

Education, Children and Families Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 22 May 2018

Outcome of the Informal Consultation on the future of Gaelic Medium Education (GME)

Item number	7.2
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Executive/routine	
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Executive Summary

A [report](#) to Committee on 12 December 2017 approved that an informal consultation should be progressed to consider the future of Gaelic Medium Education.

This report provides an update on the outcomes of the informal consultation process.

Outcome of the Informal Consultation on the future of Gaelic Medium Education (GME)

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee are requested to approve:
- 1.2 Establishment of a rising rolls working group for James Gillespie's High School.
- 1.3 Preparation of a strategic plan for the whole journey of Gaelic Medium Education growth and development from Early Years to Secondary.
- 1.4 Establishment of a short term working group to oversee the development of the strategic growth plan for Gaelic Medium Education which addresses increasing the supply of GME teachers, expansion of curriculum opportunities and long term accommodation requirements.

2. Background

- 2.1 A [report](#) to Committee on 12 December 2017 approved that an informal consultation should be progressed to consider if Drummond High School (DHS) could become the school to which pupils from the Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce attend for secondary Gaelic Medium Education (GME) in the future. Secondary GME is currently provided at James Gillespie's High School (JGHS).
- 2.2 This report provides an update on the outcomes of the informal consultation.

3. Main report

- 3.1 As part of the informal consultation meetings were held with the Parent Council chairs and head teachers of DHS, JGHS and all of the feeder primary schools for these two secondary schools. A public meeting was also held at DHS on 27 February 2018 to which all parents from the cluster schools were invited.
- 3.2 A special informal consultation meeting was held with the Gaelic Implementation Group on 17 January 2018. Two meetings for parents at Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce were held on 5 March and 9 March 2018.
- 3.3 The outcomes of the informal consultation can be summarised as follows:
 - The view of the majority of responses received from families with pupils at DHS and/or its feeder primary schools was they did not want secondary

GME pupils to start attending DHS if it meant that in the future there would be no space at the school for existing catchment pupils.

- A commitment was therefore made that GME pupils would only transfer to DHS if it could be demonstrated in the future the school's capacity could be expanded to accommodate all expected existing catchment pupils and future GME pupils.
- A commitment was also made to look at other accommodation options for the long term provision of secondary GME at locations other at DHS, whether this may be a joint campus or a stand-alone GME secondary school.
- JGHS Parent Council requested that options for expanding capacity at JGHS be considered including the use of Darroch as a permanent annexe.
- GME parents wanted to see the development of a strategic plan for growth of GME at all levels and did not want secondary GME to be transferred from JGHS until the curriculum provision had been enhanced and improved.

3.4 When all of the views expressed during the informal consultation are considered the following conclusions can be reached:

- Secondary GME can only be transferred to DHS if it can be shown that the school can be expanded to accommodate all of the existing catchment pupils and the expected GME pupils in the long term.
- Other options for accommodating secondary GME in the long term require further investigation. This includes consideration of whether there is the possibility for a joint campus arrangement to be developed with any other existing or new high school or if there is the opportunity for a stand-alone GME secondary school to be established.
- A strategic plan for growth of GME at all levels – early years, primary and secondary – is required which addresses increasing the supply of GME teachers, expansion of curriculum opportunities and long term accommodation requirements.
- In the interim, the capacity issues at JGHS require to be treated as a separate issue. The projections indicate the school's roll will continue to increase in the future and therefore all options for expanding the school's capacity require to be considered and solutions implemented as quickly as possible.

3.5 It is therefore recommended a rising rolls working group is established for JGHS led by officer's from the School Estate Planning Team and involving an appropriate senior officer from the Schools and Lifelong Learning Service, the Head Teacher and Parent Council representatives. This group will meet regularly to consider and oversee the implementation of solutions to address the expected capacity issues at the school. Several solutions will require to be considered:

- Introduction of more efficient timetabling.

- Internal reconfiguration of spaces and classrooms to support more efficient timetabling.
- Provision of temporary accommodation.
- Provision of permanent additional accommodation whether on the existing campus or at an off-site location.
- Statutory consultation and funding requirements for any additional accommodation.

3.6 For the future growth of GME the following actions are recommended:

- ***Preparation of strategic plan for the whole journey of GME growth and development from Early Years to Secondary and as per the legislative Gaelic Language Plan.*** The new [Gaelic Language Plan 2018 - 2022](#) (prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005) was approved by the Council's Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee on 15 May 2018 and includes a commitment to improving and enhancing GME in the city. In line with this commitment a draft GME strategic growth plan will be prepared for consideration by stakeholders in August with a final plan submitted to the ECF Committee in October.
- ***Establishment of a short term working group to oversee the development of the strategic growth plan for GME.*** The membership of this group will be as follows: City of Edinburgh Council (Elected Members and officers), Head Teachers from Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce and James Gillespie's High School, parent representatives with pupils at all stages of GME and officers from Bòrd na Gàidhlig. The appropriate representatives will be allocated through discussion at the Gaelic Implementation Group.
- ***Explore opportunities to expand Early Years provision for August 2018.*** The after school club which is situated within Bun-sgoil Taobh na Pàirce, is registered with the Care Inspectorate for children aged three years old upwards and the manager has expressed an interest in coming into partnership with the council to deliver funded early learning and childcare. A formal request to come into partnership has now been received and the setting Oganan Dhun Eideann has submitted a Profile of Provision to apply for partnership with the council. Early years Officers will now visit the setting to establish if it meets the criteria for coming into partnership with the council. If this setting is admitted into partnership it is hoped that this will be in place for August 2018. The possibility of introducing Gaelic Medium early learning and childcare provision in another location within the city is also being explored. The location and management of this will need to take into account the requirements for the expansion to 1140 funded hours.

3.7 The strategic growth plan will include details of actions which will be taken to:

- enhance the number of GME teachers;

- expand the choice of subjects available for GME secondary pupils at SQA level;
- conclude the most appropriate accommodation solutions for long term expansion of early years and primary; and
- determine the best option for the provision of a dedicated GME secondary school whether this is delivered through a joint campus arrangement with another school or as a stand-alone facility on its own site.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 The provision of a school estate that will meet the needs of future pupils and the wider community.

5. Financial impact

- 5.1 The financial implications on future capital and revenue budgets associated with the potential infrastructure projects arising from the JGHS rising rolls project or the GME strategic growth plan will be considered in detail with colleagues in finance. Business cases will require to be developed through the Communities and Families Asset Investment Group and presented to the Asset Management Board for consideration. Following this process the identification and approval of the required additional capital and revenue funding would require to be established by Council as part of future budget setting processes.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 Any project led by Communities and Families is aligned to all the necessary Council risk, policy, compliance and governance requirements.

7. Equalities impact

- 7.1 Equalities impact assessments will be carried out for any future statutory consultation or capital infrastructure project.

8. Sustainability impact

- 8.1 An approach to the provision of Communities and Families assets which is fully integrated with the wider asset priorities of the Council and its partners will ensure a sustainable approach to future asset provision.

9. Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Any statutory consultation required for changes to the school estate will be undertaken according to the procedures set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Report to Education, Children and Families Committee 12 December 2016: [Schools and Lifelong Learning Estate Strategic Review – Update on Informal Consultation.](#)

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