

## **FUTURE PROVISION FOR SECONDARY PUPILS WITH PROFOUND AND COMPLEX NEEDS CURRENTLY PROVIDED AT LANGLANDS SCHOOL**

### **1. Reason for Report**

This report provides Members with an update on the current situation on this matter following recent visits by them to Stranraer Academy, Georgetown Primary, Langlands School and Dumfries High School and recommends a way forward.

### **2. Report Summary**

2.1 The report outlines the various options previously presented to Members.

2.2 The Council has a duty to ensure Best Value and the delivery of educational support for pupils with profound and complex needs and, to balance these with the preferences of parents, a further option is recommended, subject to the availability of funding.

### **3. Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

3.1 note the continuing views of parents as detailed at Paragraph 9.7;

3.2 approve the closure of Langlands School, but defer its closure until the end of 2010/2011 academic year, by which time the majority of the current pupils will have progressed through the school;

3.3 agree to the building of a new integrated provision, which will open at the beginning of academic year 2011/12, or at later date when the new facility is complete;

3.4 agree that the design of the new facility should not include hydrotherapy provision;

3.5 support the continued engagement with parents and staff to develop optimum outcomes for children, through the proposed transition phase; and

3.6 agree to remit to the Social Work Services Committee the concerns regarding the appropriateness and adequacy of post school provision for young people with complex needs.

### **4. Corporate Plan Links and Contribution**

This proposal links to the Safer and Stronger Corporate Plan objective to 'make this an inclusive society'. As such, it seeks to extend practice which meets the needs of children and young people and enables them to have the opportunity to be included in mainstream educational provision, where appropriate, at a degree and level according to their needs.

## 5. Resources/Value for Money Assessment

The update report for Members at this Committee on the School Services Capital Programme highlights that this project will require to be funded from the unallocated sums available. This monthly report will ensure that Members are fully apprised of the costs being committed and progress on this project.

## 6. Risk Assessment

6.1 Risks associated with this issue can be considered under three headings –

- *If Langlands retained in the longer term*
  - Most costly option
  - Lack of support from parents of current Georgetown parents – see Para 9.7
  - No viable decant provision identified and additional costs arising from this
- *Early Closure of Langlands*
  - Lack of continuity of provision for existing Langlands pupils
  - Possible delay in provision of new facility
  - Lack of support from parents of current Langlands pupils – see para 9.7
- *Delayed Closure of Langlands - Recommended Solution*
  - Prolonged concern regarding quality of current environment at Langlands
  - Possible delay in provision of new facility

6.2 For all possible outcomes, given the time period that has elapsed since this project was costed and the demand within the construction sector, both locally and nationally, current budget estimates are likely to be too low.

## 7. Authorities and Legal Implications

The required local consultation process on a proposed school closure has been carried out, as detailed in a report to Members on 6 December 2007. The Council is not required to seek ministerial consent to the closure of Langlands School, in terms of either the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 or the Education (Publication and Consultation etc.) (Scotland) Regulations 1981.

## 8. Consultations

The following have been consulted on the contents of this report and are in agreement with its contents:

- Head Teachers at Langlands, the four Dumfries secondary schools and Georgetown Primary School
- Service Manager – ESWCS Property
- Acting Director of Finance
- Group Manager, Policy and Improvement
- Service Director Schools Services
- Service Director Social Work Services
- Operations Manager – Legal Services
- Operations Manager – Property Services
- General Manager – Child Health

## 9. Background

9.1 Initial discussion regarding the future of Langlands began with the then School Board back in May 2000. At that time, the facilities available there, and at similar sites in Lockerbie and Stranraer, made provision for children and young people with profound and complex needs from 3-18 years of age on the same site. Following the publication of the Riddell Report on the education of children with severe low incidence disabilities, a report was tabled at Education Committee in October 2000. This resulted in Members agreeing a consultation process between parents and the Council, which would look towards establishing separate primary and secondary provision across the Authority, sited in such a way as to allow the opportunity for increased inclusion, as appropriate.

9.2 Consequently, new provision has been developed or planned in:

- Belmont Primary and Stranraer Academy in Stranraer;
- Georgetown Primary in Dumfries; and
- Lockerbie, as part of the new PPP primary and secondary provision

9.3 Plans were also progressed to develop a new secondary provision in Dumfries, linked to Dumfries High School. In order to try and resolve a split in parental opinion, a Reference Group was established, with parental and officer representation, which considered the advantages and disadvantages of the following 6 options.

- Option 1: status quo;
- Option 2: refurbishment only of Langlands;
- Option 3: refurbishment and upgrading of Langlands;
- Option 4: re-siting of Langlands provision on the campus of Dumfries High School;
- Option 5: the development of two smaller units (one at Langlands and one at Dumfries High School);
- Option 6: re-siting of Langlands provision at Dumfries High School with an additional classroom.

Unfortunately, no consensus could be reached.

9.4 Education and Community Services Committee meeting on 27 February 2007 considered the options and

- approved the option to the building of a new stand-alone provision within the campus of Dumfries High School;
- agreed that the additional resources required, amounting to £337k, should be incorporated within the Education and Community Services capital programme;
- noted additional estimated budget costs arising from increased accommodation within the overall provision, site relocation, time slippage and inflation and agreed that this be included in the Schools Fund block of the capital programme;
- approved a further statutory consultation process regarding the closure of Langlands School which would include input from NHS Dumfries and Galloway and the issue of a hydro therapy unit; and

- agreed to receive an early report on the status of the Georgetown Primary School hydro therapy unit.

#### 9.5 Consultation on Closure

9.5.1 As a result of the formal consultation on the proposed closure of Langlands four responses were received from:

- Dumfries High School Board;
- Two parents of young people attending Langlands;
- A representative of one of the teachers' unions.

Subsequently, the parents of the pupils currently at the Georgetown facility confirmed their continuing agreement to the proposed re-siting of the secondary provision.

9.5.2 The first of the four responses referred to above supported the proposed plan and indicated that they felt "...that the issue of the financing of the hydrotherapy pool should not be used as a distraction for further delay..."

9.5.3 The two parental responses indicated their opposition to the proposal. Subsequently, a parent also contacted an MSP who has spoken to them, to other parents who support the move and to officers on this matter and has visited Langlands School.

9.5.4 The response on behalf of the union members of Dumfries High raised various concerns but particularly regarding the loss of classrooms in the present portacabins. Satisfactory discussions with their representative have subsequently taken place on this matter.

9.5.5 A further report was submitted to the Education and Community Services Committee on 6 December 2007, which detailed the consultation process followed in relation to the proposed closure of Langlands. The decision at this meeting was as follows:-

- agreed to defer consideration to allow Members to visit Langlands, Georgetown Primary School and the Aird Unit at Stranraer Academy; to meet with parents; and to receive all copies of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education correspondence following upon the inspection and background paper further agreed
- that the visits be arranged to take place in January 2008.

9.6 In addition, the December 2007 report also recommended that the design of the new facility should not include hydrotherapy provision for the following reasons –

- There is no budget provision for the additional cost - estimated at £250K
- The footprint of the site would necessitate a reduction in class base provision to incorporate such a facility
- The Georgetown provision was built with a view to providing for both units.
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This recommendation has been carried forward to this report.

9.7 The parents of the pupils currently attending Langlands do not wish a change of location. However, the parents of the pupils with profound and complex needs currently attending Georgetown Primary do not wish their children to move to Langlands and would prefer to move to a new unit at Dumfries High School; thereby ensuring continuity of provision for their children at Georgetown. Of this latter group, 4 are now of secondary school age, the parents choosing to retain the link to Georgetown, but with appropriate links to Dumfries High School. There are no pupils in the P5, 6 or 7 year groups.

## 10. Key Issues

10.1 The present Langlands School building is reaching a point where major investment in the fabric is essential, both from a condition and curricular viewpoint. Therefore, decisions need to be made as to an appropriate provision for secondary age pupils with profound and complex needs in Dumfries and the surrounding area.

10.2 No parental consensus on the nature and siting of this provision has been possible to date.

10.3 In recognising the respective position of service users and parents, an alternative solution is now proposed.

10.4 In the course of consultation, parents have raised a concern regarding the appropriateness and adequacy of post-school provision for young people with complex needs. It is recommended that this concern is remitted to Social Work Services Committee for consideration.

## 11. Options Available

11.1 The main options considered by Members in February 2007 were as follows. It should be noted that costs are those current at the time and are subject to review. They are, however sufficient for comparison of the options.

<b>Option 1: Status Quo</b>	
<b>Option 2: Refurbishment only of Langlands</b>	<p><b>Cost: £622k</b></p> <p><b>Basis:</b> a fabric condition report undertaken by Design Services in June 2006.</p> <p><b>Exclusions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• upgrading to meet current standards;</li> <li>• decanting during the progress of the works; and</li> <li>• subsequent increases in costs due to time slippage and inflation.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3: Refurbishment and upgrading of Langlands</b>	<p><b>Cost: £1.2M</b></p> <p><b>Basis:</b> sketch proposals provided by Design Services costed by consultant quantity surveyors</p> <p><b>Exclusions</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● decanting during the progress of the works,</li> <li>● subsequent increases in costs due to time slippage and inflation.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 6: resiting of Langlands at Dumfries High School with an additional classroom</b>	<p><b>Cost: £1,09M</b></p> <p><b>Basis:</b> Design Services advice</p> <p><b>Includes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● building £814,344;</li> <li>● site works (including site clearance/demolition) £130,320;</li> <li>● an additional class base of £142,235</li> </ul> <p><b>Excludes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● subsequent increases in costs due to time slippage and inflation.</li> </ul> <p>Decanting costs would be eliminated in this scenario.</p>

11.2 The following is now recommended :-

- approve the closure of Langlands school but defer its closure until the end of academic year 2010/11, by which time the majority of the current pupils will have progressed through the school;
- allow those pupils currently attending Georgetown to continue there at present, with secondary age children being given the opportunity to link, where appropriate with Dumfries High School;
- open a new integrated provision at the beginning of 2011/12, or at a later date when the new facility is complete, at which time all secondary-age pupils in Langlands or Georgetown move to this new provision;
- in the interim, any parents of new pupils of secondary age be given the option of their children attending either Langlands or Georgetown, on the understanding that they will move to the new provision.

<p>John McVie Operations Manager (Additional Support for Learning)</p> <p>Date of Report: 19 February 2008</p>	<p>Colin Grant Service Director Schools Services Education, Social Work and Community Services Woodbank, 30 Edinburgh Road DUMFRIES, DG1 1NW</p>
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**Background papers:**

Future Provision for Pupils with Profound and Complex Needs Currently Attending Langlands School – Education and Community Services Committee – 6 December 2007

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Future Provision for Pupils with Profound and Complex Needs Currently Attending Langlands School – Education and Community Services Committee – 27 February 2007

The Future of Provision for Secondary Age Pupils with Profound and Complex Learning Difficulties Currently Sited at Langlands School, Dumfries – Children's Services Sub-Committee - 7 September 2006