historical position in respect of the previous consultation and why the council was now conducting a new consultation on a new site. To indicate the urgency the council is giving to resolving the current school capacity issues, it is prepared to work at risk by appointing a design team as soon as possible whilst awaiting the decision on the proposal. Should the proposal not be approved the council has a contingency for the land purchased. However, CMcC stressed that the Education Authority hoped that stakeholders would support the new proposal and for it to be approved.

MD opened the floor to questions:

**Q** **How long will the new school be fit for purpose?**

A The asset time attributed to school builds is currently 60 years. However there are three key measurables when assessing a school’s state : The condition of the building (60 years); utilisation (space used) and suitability (how suitable the school is in relation to learners, staff, and other users). Therefore, the 60 years relates to condition only. The other two variables cannot be quantified in this way – as an example it was stated that the meeting was being held in a school that was deemed ‘suitable’ in 2013 but does not meet the highest level of ‘suitability’ in 2023.

CMcC provided information on how the school roll is projected in respect of the pupil product rate, using historical data on migration, etc and that the council builds for the forecasted peak number of pupils.

**Q** **On what basis could this proposal be refused?**

A Officers put forward the proposal to Elected Members and they make the decision. A report is put to Committee that includes your views, other stakeholder views such as Education Scotland and the Elected Members make the decision.

Q **Will it be the case that the lowest bidder gets the contract, and that quality is not a factor?**

A No, this is not the case. There is a cost: quality ratio in the tender. The council only uses Tier 1 contractors and ‘award winning’ Architects. We want to build the best facility that we can. The budget allocated to this project is comparable to any other in North Lanarkshire. The HT, staff and Parent Council Chair will be invited to visit some of the new facilities to see the quality of builds.

**Q** **Will there be a change to the catchment?**

A No, this is not within the scope of this consultation. The proposal is modelled on the existing catchment. If a change to the catchment area was to be proposed, this would be subject to a statutory education process. This is not planned.

**Q** **Does the 434 roll include the 60 Language, Communication & Speech Centre (LCSC) places and 48 Early Years (EYs) places and are you confident this is sufficient (ie using accurate projections)? Capacity is a key question?**

**S** **The projections for Stepps, Glenboig and Chryston were inaccurate.**

A These facilities used an older method of projection calculation. An explanation was given on the new projection criteria and, whilst acknowledging it is not a perfect science, by using the intelligence available at this time, the council has confidence in their figures.

**Q** **Will the community centre be retained for community use (eg pensioners’ lunch club). The village is struggling for community facilities such as GP surgery?**

A Once the new community centre is decanted to the new build, the old community centre becomes surplus. An explanation was provided on the council’s surplus asset process where empty buildings are offered to internal council services before going external (assets & disposals).

The NHS is a separate entity to the council and this suggestion would need to be pursued by the community and councillors.

**S** **The size of the site at Newmains & St Brigid’s Hub is far greater than that of the new site. I cannot see how the size of school will fit.**

A It is acknowledged that the site at Newmains is significantly larger than the proposed site for Gartcosh. Newmains therefore was able to be designed with little constraints around site space, this is not normal. The council have evidenced that the primary, LSCC, and EYs facilities will fit on the new site.

**S** **Would like to have been able to have discussed the red boundary lines.**

CMcC explained the situation regarding the entrance and exit strategy for the new school – and a map was put on the screen to show the ‘red line boundary.’ A discussion took place regarding the current situation with the area of land north of the site (Blades Court).

**Q** **Do you have plans to acquire the adjacent field?**

A No – the red line boundary shown is the site that the new campus would occupy.

**Q** **Will the council be maintaining the land south of the access road?**

A This is not known at this time but is out with the scope of this consultation.

**Q** **Do you have a plan B?**

A We have considered many options over the years, and this is the best proposal and the ‘plan A’ which is being proposed. The ‘plan B’ would be to build two smaller schools and split the catchment area.

**Q** **Is this still ‘plan B’?**

A If new build does not go ahead, then it is a possibility, but we would need to understand why the proposal was not accepted.

S **Should we be getting better? holding out for better for our children? Do not like the language ‘required’ space.**

A We would prefer a bigger site however this site is the best central location – it is a very inspiring space that will allow for a creative design. We have a very good design team and although we will meet the necessary metrics that is not our aim. We will make best use of every space available.

**S** **We need other community facilities in the area.**

An explanation was given on the council’s position regarding the confines of the current consultation. The Education Service alongside colleagues from the road safety team will, under the council’s Active Travel criteria, consider the condition of the walking routes from Gartcosh to the new school.

**Q** **What about transport, how will the children get there the roads are shocking.**

A The Contracts & Provisions service within Education will oversee the process that will assess the walking routes to ensure they are acceptable. The standard definition of ‘acceptable,’ under the Active Travel criteria, considers the walking route contingent on the pupil being accompanied by an adult.

**Q** **What will happen to the current school building**

A There is a surplus process that the council follows. The building will be offered to other NLC services, if they are not required, they are then offered out externally (assets & disposals).

**Q** **What about the planning permission for the modular units in the current school, when does that expire?**

A The current planning permission for the modular units (3 1/2 years) will extend beyond the new build completion date.

**S** **The school chairperson thanked the team for all their hard work and confirmed that the Parent Council fundamentally support the proposal.**

**Q** C**learly the existing building does not work and is bursting at the seams. How will the children be accommodated till the new building has been built?**

A We are currently investigating temporary solutions to meet the increased capacity needs of the current school until such time as the school relocates (assuming the proposal is accepted).

**Q** **What will the safer routes to school look like? The traffic is different at the new school –**  **motorway traffic, how will this be managed?**

A All acceptable walking routes will be assessed, we do not know yet where the paths and gates will be positioned. It is offered that any assessment is evaluated on the basis that the pupil(s) would be accompanied to school by a responsible adult.

**Q** **Will the building be accessible out with school times?**

The operating model and aspiration for all NLC community hubs is that they are open from dawn till dusk and open to the wider community.

**Can Parent Council visit other sites?**

The team will arrange for the Parent Council to visit other schools. The nearest will be Chryston PS when finished.

It is remarkable what has been done in other hubs and that is what we want for this school for the staff and young people. We will also be looking at the Early Years start and finish times. and consulting with parents on the flexibility of the service

**Q** **If it takes 18 months to design and 18 months to build, when will the proposal be approved?**

A The design process starts now (we are absorbing the risk). However, if approved, we will not have legal approval until after the statutory consultation is complete. The consultation is a 6-week process, within which time representation can be made, and it is expected that the recommendation will be presented to the Education, Children & Families Committee for approval in September 2023.

**Q** **What about Gartcosh United, where will they play?**

A We have reached a unilateral obligation with Gartcosh United to build an 11-a-side pitch with training facilities at the social club. There will be access to other facilities if the pitch is not ready on time (sub-station to move).

**Q** **Will the entrance to the north be for cars or on foot? Residents have already petitioned the council for more parking to be provided, as this area is very tight.**

A There are three separate authorities involved in assessing the requirements for the site and they will all deal with their own area. These authorities are Education, Planning and Roads, any issues in relation to these concerns will be raised and addressed through Planning and Roads services. These services operate independently in this regard.

**Q** **Can the wider community use the outdoor space?**

A We would look at the risk as all schools need to be secured, but if, for example, we had a MUGA, there would be a separate entrance for daytime for the school and for the wider public in the evening. This is how we have designed similar facilities (such as at the new Chryston PS Hub)

**Q The emphasis on this is young people, what about the older people who do not have nice areas to walk in?**

A Our focus is on this proposal for a new school. The Roads department will look at it from the aspect of getting pupils and others to and from the Gartcosh hub safely. An acceptable walking route will be established and where necessary adaptations put in place, such as safety barriers. Personal safety is a matter for the Police.

**Q Will consideration be given to the noise?**

A Acoustic specialists are part of the design team and Pollution Control will make sure that we meet the standards.

**Q Will the community centre be next to a community garden?**

A Access to the outdoor space for the community is a consideration that would be will be developed during the design process in collaboration with the Landscape Architects. There is opportunity to bring your ideas to the intelligent brief.

**S Concern about traffic modelling around the artery roads, etc.**

Concerns noted and reference made to previous responses regarding traffic.

MD closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and asked that comments are sent into gartcoshconsultation@northlan.gov.uk. All papers relating to this consultation are online and FAQs will be updated as the consultation progresses.