

ANGUS COUNCIL

ANGUS COUNCIL – 4 NOVEMBER 2021

MONIFIETH LEARNING CAMPUS – PROPOSAL TO INCLUDE MONIFIETH PUBLIC LIBRARY

REPORT BY VIVIEN SMITH, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC POLICY, TRANSFORMATION & PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM

ABSTRACT

This report provides an update to Council on the recent consultation exercise relating to the potential inclusion of Monifieth Public Library within the new build Monifieth Learning Campus. The report highlights key themes from the consultation and recommends that an Options Appraisal exercise is now undertaken by officers to identify the preferred solution.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) Notes the outcomes of the two phases of consultation to consider the inclusion of Monifieth Public Library within the new build Monifieth Learning Campus.
- (ii) Agree that officers undertake an Options Appraisal exercise, including the development of relevant assessment criteria relative to the timescale available, to compare the various options available, and that a report with the preferred solution will be prepared for Council to consider at its meeting on 16 December 2021.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

Angus Council Community Plan

The best start in life for children
An enhanced, protected and enjoyed natural and built environment
Safe, secure, vibrant and sustainable communities

Council Plan

Priority 1: Economy – We want Angus to be a ‘go-to’ area for businesses
Priority 2: People – We want to maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities
Priority 3: Place – We want our communities to be strong, resilient and led by citizens

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At Angus Council on 17 December 2020 (Report [329/20](#)), Elected Members approved the recommendation to identify the replacement of Monifieth High School as the Council’s priority project for inclusion in the Scottish Government’s Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP). The report set out the rationale for the inclusion of the project, which includes addressing capacity issues and addressing a series of building and maintenance concerns. The report made a commitment to consult with key stakeholders in the development of plans for the replacement high school.
- 3.2 As agreed at Angus Council on 04 March 2021, an allocation of £50 million has been identified on the Capital Plan for the replacement of Monifieth High School (Reports [68/21](#) and [76/21](#) refer). Due to the early stage of the project the estimated budget is based on a cost per square metre. The budget has been agreed alongside consideration of other identified priorities within the Capital Plan and a full consideration of the long-term affordability impact for Angus Council.

- 3.3 Reference is made to Recommendation (iii) of Report [222/21](#), approved at Angus Council on 24 June 2021, relating to further consultation with the Monifieth community regarding the inclusion, or otherwise of a relocated public library. This public consultation began on Monday 13 September 2021 and closed on 27 September 2021. Section 4 below provides an analysis of the consultation exercise. A full report with details is available in Appendix 1.

4. CURRENT POSITION

Reach of Consultation

- 4.1 The consultation was available from Monday 13 September 2021 and closed on 27 September 2021. Responses could be submitted online or hard copies completed at Monifieth Public Library. The consultation was publicised using the Council's social media channels. The Facebook post advertising the consultation on 13 September 2021 reached a total of 5459 people. The post via Twitter on the same date was seen a total of 1196 times (post impressions). A second Facebook post was released on 23 September 2021 and this reached 4391 people, with the second Twitter post on the same date reaching 1558 people (post impressions). Notification of the consultation commencement was issued to a variety of community groups. In addition, ANGUSalive issued an email to around 1,400 Library members who originally registered at Monifieth Library and remain a member.
- 4.2 The consultation received 199 valid responses. 179 responses were completed on-line and 20 hard copies were submitted at Monifieth Library. Of the 179 online responses, 166 responses were from unique IP addresses. 13 responses were provided from six duplicate IP addresses. These were generally two submissions per IP address, however one IP address provided three responses. As the level of multiple responses was limited and may be due to there being multiple members of a single household all responses were included.
- 4.3 The consultation asked four questions, with question two changing dependent on the response to question one. The questions were the same questions used in the original Public Consultation regarding Monifieth Learning Campus to allow for consistency in reviewing responses. The questions were as follows:
- Question 1 – Monifieth Library. Do you currently use Monifieth Library?
 - Question 2A – (If you answered yes to question 1) Would you continue to use the public library if relocated as part of Monifieth Learning Campus?
 - Question 2B – (If you answered no to question 1) Would you start to use a public library facility as part of the Monifieth Learning Campus?
 - Question 3 – Please provide details of any opportunities or barriers to your use of a relocated library facility within a Monifieth Learning Campus.
 - Question 4 – Any other comments regarding the proposal you wish to make us aware of.

Consultation responses

- 4.4 Question 1 – Respondents were asked if they currently use Monifieth Library. The following responses were received:
- 178 (89.45%) of respondents stated yes.
 - 21 (10.55%) of respondents stated no.
- 4.5 Question 2A – Existing Library users were asked if they would continue to use the library if relocated as part of Monifieth Learning Campus. The following responses were received:
- 16 (8.99%) of 178 respondents stated Yes, I would use the library more.
 - 36 (20.22%) of 178 respondents said Yes, I would use the library the same.
 - 43 (24.16%) of 178 respondents stated Yes, but I would use the library less.
 - 81 (45.51%) of 178 respondents stated No, I would likely stop using the library.
 - Two (1.12%) of 178 respondents did not provide a response.
- 4.6 Question 2B – Respondents who didn't use the existing library were asked if they would start to use the library if relocated as part of Monifieth Learning Campus. The following responses were received:
- Eight (38.10%) of 21 respondents stated Yes, I would use the library facilities.
 - 12 (57.14%) of 21 respondents stated No, I would continue to not use the library facilities.

- One (5%) of 21 respondents did not provide a response.
- 4.7 Question 3 – 170 respondents (85.43%) provided responses to identify opportunities and / or barriers to the library being relocated to Monifieth Learning Campus.

24 responses identified opportunities, which can be categorised as follows:

- Good links for school children;
- Advantage of location;
- Benefits of being co-located within a learning campus;
- Potential for increased opening hours;
- Potential improved facilities

144 responses identified barriers, which can be categorised as follows:

- Concern on location, away from town centre;
- Concern on the accessibility of Monifieth learning Campus location;
- Concern on the effect on the High Street as a result of relocation away from the town centre;
- Concern on sharing the library within a learning campus setting.
- Concern on existing library operational issues.

Some responses could not be identified as an opportunity or a barrier.

- 4.8 Question 4 – 119 respondents (59.80%) provided responses to highlight any additional comments regarding the proposal they wished to make us aware of. Many used this as an opportunity to reinforce a previous comment from question 3.

The responses have been interpreted into the following summary:

- 61 responses noted concern on the proposed location, away from town centre;
- 49 responses noted concern on the accessibility of Monifieth learning Campus location;
- 11 responses noted concern on the effect on the High Street as a result of relocation away from the town centre;
- 22 responses noted concern on locating the library within a learning campus setting;
- Eight responses noted potential benefits on locating the library within a learning campus;
- 12 responses noted concern on existing library operational issues.
- Two responses noted potential benefits for increased opening hours or long-term security of the library if relocated.
- Five responses noted potential improved facilities if the library relocated.

Some responses highlighted more than one criteria from the above list.

Previous consultation responses regarding library

- 4.9 The previous public consultation for Monifieth Learning Campus, completed between Tuesday 23 March 2021 and Wednesday 21 April 2021 resulted in 470 valid online responses. That consultation was undertaken to cover a broad range of aspects for consideration as part of the project, including for example sport & leisure, early years, active travel and the public library.
- 4.10 Respondents were asked if they currently use Monifieth Library. The following responses were received:
- 175 (37.23%) of respondents stated yes.
 - 260 (55.32%) of respondents stated no.
 - 35 (7.45%) of respondents did not answer the question.
- 4.11 Existing Library users were asked if they would continue to use the library if relocated as part of Monifieth Learning Campus. The following responses were received:
- 52 (29.71%) of 175 respondents stated Yes, I would use the library more.
 - 59 (33.71%) of 175 respondents said Yes, I would use the library the same.
 - 29 (16.57%) of 175 respondents stated Yes, but I would use the library less.
 - 34 (19.43%) of 175 respondents stated No, I would likely stop using the library.
 - 1 (0.57%) of 175 respondents did not provide a response.

- 4.12 Respondents who didn't use the existing library were asked if they would start to use the library if relocated as part of Monifieth Learning Campus. The following responses were received:
- 102 (39.23%) of 260 respondents stated Yes, I would use the library facilities.
 - 136 (52.31%) of 260 respondents stated No, I would continue to not use the library facilities.
 - 22 (8.46%) of 260 respondents did not provide a response.
- 4.13 118 respondents provided responses to identify opportunities and / or barriers to the library being relocated to Monifieth Learning Campus. Some of the areas of feedback were:
- Preference for a centrally located library.
 - Impact on the High Street.
 - Potential traffic and travel implications. Potential access difficulties for older people or those with disabilities.
 - Interest in wider opportunities that could be available such as clubs, family groups and learning opportunities.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The two phases of consultation carried out have provided a mixed range of views and highlighted some specific issues. These issues, along with other factors that require further exploration, should be considered prior to arriving at a recommended way forward.
- 5.2 It is therefore proposed that an Options Appraisal exercise is now undertaken, including the development of relevant assessment criteria relative to the timescale available, to compare the various options as follows:
- (i) Do nothing
 - (ii) Retain Public Library in existing building at current location and invest in improvements (using £675k capital funding available)
 - (iii) Provide purpose designed Public Library space as part of the new build Monifieth Learning Campus (using £675k capital funding available)

Proposed Programme

- 5.3 The proposed programme for the overall development of the Monifieth Learning Campus is:
- Appointment of designers and Main Contractor: September 2021 – November 2021
 - Outline design: October 2021 – April 2022
 - Detailed design and Tender: May 2022 – April 2023
 - Project approval and Development Agreement: May 2023 – June 2023
 - Construction: (Phase 1 – new school) July 2023 – September 2025
 - School building opening: October 2025
 - Construction: (Phase 2 – demolition) November 2025 – September 2026
- 5.4 In order to minimise disruption and maintain momentum with the Monifieth Learning Campus programme, an optional space allocation for the public library will be included in the preliminary design stage. This will allow progress with design until a final decision on the future location of the library is made. A report will be presented at the Council meeting of 16 December 2021

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The council currently has an overall provision of £50m (gross) within its 2020 – 2025 Provisional Capital Budget to support the development of Monifieth Learning Campus. A proportion of the total cost falls into the "Later Years" part of the 2020-2025 Capital Budget but this cost along with an assumption about funding support through the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) model has been built into the assessment of the Long Term Affordability of the General Fund Capital Plan (Report 76/21 refers) confirming that the project is affordable.
- 6.2 There is currently no allowance within the project budget to provide additional accommodation for a public library. The inclusion of Monifieth Public Library will not attract any increased LEIP funding from Scottish Government and would thus require to be funded from the Council's own resources.

- 6.3 There is currently £675,000 identified in the Capital Plan for planned improvements to Monifieth Public Library (£507k in 2022/23 and £168k in 2023/24). In the event that the option of including the public library in the new build Monifieth Learning campus was agreed, this capital allocation could be re-purposed to support that project and reprofiled into 2023/24 and 2024/25 to suit the new build timetable. A £675,000 budget would provide approximately 200m² of library accommodation. The current Public Library building is around 258m².
- 6.4 The revenue implications associated with the options will also require to be considered in detail. An important aspect of that will be the potential Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) impact. Members will be aware that ANGUSalive currently attracts NDR relief based on the existing public library building. The potential NDR costs associated with the new build option will likely be significantly higher, and this would need to be assessed in comparison to the Barclay Report recommendations which have capped the level of financial benefit available.

7. RISK

- 7.1 Undertaking the Options Appraisal exercise will cause some impact to the initial stages of the planned design development process. However, this has been partly mitigated by including an optional area for the Public Library in the initial briefing information. This will support the initiation of the design process which is relatively fluid in the initial stages. The library area could then be omitted, with only a minor delay to the programme, if it is decided not to progress with the new build solution as the preferred option.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

9. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive of ANGUSalive has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

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 [329/20](#)
- Report [68/21](#)
- Report [76/21](#)
- Report [222/21](#)

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Consultation Report