

**To:** **Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

**On:** **14 March 2024**

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**Report by:** **Interim Head of Education**

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**Heading:** **Learning Estate Update**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with a further update on current capital projects to develop and improve the learning estate
- 1.2 The Council has engaged with Space Zero to develop a strategic planning brief for the new primary school in Dargavel. This work has included engagement with key stakeholders, visioning sessions, focus groups and general data gathering around requirements and expectations for the new school. This exercise was in advance of the required statutory consultation, and concluded in December 23. This will inform the next key stage in the design process which is the production of an accommodation schedule, which will in turn enable clearer cost forecasting before producing the final brief which will be handed over to the architects.
- 1.3 The Education and Children's Services Policy Board on 18 January 2024 agreed to move ahead with the formal consultation on the establishment of a new school and associated catchment review.
- 1.4 Following discussion with the school management, designers have now agreed a solution for the internal alterations to Dargavel Primary School that satisfies the school requirements and meets statutory building requirements. A Building Warrant has been applied for and is awaiting formal approval. Suitable procurement routes are being considered with the aim being to undertake the required works during the summer break in time for the new school term.
- 1.5 Works to repurpose the existing modular unit at Park Mains High School are underway, with an expected completion date of April 2024. This will create five additional classrooms which will provide flexibility for the school as the roll increases.

- 1.6 The Space Planning exercise for Park Mains High School is progressing. The four planned Steering Group Sessions have been completed, feedback from which will be used to finalise the Strategic Brief.
  - 1.7 To provide an improved learning environment at Bishopton Primary School, we are replacing the Classroom Block with a new, improved permanent facility, in time for the new school year in August 2024. Our contractor began work on site at the end of January 2024
  - 1.8 The new Paisley Grammar School Community Campus remains on track. Planning permission was granted at the end of January 2024. At the time of writing (early Feb 2024) steady progress is being made towards being able to hand over the site to the contractor to allow them to begin enabling works towards the end of February
  - 1.9 Following the unsuccessful bid to the Scottish Futures Trust, there is further planning required in relation to a new build Thorn Primary School.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. It is recommended that members note the content of this report.
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## **3. Next Steps for Primary Provision in Dargavel**

- 3.1. Under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 the Council has started a formal consultation on a proposal to establish a new school. The consultation is on a proposal with 3 key aspects – the building of a school with capacity for 800 children; the location of the proposed school, and a review of the catchments for the new and existing Dargavel primaries. It launched on 29 January 2024 and will run until 26 March. A copy of the proposal paper with full details has been shared with all statutory consultees and all relevant groups. A series of information sessions, public meetings and informal drop-ins designed to give as many members of the community the opportunity to find out more about the proposal and discuss their views on the proposal and possible alternatives with officers leading the consultation have been taking place during February and March.
- 3.2. Geotechnical Site Investigations have concluded at the proposed site to the north of Craigton Drive. We are currently awaiting the final report.
- 3.3. Discussions with HubWest Scotland have indicated their ability to provide an accelerated route to market. HubWest Scotland have begun engaging with consultants in order to present the Council with a stage one submission which will provide Hubs Value for Money assessment and an outline design.
- 3.4. Identification of the preferred procurement and delivery route will take account of anticipated programme, implications with the BAE associated remediation and infrastructure programme, appropriate engagement timelines with the local community, as well as wider resourcing demands within the Council.

- 3.5. The estimate for delivery of the new school is currently no later than August 2027. As work progresses we will be able to refine the programme and delivery timescales.
- 3.6. Space planning consultants Space Zero have concluded all exercises associated with preparation of a Strategic Brief. Following extensive engagement with various stakeholders including, council technical officers, existing cluster schools, education colleagues and the wider community Space Zero have produced an outline briefing document demonstrating that an 800 person school can be delivered within the target GIFA of 5200m<sup>2</sup> and provide quality spaces that are flexible, inclusive and sustainable for use by Education and the wider community.
- 3.7. Following approval of the Strategic Brief property services will arrange handover from Space Zero to the design team thereby allowing core design and technical strategies to be developed in accordance with the master programme.

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#### **4. Park Mains High School**

- 4.1. In May 2023, the Education and Children Services Policy Board approved a 400 pupil extension to the capacity of Park Mains High School, and to cap that school's total capacity at the extended 2000 figure.
- 4.2. To create additional flexibility for the school a modular unit has been moved to Park Mains High School and will be repurposed into five additional classrooms, which will be able to accommodate a further 165 pupils. We are expecting this to be in place and operational for April 2024
- 4.3. The high-level cost estimate for an extended building to the school is circa £30m. Discussions are ongoing regarding the obligation of BAE Systems who, under the existing Section 75 agreement, have an obligation to contribute towards the expansion cost.
- 4.4. A model has been developed for 2000 learners to create a theoretical space model required to support a school of this size. This model was overlaid on the existing school to ascertain the extent of the additional accommodation that would be required on a subject by subject and support services basis.
- 4.5. A scenario planning and validation exercise is currently ongoing which will determine the schedule of accommodation required to be built within the new extension areas and any changes needed within the existing school building to ensure that the school operates as well as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- 4.6. A liaison group for Park Mains High School continues to meet regularly with the last meeting held on 30 January 2024. Members of the PMHS Parent Council and all its associated primaries attend to receive updates on roll projections, share information on the programme and gather feedback which will help inform the design of the building.

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## 5. Thorn Primary School

- 5.1. The Council agreed under the previous SEMP programme to invest £10million to deliver a new Thorn Primary School, with the intention for the balance of the funding required to be funded through the Learning Estate Investment Programme managed by the Scottish Futures Trust. Following the funding bid to the Scottish Futures Trust being unsuccessful, the Council agreed on 29<sup>th</sup> February to fully fund the new Thorn Primary School.
- 5.2. Further updates will be provided as the project develops.

## 6. Next Steps

- 6.1. Officers are currently preparing the 5 year Learning Estate Management Plan that will set out the short to medium term priorities for the estate. It is our intention that this will be presented to the ECSPB in August 2024.
- 6.2. The review of the learning estate that will inform the long term strategy is in the early stages; we are currently collecting all necessary data to inform next steps.
- 6.3. Given the complexity of the exercise, the development of the strategy will require significant time and attention.

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## Implications of this report

### 1. Financial

This report is for noting and as such there no implications which arise directly from this report.

### 2. HR and Organisational Development

None

### 3. Community/Council Planning

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|---|---|---|
| Our Renfrewshire is thriving                    | - | The new learning environment will support learning and achievement for all.       |
| Our Renfrewshire is well                        | - | The new learning environment will support the Health and Wellbeing of all.        |
| Our Renfrewshire is safe                        | - | The new learning environment will provide safe and secure spaces for all users.   |
| Reshaping our place, our economy and our future | - | The new learning environment will provided spaces which support local enterprise. |

Building strong, safe and resilient communities

- The new learning environment will provide spaces to support community activities.

**4. Legal**

Renfrewshire Council adheres to all relevant legislation.

**5. Property/Assets**

Through its school estate management plan the Council aims to have an efficient and well maintained property portfolio which provides learning environments which support the delivery of the curriculum.

**6. Information Technology**

The new campus will have IT provision which supports digitally enabled learning.

**7. Equality and Human Rights**

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. There has been a full Equalities and Human Rights Assessment carried out for the consultation process to ensure it is fully inclusive. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

**8. Health and Safety**

None.

**9. Procurement**

Renfrewshire Council adheres to all procurement regulations.

**10. Risk**

A full risk register will be compiled for the project in accordance with the Council's established risk management protocols.

**11. Privacy Impact**

None.

**12. Cosla Policy Position**

None.

**13. Climate Risk**

The project aims to comply with the requirements for ambitious energy efficiency targets over the long term and to contribute to the Council's net-zero commitments.

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## List of Background Papers

Background Paper 1: Proposal to Consult on:

- establishment of a new primary school to be built at Dargavel Village and

- a Catchment Review Affecting Dargavel Primary School and a new primary school to be built at Dargavel Village

The foregoing background papers will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting.

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**Children's Services**

JC/GL

14 February 2024

**Author:** Gerry Lyons, Interim Head of Education [gerry.lyons@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:gerry.lyons@renfrewshire.gov.uk)