

---

## **PRIMARY SCHOOL ESTATE UPDATE REPORT EYEMOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EARLSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**Joint report by Interim Service Director Children and Young People and  
Service Director Assets and Infrastructure**

---

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**16 April 2019**

---

#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides an update of the community consultations that were undertaken at Eyemouth Primary School and Earlston Primary School, provides a summary of work undertaken to date and further recommends that approval is given to the next stage of the detailed design and costings process in respect of both schools.**

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee:**

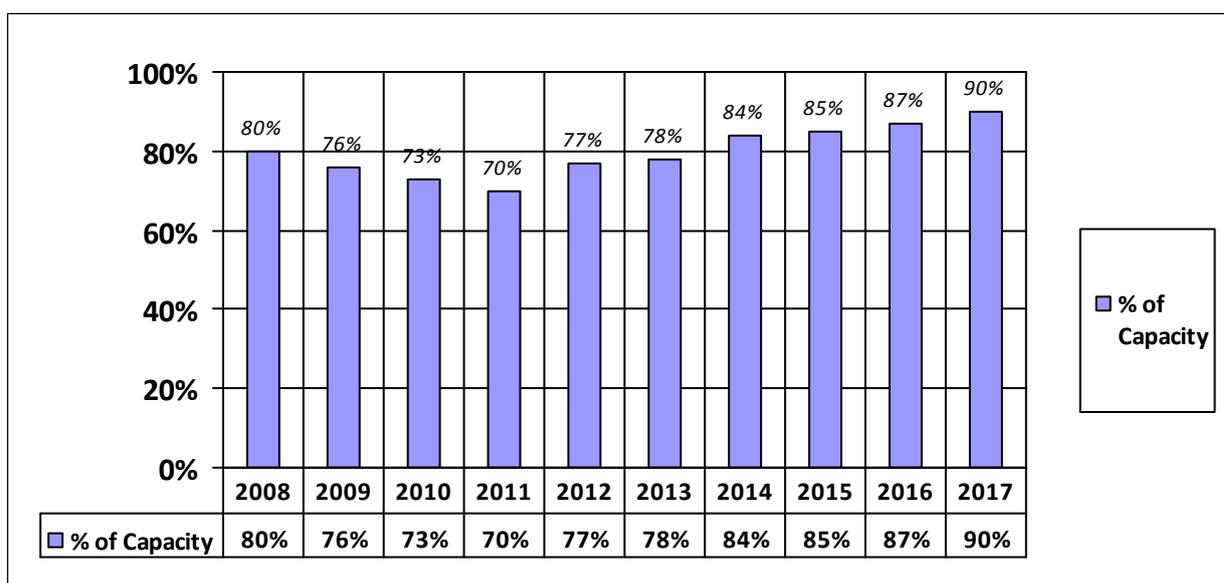
- (a) Note the contents of this update report;**
- (b) Agree to progress to the next stages in the detail design and costing process for both Eyemouth Primary School and Earlston Primary School;**
- (c) Note that further updates will be provided to Members as more detailed information and clarity around potential future funding support from Scottish Government becomes available; and**
- (d) Note that Eyemouth while will be treated as a priority, and further considers that if sufficient funding support were to be provided by Scottish Government, that Eyemouth PS and Earlston PS will be progressed and procured in parallel (subject to any revised profiling of the capital programme); and**
- (e) In accordance with the principle of 'Fit for 2024', request that officers consider all potential options for property asset consolidation within each of the respective school clusters as part of the proposed capital investment.**

### 3 BACKGROUND

3.1 On 7 November 2017, Executive Committee approved several recommendations set out in the paper entitled '**School Estate Review Next Steps 2017/18**'. This included approval to progress the next steps regarding investment at Earlston and Eyemouth Primary Schools, which included undertaking informal consultations with stakeholders regarding a vision for future provision.

#### EYEMOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

3.2 The school has capacity for 373 pupils. The number of pupils has grown steadily over the last 5 years. The school roll is currently 344 pupils for the 2018/19 school year which equates to 92% of capacity.



3.3 40 children are currently enrolled at the ELC (nursery) setting at the school which is the maximum number for the setting. In previous years the setting provided places for c 70 children on a half day basis, however when the number of Council funded hours for the Eyemouth catchment was increased from 600 to 1140 (part of the roll out of increased ELC provision in line with the Government policy for 2020) the capacity of the setting was reduced to 40 places for all day provision. Demand for places at the setting significantly exceeds supply.

3.4 The current primary school is located in the residual buildings of the former Eyemouth High School which was replaced through a PPP contract arrangement in March 2009. The space does not work well for modern day curricular requirements and the current setting does not provide a modern learning environment for the children.

3.5 In line with the Council's asset management strategy condition surveys are undertaken on a rolling programme by a team led by a chartered building surveyor. The suitability assessment is undertaken by the Head Teacher and validated by Senior Managers within Children and Young People's Services. These assessments are undertaken approximately every five years unless significant building or operational change has occurred within the

school requiring additional assessment. The definition and assessment categorisations are set by the Scottish Government as: -

**Condition** - an assessment of the physical condition of the school and its grounds.

A: Good	Performing well and operating efficiently
B: Satisfactory	Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration
C: Poor	Showing major defect and/or not operating adequately
D: Bad	Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure

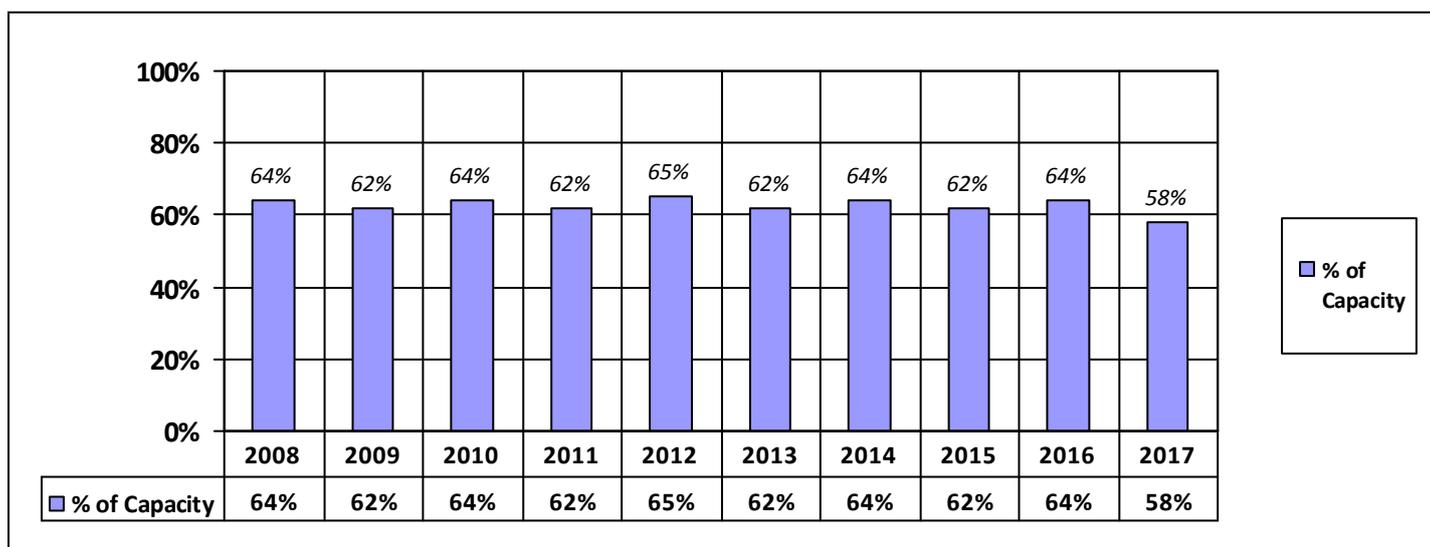
**Suitability** - an assessment of the school as a whole, its buildings and its grounds and of the impact these have on learning and teaching, leisure and social activities and the health and well-being of all users.

A: Good	Performing well and operating efficiently
B: Satisfactory	Performing well but with minor problems
C: Poor	Showing major problems and/or not operating optimally
D: Bad	Does not support the delivery of services to children and communities

3.6 Both the Condition and Suitability of the Eyemouth Primary School have been assessed as C.

### EARLSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

3.7 The school has capacity for 307 pupils. The roll has averaged at 63% over the last 10 years. The school roll is projected to 153 for the 2018/19 school year which equates to 50% of capacity.



3.8 The current primary school has been created from residual buildings of the former Earlston High School which was replaced through a PPP contractual arrangement in August 2009. The space does not work well for modern day requirements and is too large for its current use despite a recent demolition programme to remove some redundant areas. This does not provide a

modern learning environment for the children and results in management issues for staff regarding excess space, as well as multiple entrances and exits.

Both the Condition and Suitability of the Earlston Primary School have been assessed as C.

- 3.9 While the Condition and Suitability of the school are both assessed to be C ratings, Eyemouth has a greater and more immediate need for priority investment.

## **4 CONSULTATION**

### **EYEMOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

- 4.1 Two consultation events were held in Eyemouth on 8 and 9 March 2018, where parents and members of the community were invited to come and share their views regarding the current primary school and consider options to replace the existing school. The events were both well attended and a response form was available at the events and online to capture views, comments and opinions.

Consideration was given to co-location of the entire primary school with the newer High School, splitting the campus with P5-7 relocating to the High School and P-14 being retained on the current site along with ELC provision and finally, full retention of P1-7 + ELC on the current site.

- 4.2 87 forms were submitted, with 98% of respondents confirming their support for a new primary school in the town centre. The main themes arising from the comments were:

- Current school is too small and does not provide the facilities required for modern learning.
- Current school is run down and is not fit for purpose. It does not meet the needs of the pupils, staff or parents.
- Current school does not have adequate access for disabled provision.
- Investment is required in the town. A new school could lift and inspire a whole community. A new school could benefit and provide facilities for the whole community in the town centre.

- 4.3 Respondents were also asked for the views regarding the potential location of a new school on the existing site which would be master-planned for redevelopment. 75% of respondents favoured the Coldingham Road option and 18% expressed a preference for the middle of the site. The main themes arising from the comments about location were: -

- Site needs to be planned to ensure safe access by foot and road.
- Site needs to be developed sympathetically given its proximity to the cemetery.
- Many respondents expressed that they did not want the school hidden or surrounded by new houses.

- Several respondents were keen to see green space at the school for the children and to ensure that there are adequate sports facilities.
- 4.4 Respondents were also asked what other services they would like to be included at the site in addition to Education Services.
- 82% of respondents advised that they wish community services to be included at the site;
  - 56% wish the site to include intergenerational provision e.g. elderly care, health care, cultural spaces, further education;
  - 28% would like to see Enterprise (e.g. business, lifestyle, exhibition spaces). The main theme arising from the comments regarding additional services were: -
    - The new school must have a hall large enough to accommodate the community's needs and space and facilities to serve the community and community groups (200+ capacity for Herring Queen).
    - There is a real need for youth space in the town and also play areas, sports area, soft play climbing and facilities for health and well-being and exercise that can be enjoyed by all.
    - Elderly Shelter Housing in close proximity to the school would be good and beneficial to all.
    - The school should be a hub for extended social services for the town including an Early Years centre, with universal and targeted support for a wide cross section of the community whether they are directly linked to the school or not.
    - Facilities to support the wider community of Eyemouth including arts, sports, health or further education provision and retail space
    - New build residential houses of mixed sizes. There is a real need for larger new build housing which is not aimed at social or first-time housing.
    - Green space around the school for outdoor learning.
    - Language support centre to accommodate the different languages spoken in the community to help improve attainment for both children and adults.
- 4.5 As part of the redevelopment of the former High School, SBC entered into a forward agreement with Berwickshire Housing Association to sell approximately 20% of the former high school site for affordable housing. In addition, Eyemouth was identified as a priority town for Extra Care Housing investment, and therefore an indicative masterplan has been prepared outlining how the site could accommodate a new school + community facilities, affordable housing (by BHA) and the Extra Care Housing (ECH) investment by Trust HA, who is one of the Council's development partners alongside Eildon HA, both of whom were previously appointed to deliver the agreed ECH investment programme.
- 4.6 Initial consideration has been given, through an Officer led pilot around Property & Estate Asset Rationalisation in Berwickshire, as to the opportunities which the construction of a new school and community hub could create within the town. For example, in the provision of new Customer Contact Centre, office space for the Council and emerging

SOSEP (South of Scotland Enterprise Partnership) requirements, community space which could accommodate the 'What Matters' hubs, a replacement for the adjacent Family Support Centre which would permit expansion of the existing cemetery which has been identified as being required within Eyemouth. Further consideration of any potential service requirements will be included as part of any emerging design development process.

## **EARLSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

- 4.7 Two consultation events were held in Earlston Primary School on 10 and 11 May 2018, where parents and members of the community were invited to come and share their views regarding the current primary school and consider options to replace the existing school. The events were both well attended and a response form was available at the events and on line to capture views, comments and opinions.
- 4.8 We received 47 forms, with 98% of respondents confirming their support for a new primary school in the town. The main themes arising from the comments regarding the requirement of a new school were:
- Current school is unsuitable as it is created from part of the old high school and does not provide the facilities required for modern learning. The buildings are disjointed. The whole site is uninspiring, with no decent playground.
  - The school buildings are too large with many parts unused. There are too many entrance/exit points. The layout does not allow the age groups to mix.
  - Current school is run down and is not fit for purpose. Current school does not have adequate access for disabled provision
  - Investment is required in the town. A new school could lift and inspire a whole community. A new school could benefit and provide facilities for the whole community
- 4.9 Respondents were also asked if they agreed that the existing site was the most suitable location for a new school. 73% of respondents favoured the existing site with 6% disagreeing and 21% stating that they did not know if the site was the most suitable. The main themes arising from the comments about location were: -
- The school should be central to the town and contain community facilities that are accessible to all.
  - The existing site is very close to the main road, drop offs are very busy and the pavements are too narrow. The site needs to be planned to ensure safe access by foot and road.
  - The school should be co-located with the high school, there is plenty of space and facilities could be shared.
- 4.10 Respondents were also asked what other services they would like to be included in a new build site in addition to Education Services.
- 85% of respondents advised that they wish community services to be included at the site;
  - 67% wish the site to include intergenerational provision e.g. elderly care, health care, cultural spaces, further education;

- 42% would like to see Enterprise (e.g. business, lifestyle, exhibition spaces).
- 9% wished other facilities
- 4% do not want a new build

The main themes arising from the comments regarding additional services were: -

- There is strong demand for community space and facilities in the town. The school could be hub for the community; providing space for groups, performances and for rent
- The school should provide facilities for early years and for childcare facilities from babies to breakfast and after school clubs.
- The school should provide intergenerational learning along with support for assist people into employment and for retirement.
- There was demand for a swimming pool and increased leisure facilities.
- There were suggestions that the following be included: - shops, greenspaces, allotments, out of term child care, gym, cooking courses, facilities for kid's parties.
- There was limited appetite for new housing as the area is already considered congested

4.11 In the final comments section, several respondents expressed their concerns about the current ELC provider on the site. This is a private operator and is the only after school club option in the town at present.

4.12 SBC has concluded the sale of the former High School site in Earlston to Eildon Housing Association for affordable housing.

## 5 DESIGN, COSTINGS and DELIVERY

5.1 Architects Stallan-Brand have prepared an Option Analysis which considers various proposals to masterplan the redevelopment of both school sites. These are attached in **Appendix 1 and 2**. It is proposed that the masterplan options are progressed to design stage.

5.2 All investment models for the School Estate are delivered in partnership with the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government has established the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) to take forward infrastructure projects. SFT operates at arm's length from the Scottish Government and works with every Local Authority across Scotland to drive forward the Scottish Government's 'Schools for the Future' programme. SFT's role is to efficiently and effectively manage the programme to help Local Authorities achieve the very best value-for-money for their investment in new schools.

5.3 The Scottish Government has recently announced its latest education investment plan, to the value of £1bn, which includes funding for a replacement to the former 'Schools for the Future' programme. It is also intended that Local Authorities will largely 'match fund' this £1bn investment in the same way as the original Schools for the Future Programme with a potential mix of capital and revenue funding.

- 5.4 On 31 January 2019, Officers met with both Scottish Government (Education) and Scottish Futures Trust to discuss plans for our primary and secondary school estates.
- 5.5 The discussions were productive, and while SG and SFT were broadly supportive of the proposals, no firm commitments were made as they indicated that due to on-going discussions with COSLA and a review of procurement funding methodology, that it was highly unlikely any announcement for funding from the new £1bn programme would be made potentially before the Autumn of 2019. Discussions also remain on-going with a number of Local Authorities at this time.
- 5.6 SBC were encouraged to continue to progress with the current investment plans (aligned with the capital programme), so that when any formal Government announcements are made, the design and costings have been progressed to reduce risk and increase certainty around deliverability - in effect to have 'shovel ready' projects. Typically, funding for primary schools is provided on a 'like for like' basis at a level of 50% by the Scottish Government and 50% by the respective Local Authority. In the interim, Service Directors will continue to liaise closely with both Scottish Government and SFT. This was the approach largely adopted at Jedburgh which saw a successful funding award outwith normal funding timescales.

5.7 **Project Delivery and Engagement of Consultants**

Delivery of the project(s) within the Capital Financial Plan will be undertaken by the Major Projects section within Assets & Infrastructure. This is consistent with the delivery of recent schools, other buildings and infrastructure projects. Projects of this nature however require the appointment of a wider team of project managers, cost managers, architects, engineers (civil / structural / mechanical / electrical / acoustic) as well as other complimentary design team consultants. In accordance with section 12.4 of the Council's Procurement and Contract Standing Orders, it is proposed within this report that the project delivery of the project(s) will be undertaken making use of existing pre-procured framework contracts for the supply of services of this nature.

Specifically, it is proposed that largely the same delivery team as was used for the recent Broomlands and Langlee PS are engaged. This has the benefit of continuing the established working relationship between the Council and that delivery team while also streamlining the delivery programme to achieve a school opening as swiftly as possible. The Major Projects section will work closely with the Procurement and Payment Manager to ensure that the principles of Best Value are achieved within the appointment of that same delivery team.

- 5.8 In relation to the specific schools, Eyemouth is facing significant capacity issues (in addition to the various condition and suitability issues) and is currently operating at c92% of capacity. This is projected to rise over the next 5 years with a concomitant rise in the High School role which has also seen recent increases. Accordingly, it is proposed that Eyemouth PS is considered as the next immediate primary school investment proposal and it is recommended that a full design process and costings begin

immediately to ensure this can be progressed as a priority while funding discussions continue with Scottish Government. In the event however, that SBC has to fully fund the capital cost of Eyemouth PS, this would have the consequential impact of delaying the construction of the replacement Earlston PS.

- 5.9 It is however proposed that Earlston Primary School be progressed to the full design and costings stage (pre-construction only) in order that it too can be progressed as soon as appropriate funding can be identified from within the Council's own prudential borrowing or combined with parallel funding from Scottish Government at an intervention rate of 50%, but at a later date than the Eyemouth proposal.
- 5.10 On the basis that sufficient funding can be identified however, Officers would continue to progress both Eyemouth and Earlston to the delivery and construction stages in parallel, and in a similar manner to Broomlands and Langlee Primary Schools. Certainty around this approach will only be possible once greater clarity is available on the quantum and timing of any funding support from the Scottish Government, since there is only currently sufficient resources identified within the Council's current capital programme to deliver one school, subject to an agreed re-profiling of the expenditure across appropriate years.
- 5.11 It should also be noted that any investment in the primary school estate has to be considered not only in relation to the wider capital programme and prudential borrowing, but also with specific reference to other planned activities within the overall School Estate Review, with a particular emphasis on the four remaining high school clusters.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial**

Based on the agreed funding metrics currently utilised by SFT and the Scottish Government, indicative costs for new primary schools and ELC settings in each town are;

- Eyemouth Primary School - £16m
- Earlston Primary School - £9m

Officers will continue to refine these costs as the detail designs are developed and further update reports will be submitted for approval prior to the submission of any bid for funding to the Scottish Government, which will identify any further capital or revenue implications. Further details on the briefs prepared for each site are included in the appendices to this report.

- 6.2 Scottish Borders Council's current capital plan indicates that there is £15.5m allocated to the School Estate Review within the overall ten year programme which will require to be accelerated to match the indicative delivery timescales of typically 2-3 years per school overall.

- 6.3 Between 2019/20 and 2024/25, £25m has been factored into the Council's Capital Investment Plan in order to provide new primary schools in Eyemouth and Earlston. This investment is part of a wider £75m investment in its school estate over the next 10 years.

Additional revenue costs have not yet been quantified in detail and do not currently form part of the medium-term revenue Financial Plan. These will be incorporated in the 5 year plan from 2020/21.

The proposed 2 new schools are capital funded and as such do not require any additional provision of direct revenue budget to meet expected liabilities such as funding charges, lifecycle maintenance or facilities management charges. Loans charges servicing and repayment has already been factored into the plan.

Historically however, new primary school provision such as those proposed in this report has been proven to result in additional financial costs to meet the resulting increased impact of non-domestic rates, utility costs and cleaning costs. Whilst the exact projected impact of the proposals is not definitively known in this regard currently, initial high level forecasts indicate that additional investment across these areas will require to be identified and provided for at the date of opening at the levels below:

	Eyemouth	Earlston
	£	£
Additional Non-domestic rates	40,000	60,000
Additional Utilities	0	0
Additional Cleaning	25,000	15,000
Total Additional Budget Required	65,000	75,000

An additional £140k per annum is projected therefore which will require building into the 2020/21 5-year financial plan.

Any consolidation of the primary school estate, as part of a wider asset rationalisation strategy could generate additional revenue resources which could be reinvested in the retained school estate to offset increased costs. This would also maximise the number of children being taught in Grade A condition schools across the Scottish Borders. These principles align with the Council's 'Fit for 2024' Transformation programme.

#### 6.4 **Risk and Mitigations**

Any proposal will be largely dependent on securing funding from the Scottish Government or this could have implications for the planned timings of school openings. All investment models for the School Estate are delivered in partnership with the Scottish Government. Accordingly Service Directors will liaise closely with SFT and Scottish Government officers regarding our School Estate programme. To ensure that Scottish Borders Council will be able to bid for this investment funding it is recommended that the design and costings are progressed to reduce risk and increase certainty around deliverability and required funding – i.e. prepare 'shovel ready' schemes.

**6.5 Equalities**

An Equalities Impact Assessment is embedded within all actions contained within reports relating to each school.

**6.6 Acting Sustainably**

Acting sustainably is embedded within all actions contained within the School Estate Review.

**6.7 Carbon Management**

Carbon management assessments will be contained within the individual plans of the next stage of the School Estate Review.

**6.8 Rural Proofing**

Rural proofing is embedded in the legislation which governs the School Estate Review and consultations.

**6.9 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

**7 CONSULTATION**

7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR, Communications and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

**Approved by**

**Stuart Easingwood**  
**Interim Service Director of Children & Young People**

**Signature .....**

**Martin Joyce**  
**Service Director Assets & Infrastructure**

**Signature .....**

**Author(s)**

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Gillian Sellar	Solicitor - 01835 824000
Lesley Munro	Lead Education Officer – School Estates

Martin Joyce	Service Director Assets & Infrastructure
--------------	--

**Appendices:** Appendix 1: Stallan Brand- Eyemouth Primary School  
Appendix 2: Stallan Brand- Earlston Primary School

**Previous Minute Reference:** Executive Committee- 7 November 2017

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Diane Milne can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Scottish Borders Council on 01835 824000 or on [customeradvice@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:customeradvice@scotborders.gov.uk)