

## Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00 am, Friday, 29 March 2018

### Present

Councillors Perry (Convener), Dickie (Vice-Convener), Bird, Mary Campbell, Child, Corbett, Howie, Laidlaw, Rust, Webber (substituting for Councillor Smith) and Young.

### Added members for Education matters

#### Parent Representative

Alexander Ramage (non-voting)

## 1. Outcomes of the Informal Consultation in West and South West Edinburgh

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### (a) Report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families

This special meeting of the Education, Children and Families Committee had been arranged so that members of the Committee could receive a report from officers on the outcomes of the informal consultation on the future of the schools and lifelong learning estate in west and south west Edinburgh.

As part of the informal consultation, proposals for potential alterations to schools and their catchment areas in west and south west Edinburgh had been published on the consultation website <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/schoolsreview> .

As a result of the feedback received from engagement events held during the informal consultation period, three alternative options had been developed.

Details and further information of the published and alternative options were provided in the report by the Executive Director of Communities and Families.

Parent Councils and other groups from all the schools and communities involved had been invited to attend the Committee and share any final views and comments on all the options by way of deputations to the Committee.

**(b) Joint Deputation - Balerno High School, Currie Community High School, Wester Hailes Education Centre and Woodlands School**

Andrea Brewster (Balerno High School), Naomi Barton (Currie High School), Amanda Campbell (Wester Hailes Education Centre) and Julie Main (Woodlands School) gave a joint statement on behalf of their respective parent councils.

They indicated that they were in attendance as Chairs of their respective parent councils of the four secondary schools affected by the proposals and thanked the Authority for engaging with their schools and communities during the informal review process. They outlined their views and hopes for the outcomes of the proposals.

The full content of the presentation can be viewed via the link below:

[https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast\\_interactive/344996](https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/344996)

**(c) Kirkliston Primary Parent Association**

Gordon Paterson (Chair) Steven Budge and Louise Collingwood spoke on behalf of Kirkliston Primary Parent Association.

The deputation thanked the Committee for the opportunity to share their views on the proposals and the impact on Kirkliston. They welcomed the engagement which had taken place with the parent association and outlined some of the issues affecting Kirkliston.

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**(d) Joint Deputation from Currie Community High School and Woodlands School**

The deputation stated their preferred option of retaining Currie High on its existing site as it was central to the community. If the school was moved there would be more stress and disruption for pupils. Currie High meant lots to pupils and to the community, it represented not only educationally but in terms of community engagement.

The asked the Council to invest in the future of the school as part of the Wave 4 project.

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**(e) Juniper Green Primary Parent Council**

Jane Campbell, Kirsty Cumming and Maria Hargreaves spoke on behalf of Juniper Green Primary Parent Council.

The parent and community councils had been working together and their deputation would focus on the educational aspects of the proposals and also on issues more

specific to Juniper Green Primary School. The preference was alternative option 1 to retain all four schools on their existing sites.

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[https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast\\_interactive/344996](https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/344996)

**(f) Nether Currie Primary Parent Council**

James Nicol spoke on behalf of Nether Currie Primary Parent Council. In his presentation, he referred to the impact of the proposal on catchments and pupil numbers and the need to minimise disruption for pupils. Concerns were expressed about the impact on attainment.

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**(g) Wester Hailes Education Centre Parent Council**

Amanda Campbell (Chair) spoke on behalf of Wester Hailes Education Centre Parent Council. Amongst other issues, it was emphasised that in Wester Hailes, pupils had developed strong relationships with their peers and teachers they knew and were familiar with. It would be detrimental to pupils for them to move to a school which was much larger and less personal.

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**(h) Balerno High School Parent Council**

Andrea Brewster (Chair) spoke on behalf of the Balerno High School Parent Council.

She indicated that it would be helpful to discuss the issues as a high school and the three feeder primary schools together. Mathew Revett spoke on behalf of Ratho Primary Parent Council, Carol Allardyce (Chair) spoke on behalf of Kirknewton Primary Parent Council and Sarah Matheson represented Dean Park Primary Parent Council.

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**(i) Corstorphine Primary Parent Council**

Billy Samuel (Chair) spoke on behalf of Corstorphine Primary Parent Council. He indicated that Corstorphine had a geographically large catchment area, crossing three council electoral wards. He referred to the concerns of parents that their children might have to attend different primary schools, as a result of the proposals, and of concerns regarding travel arrangements and safer routes to schools.

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**(j) Councillor Graeme Bruce – Local Ward Member**

Councillor Bruce provided an overview of the issues involved, including the school catchment review and explained why he thought that option one was the most sensible way forward. The pupils should be looked after by the Authority and that was why he was supporting option one.

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[https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast\\_interactive/344996](https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/344996)

**(k) Educational Institute of Scotland**

Alison Murphy (Local Association Secretary) spoke on behalf of the Educational Institute of Scotland. She indicated that the contributions from parents had been superb, the role of the community was important and school resources were stretched. She thought that option one should be supported and that schools should be at the heart of the community and that the excellent provision that they gave should be maintained.

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**(l) Balerno Community Council**

Richard Henderson (Chair) spoke on behalf of Balerno Community Council. He thought there should be a cohesive community where there was a shared vision and a sense of belonging. Communities could achieve great things, it was necessary to build community resilience and that when building anything, it should be built from the base. He stated that he would support the Authority if it chose to refurbish, rather than rebuild schools.

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**(m) Currie Community Council**

Alistair McKillop and Lisa Syme spoke on behalf of Currie Community Council. They wanted to focus on communities and how they would be affected. A school was more than a building and if a school was to close, it would have a devastating effect on the community as the local store would probably close too and it would also have an adverse effect on local businesses. Schools were therefore vital to communities. It was possible to create a new school, but not a new community.

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**(n) Juniper Green Community Council**

Aonghas McIntosh spoke on behalf of Juniper Green and Baberton Mains Community Council. He indicated that he was also a member of Save Our Schools Group. The deputation felt there was no clear evidence that any of the proposals would improve the educational attainment across each of the schools. Highlighted points included catchment issues, the possible negative impact that there would be on pupils, on transport and on greenspace and wildlife. Alternative Option 1 was the preferred choice of the community.

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The Convener thanked all the deputations for their excellent contributions.

**Decision**

1. To note the report.
2. To note all the issues raised by the deputations.

(References – Education, Children and Families Committee 6 March 2018 (item 11); report by the Executive Director for Communities and Families, circulated.)