

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE**

**19 SEPTEMBER 2017**

**SCHOOL INVESTMENT STRATEGY**

**REPORT BY MARK ARMSTRONG, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR – PEOPLE**

**ABSTRACT**

This report outlines an approach for taking forward the school investment strategy. It seeks approval to undertake pre-consultation with all school communities across Angus.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Children and Learning Committee:

- i. approves the proposed pre-consultation on the whole school estate across communities of Angus
- ii. agrees that the outcome of the pre-consultation and prioritised proposals are brought back to a special meeting in early 2018
- iii. approves an amended approach to planning the implementation of the strategy based on manageable phases rather than fixed-term plans of 5-; 10-; and 30 years .

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/ CORPORATE PLAN**

This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016:

Communities that are learning and supportive

Communities that are safe and strong

Communities that are sustainable

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Children and Learning Committee on 10 November 2015 approved item 10 (report 436/15) - The Preparation of a School Investment Strategy. This requested the development of a comprehensive strategic framework for the future of the school estate. It would ensure that the educational needs of all our children are met whilst making the best use of the resources available.
- 3.2 On 13 June 2017 Children and Learning Committee approved the Strategy (report 189/17) which set out the long term vision for our learning estate and instructed that implementation plans covering 5-; 10- ; and 30 year plans are brought back for approval.
- 3.3 The committee approved Angus Council's vision to develop and maintain a learning estate that provides the best quality learning environments for all of our children and young people, and makes the best use of the resources available. This is underpinned by our statement of ambition and our

guiding principles of: equity of access, nurture and inclusion; sustainability and value for money; community; well-maintained, flexible spaces; transparency and fairness in decision-making.

- 3.4 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 details the requirements when considering proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools. The consultation process should be robust, open, transparent and fair. The Act makes special provision in relation to rural schools, with a presumption against the closure of rural schools. As a result there are more detailed requirements when considering the future of rural schools.
- 3.5 Pre-consultation is recommended for rural schools to allow the community to be involved in identifying all reasonable alternatives to closure. It can cover a range of engagement activities about a proposal before a formal consultation under the 2010 Act takes place. It is not a substitute for the formal consultation, but can play an important part in information gathering and sharing,
- 3.6 Scottish Government created an urban/rural classification. The classifications are updated every two years to reflect changes in population patterns. An extract from the last update on May 2017 is included at Appendix 1. This identifies 29 schools in Angus that are classified as rural schools.

#### 4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 There are currently 53 primary schools across Angus, one of which is mothballed and another of which has no pupils. Across our schools we have a planning capacity of 11,487 and a roll for 2017/18 of 8,708. This means that across our primary schools there are 2,779 places not filled. Some schools are very under-occupied, 16% of capacity, whilst others are at or over 100% occupancy. The table below shows the number of primary schools in 'occupancy bands'.

Occupancy range	Number of schools	% of schools
0 to 19%	3	5.6%
20%-39%	5	9.4%
40%-59%	9	17.0%
60%-79%	18	34.0%
80%-99%	16	30.2%
Over 100%	2	3.8%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 4.2 We have 8 secondary schools in Angus ranging in size from 800 places to 1,088 places. Our planning capacity across all secondary schools is 8,488 and the roll is 6,377. Our secondary occupancy rates range from 62% to 97% with an average occupancy of 75%. Our preferred occupancy rate is around 80%.
- 4.3 The cost per pupil<sup>1</sup> of our primary schools range from £3,462 per pupil per annum to £62,220<sup>2</sup> per pupil per annum. Our secondary school costs range from £5,220 per pupil per annum to £8,473 per annum. The average cost per primary school pupil is £4,914 per annum and secondary pupil is £6,133.
- 4.4 Based on Scottish Government Guidelines, two of our schools have been assessed as category C for condition "Poor – Showing major defects and/or not operating adequately". A further nine schools have been assessed as Category C for suitability "Poor – Showing major problems and/or not operating optimally (the school buildings impede the delivery of activities that are needed for children and communities in the school)".

<sup>1</sup> Based on budgeted costs for 2016/17 and pupil numbers at September 2016 census

<sup>2</sup> Assuming one child attends our mothballed school

- 4.5 Appendix 2 shows more detailed information about our school estate. It has been sorted to highlight the following: -
1. Schools which are mothballed<sup>3</sup>
  2. Schools where the condition of the building has been assessed as Category C
  3. Schools where the suitability of the building has been assessed as Category C
  4. Schools with an occupancy level of 95% or greater as at June 2017
  5. Schools with an occupancy rate of 40% or less as at June 2017
- 4.6 Our current learning estate does not fully meet our aspirations for the best quality learning environments for all of our children and young people that makes the best use of the resources available.

## 5 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 As a general principle, it is proposed to undertake pre-consultation for any significant changes to a school. This is not requirement of the 2010 Act, but would help to ensure a wide a range of views are captured. This is good practice and reflects our values as illustrated in our statement of ambition; -

We will:

- seek to improve services
- act with honesty and integrity at all times
- acknowledge when we get things wrong
- act responsibly and be accountable for our actions
- do what we say and do it well

- 5.2 The pre-consultation aims to engage constructively with our communities in advance of statutory consultation.
- 5.3 It is proposed to undertake pre-consultation across the whole of the school estate to inform the implementation of the strategy. This approach will allow us to consider how changes in one school/area might impact neighbouring schools.

### 5.4 Pre- Consultation

Pre-consultation is likely to include the development of a questionnaire which can be submitted electronically or in hard copy. We will hold drop in sessions at each of the secondary schools which will also cover the associated primary schools. At the drop in sessions we will share information about all of our schools as detailed below. We will highlight any relevant issues and seek feedback and suggestions. Head teachers will also be briefed so they can deliver pop-up sessions in their schools as appropriate.

- 5.5 As part of the pre-consultation we will share the following information with stakeholders
- i. Schools that are not currently in use
  - ii. School catchment areas
  - iii. School rolls and roll projections
  - iv. School capacities and occupancies
  - v. Placing request numbers per school
  - vi. School building condition and suitability ratings
  - vii. Community use of schools
  - viii. Average cost per pupil per school

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<sup>3</sup> The term 'mothballing' is used, according to Scottish Government guidance, to refer to a temporary decision to close a school where the roll has fallen to zero. It recognises the permanent impact on a community of closing the school and seeks to avoid that final decision until there is sustained evidence of no demand. It can be an appropriate and positive step where there is some prospect of revival in a community.

5.6 An indicative timeline for the consultation is as follows: -

Report considered at committee	19/09/17
Information prepared and pre-consultation organised	17/09/17 to 31/10/17
Briefing Session for all elected members	October 2017
Pre-consultation takes place	01/11/17 to 30/11/17
Data consolidated and report produced	01/12/17 to 08/12/17
Special Meeting	Early January 2018
Formal consultation preparation commences	To be arranged

5.7 We will gather together the information received in the pre-consultation and collate a report. We will use that information to inform a further committee report, which will identify our priorities for formal consultation and implementation. It will not be possible to address all projects identified at the same time. The availability of funding and the timescales involved mean that it is not possible to develop fixed period plans as had been anticipated. We will instead identify phases for projects. We will take forward. These will be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect any changes.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Review of the School Estate will influence the Council's Financial Plan and long term Revenue Financial Planning. It is not possible to quantify the implications at this stage. The pre-consultation, formal consultation and implementation of recommendations will require significant officer time. This will be met from within existing resources.

## 7. RISK

A strategic approach to the School Estate is required to ensure there is scope for improving educational outcomes for all children and young people across Angus. We must ensure we have a sustainable estates plan which maximises educational benefits for all children and young people or the Council could face significant risks such as poor condition school buildings and unmanageable building maintenance issues.

**NOTE:** The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Report No 436/15, Preparation of a School Investment Strategy For Angus
- Report No 189/17, School Investment Strategy
- The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

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### **List of Appendices:**

Appendix 1 Extract from Rural Schools List – May 2017

Appendix 2 School Estate Information

## Extract From Rural Schools List - May 2017

The [rural schools list](#) is maintained and published by the Scottish Government under section 14 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The table below lists the 29 Angus schools that meet the rural criteria.

Primary School	Classification
Aberlemno	Accessible rural areas
Airlie	Accessible rural areas
Arbirlot	Accessible rural areas
Auchterhouse	Accessible rural areas
Birkhill	Accessible rural areas
Carmyllie	Accessible rural areas
Colliston	Accessible rural areas
Cortachy	Accessible rural areas
Eassie	Accessible rural areas
Edzell	Remote rural areas
Friockheim	Accessible rural areas
Glamis	Accessible rural areas
Inverarity	Accessible rural areas
Inverkeilor	Accessible rural areas
Isla	Remote rural areas
Letham	Accessible rural areas
Lethnot	Remote rural areas
Liff	Accessible rural areas
Mattocks	Accessible rural areas
Monikie	Accessible rural areas
Murroes	Accessible rural areas
Newbigging	Accessible rural areas
Newtyle	Accessible rural areas
Rosemount	Accessible rural areas
Stracathro	Accessible rural areas
Strathmartine	Accessible rural areas
Tannadice	Accessible rural areas
Tarfside	Remote rural areas
Tealing	Accessible rural areas

#### How was the classification produced?

Two main criteria have been used to produce the Scottish Government 6 and 8 fold urban rural classifications: **settlement size (i.e. population or community size)** as defined by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) and **accessibility based on drive time** analysis to differentiate between accessible and remote areas in Scotland. The settlements and accessibility data are then combined to create a Scotland wide classification.

## **Scottish Government Urban / Rural Classification**

Large Urban Areas	Settlements of 125,000 or more people.
Other Urban Areas	Settlements of 10,000 to 124,999 people.
Accessible Small Towns	Settlements of 3,000 and 9,999 people and within 30 minutes drive of a settlement of 10,000 or more.
Remote Small Towns	Settlements of between 3,000 and 9,999 people and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more.
Very Remote Small Towns	Settlements of 3,000 and 9,999 people and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more.
Accessible Rural	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30 minute drive time of a settlement of 10,000 or more.
Remote Rural	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes but less than 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more.
Very Remote Rural	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more.

## School Information

The following table includes all Angus schools and is ordered as follows: -

1. Schools which are mothballed<sup>i</sup>.
2. Schools where the condition of the building has been assessed as Category C
3. Schools where the suitability of the building has been assessed as Category C
4. Schools with an occupancy level of 95% or greater as at June 2017
5. Schools with an occupancy rate of 40% or less as at June 2017

Lethnot Primary school is currently mothballed. Muirfield and Hayshead Primary Schools are in the process of being replaced as part of the Arbroath Schools Project.

School	Condition	SG Suitability	Occupancy <sup>ii</sup>	Budgeted Cost per pupil <sup>iii</sup>
Lethnot Primary School	B		0%	£62,220
Muirfield Primary School	C	C	44%	£4,252
Arbirlot Primary School	C	C	46%	£12,691
<b>Monifieth High School</b>	B	C	97%	£5,220
Eassie Primary School	B	C	30%	£9,860
Hayshead Primary School	B	C	90%	£4,071
Liff Primary School	B	C	84%	£5,226
Stracathro Primary School	B	C	72%	£10,095
Southesk Primary School	B	C	70%	£4,456
Ferryden Primary School	B	C	59%	£5,156
Ladyloan Primary School	B	C	56%	£5,514
Glamis Primary School	A	C	75%	£5,131
Woodlands Primary School	A	A	106%	£5,723
Timmergreens Primary School	A	A	100%	£3,906
Whitehills Primary School	A	A	95%	£5,449
Langlands Primary School	A	A	95%	£6,261
Warddykes Primary School	A	A	95%	£4,004
Tarfside Primary School	B	B	16%	£36,806
Carmyllie Primary School	B	A	17%	£12,048
Tannadice Primary School	B	A	23%	£6,258
Aberlemno Primary School	A	A	28%	£11,352
Newbigging Primary School	B	B	32%	£10,381
Inverarity Primary School	B	B	36%	£9,799
Airlie Primary School	A	A	40%	£7,978
St Margaret's RC School	B	B	94%	£6,376
St Thomas' RC Primary School	B	B	93%	£4,700
Lochside Primary School	B	B	89%	£4,282
Mattocks Primary School	B	B	89%	£4,971
Murroes Primary School	B	B	86%	£4,422
Inverbrothock Primary School	B	B	85%	£4,277
Auchterhouse Primary School	B	B	54%	£6,398
<b>Montrose Academy</b>	B	B	64%	£5,645
<b>Arbroath Academy</b>	B	B	65%	£6,190

School	Condition	SG Suitability	Occupancy <sup>ii</sup>	Budgeted Cost per pupil <sup>iii</sup>
Colliston Primary School	B	B	71%	£5,728
Birkhill Primary School	B	B	71%	£3,801
<b>Webster's High School</b>	B	B	76%	£6,130
Monikie Primary School	B	B	79%	£4,838
<b>Arbroath High School</b>	B	B	79%	£5,674
Borrowfield Primary School	B	B	80%	£3,894
Maisondieu Primary School	B	B	83%	£3,812
Northmuir Primary School	B	B	84%	£3,601
Friockheim Primary School	B	A	59%	£4,953
Grange Primary School	B	A	78%	£4,496
Rosemount Primary School	A	B	89%	£3,980
Southmuir Primary School	A	B	56%	£5,273
Strathmartine Primary School	A	B	62%	£7,269
Inverkeilor Primary School	A	B	67%	£5,093
Andover Primary School	A	B	70%	£4,798
Edzell Primary School	A	B	72%	£5,681
Isla Primary School	A	A	47%	£7,714
Newtyle Primary School	A	A	61%	£6,760
<b>Brechin High School</b>	A	A	62%	£7,094
Cortachy Primary School	A	A	67%	£6,948
Letham Primary School	A	A	69%	£4,527
Tealing Primary School	A	A	71%	£6,018
<b>Carnoustie High School</b>	A	A	75%	£8,473
Carlogie Primary School	A	A	75%	£5,907
Seaview Primary School	A	A	77%	£3,462
Strathmore Primary School	A	A	77%	£6,121
<b>Forfar Academy</b>	A	A	81%	£5,631
Burnside Primary School	A	A	85%	£5,526

<sup>i</sup> The term 'mothballing' is used, according to Scottish Government guidance, to refer to a temporary decision to close a school where the roll has fallen to zero. It recognises the permanent impact on a community of closing the school and seeks to avoid that final decision until there is sustained evidence of no demand. It can be an appropriate and positive step where there is some prospect of revival in a community.

<sup>ii</sup> Based on June 2017 data for term commencing August 2017

<sup>iii</sup> Based on budgeted cost for 2016/17 and pupils per September 2016 census