
EYEMOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL – UPDATE REPORT

Report by Service Director Young People, Engagement and Inclusion

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

17 June 2021

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Report provides an update on the Eyemouth Primary School project following the completion of an informal consultation.**
- 1.2 A Report to Council on 17 December 2020 provided approval to undertake a community engagement and consultation on alternative education delivery models in the town.
- 1.3 Given movement restrictions, this consultation was conducted digitally using the Citizen Space platform.
- 1.4 The results of this engagement and consultation suggest community interest and support for a campus style model for the delivery of education.
- 1.5 The next stage in the process would be the commencement of a statutory consultation in accordance with Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 legislation.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Council:-

- (a) Notes the results of the community engagement;**
- (b) Approves the commencement of a statutory consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010;**
- (c) Requests a follow on Report as the project progresses.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Report to Council on 27 August 2020 identified issues affecting the delivery of the proposed replacement of the Primary School in Eyemouth. The Report also identified cost pressure issues. The Report approved that a feasibility study should be undertaken to review 3 education delivery models within Eyemouth.

Option 1	Replacement Primary School adjacent to the existing Primary School and retention of the existing Secondary School.
Option 2	Full use of the existing Secondary School for both Primary and Secondary education with the addition of an adjacent Early Years Centre.
Option 3	Partial use of the Secondary School for elements of Primary education with the addition of an adjacent Primary and Early Years Centre.

- 3.2 The Report to Council on 17 December 2020 gave an update on the feasibility study and of the validation of the educational principles of the 3 options by Officers. The Report recommended community engagement and consultation on the 3 education options.

4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

- 4.1 An engagement exercise began in late 2020 in the form of digital meetings with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Groups of both the Secondary and Primary School in the town.
- 4.2 A similar presentation was made to the Parents Council for both Secondary and Primary Schools.
- 4.3 Finally, a presentation was made to Eyemouth Community Council in February 2021.
- 4.4 At all of these meetings, the educational benefits of the 3 options were discussed and reviewed.
- 4.5 This was followed by a digitally themed online consultation exercise with the use of Citizen Space on the Council's website. The consultation started on 6 April and finished on 16 May 2021.

5 FEEDBACK

- 5.1 A total of 178 responses were made to the Citizen Space consultation. 73 responses (41%) preferred Option 1, in which the new Primary School would function separately to the Secondary School in the town. Principally, this would be through a new build solution adjacent to the existing Primary School.
- 5.2 97 responses (54%) preferred Option 3 for a campus style of education concentrated at the Secondary School with part of the Primary education being provided within the Secondary School. A separate Early Years Centre would provide for Nursery and lower Primary School education.
- 5.3 Only 5 responses were given for Option 2 to locate Early Years and Primary

provision within the existing Secondary School.

- 5.4 3 responses chose not to give a preferred option.
- 5.5
- a) Participants were invited to make comment on their preferred options.
 - b) Option 1 where the Primary School would be built on the same site as the existing School, was viewed to be favourable due to the town centre location and ease of accessibility. Comments reflected the desire for purpose built and high quality environments for learning. The protection of the green space on the current site was highlighted as a priority for those in favour of siting the Primary School on this site.
 - c) Many of the reasons this option was favoured related to the avoidance of concerns around the alternative of co-location with the High School. Concerns around the range of age groups mixing, impact and disruption on the pupils in the High School and safety concerns around travel to school routes and increase traffic.
 - d) Option 2 did not attract strong support. Comments relating to this option supported the need to make effective use of the available space in the High School, but questioned the opportunity to do this in a PPP arrangement.
 - e) Option 3 gained the highest level of support. Comments in support of this option reflected the opportunities in all young people having access to specialist facilities and the educational benefit this will bring. Reference was made to the previous arrangement of both Primary and Secondary Schools being located in the same building and noted the benefits.
 - f) The opportunities for the older children in Primary School were viewed particularly positively with reference to the ease of transitions. The potential for families to engage with one campus and for the creation of a real sense of community was also highlighted.
 - g) Many of the comments in favour of Option 3 expressed desire that all stages of Primary School children had opportunity to connect as well as to access specialist and shared facilities.
 - h) There was clear desire that in addition to a campus for all education provision, the existing Primary School site should be developed as greenspace and a destination park provision.

6 STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON THE PREFERRED PROPOSAL

- 6.1
- a) Option 3, the creation of a campus style facility for all stages of education from Early Years to S6 on the site of the High School, has attracted the most support from the community consultation.
 - b) The change of location and creation of a new Primary School is a relevant proposal in the Schools (Consolidation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and a statutory consultation in accordance with the Act is required.
 - c) It is a recommendation of this Report that such consultation be prepared. The consultation needs to be held for a minimum of 30

teaching days. It would therefore be proposed that the consultation will be undertaken at the commencement of the 2021/22 academic year.

- 6.2
- a) Any proposal must be based on strong educational benefits statements and therefore the educational reasons to locate both Secondary and Primary education at the existing Secondary High School will be presented.
 - b) It is important that all the feedback received from the community is taken into account in progressing the design response to Option 3. There has been strong representation that the safety and security of all the children and young people is taken into account, that there is opportunity for all primary children to remain connected and that there is appropriate sharing of resources and facilities. The design team will be asked to now consider the most appropriate provision and blend of accommodation to respond to this.
 - c) Whichever option is agreed, the proposals would need to be the subject of a planning application, and would therefore be subject to the normal assessment and separate statutory public consultation arrangements that form part of that process.

7 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial

- (a) The Capital project budget for the construction of the Eyemouth Primary School as contained within the 2021/22 Capital Investment Plan is as below.

2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
0	3,500	7,402	4,000	14,902

- (b) Satisfactory progress with the Education Scotland Consultation during the second half of 2021 may allow for progress with the technical design work required to deliver the project. It is noted that there is no budget in 2021/22 to allow for this and a forward timing movement of budget from 2022/23 to 2021/22 may be required. This will be identified in future reporting.

7.2 Risk and Mitigations

- (a) The Report to Council on 27 August 2020 identified risks associated with the extant project to provide a Primary School adjacent to the existing Primary School. This risk has been mitigated through the informal consultation and of the recommended proposal to take forward Option 3 that concentrates education provision within the existing Secondary School site.
- (b) There could be timing risks associated with undertaking a statutory consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, should there be significant opposition to the proposal taken forward. This risk has been mitigated through the informal

community engagement and consultation.

- (c) There is a contractual and commercial risk associated with opening up negotiations with the Council's PPP provider Scottish Borders Education Partnership to alter the existing contract to allow for the alterations to create either Option 2 or 3 remains. Initial discussions have taken place with SBEP who have shown a willingness to discuss a possible project at the High School. This risk will be further mitigated through ongoing discussions with SBEP. It is likely that specialist advisers will be required to represent the Council.

7.3 **Integrated Impact Assessment**

- (a) An Integrated Impact Assessment has not been carried out on this Report.
- (b) It is anticipated that there are no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals in this report.
- (c) A campus solution will provide improved outcomes.

7.4 **Sustainable Development Goals**

It is noted that overall the project will have a positive impact on energy consumption when compared to the existing buildings.

7.5 **Climate Change**

It would be planned that the project will seek to minimise the use of fossil fuels.

7.6 **Rural Proofing**

This Report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and, as a result, rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

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

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

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR & Communications, the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Lesley Munro

Service Director, Young People Engagement and Inclusion

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Steven Renwick	Projects Manager – 01835 826687

Background Papers: 27 August 2020, 17 December 2020

Previous Minute Reference: Nil

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