
Report to Council

**Subject: Primary School Provision in Alloa West - Consultation with
Community**

Report by: Councillor Gary Womersley and Councillor Mark English

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. At the meeting of Council on 3rd June 2010, a Report to Council on the outcome of a public consultation exercise regarding future primary school provision for the St John's and Claremont catchments was withdrawn, advice being that the consultation exercise itself was not legally compliant.
- 1.2. Officers confirmed at that time, that a further tranche of consultation would be undertaken, in a legally compliant manner, to be reported back to Council at a future date (c. Autumn).
- 1.3. This Report seeks to ensure that such consultation exercise is a full, open and non-predetermined engagement to ascertain the full views and options preferred by the community. Such information would be reported back to Council, to allow any decision(s) made by Council as to future primary education provision for the catchments concerned, to be as fully informed and, insofar as possible, allow a decision to accommodate as many of the community stated requirements.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Council undertakes the latest tranche of consultation regarding the provision of primary education in Alloa West, in a full and open manner and not restricted to one option only i.e. a new school for a merged St John's and Claremont Primaries to be erected at the current Redwell playing fields in Alloa.
- 2.2. That such consultation seeks to pursue the community's view on all options stated in the original business case presented to Council and reports such views and any other views/preferences back to Council, at a future date, to allow Council at that time to make a decision, fully informed as to the expressed preferences of the community.


3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. On 17th December 2009, a Report was presented to Council by the Director, Services to People, regarding public consultation on future delivery options for early year and primary education in Alloa West, more specifically for those pupils in the current St Johns and Claremont catchment areas (the "December Report")
- 3.2. The December Report was approved by Council, subject to minor amendment, which required the future report to Council on the consultation exercise undertaken, to be presented to the first Council meeting after the end of March 2010.
- 3.3. A Report, originally tabled to be heard at Council meeting on 3rd June 2010, to update Councillors on the consultation exercise undertaken by the Council in implement of the December Report (the "June Report") was withdrawn, following legal advice that the consultation exercise it referred to had not been legally compliant. Commitment was given by officers that a new tranche of consultation would be undertaken by the Council, in a legally compliant manner.
- 3.4. The original consultation exercise, in implement of the December Report only consulted with one option being preferred by the Council, namely that a new school for a merged St John's and Claremont Primaries, be erected at the current Redwell playing fields in Alloa.
- 3.5. By only consulting on one option, the Council could be perceived as presenting a *fait accompli*; not genuinely engaging with the parents, pupils and public concerned; or not giving any affected party an opportunity to genuinely contribute to an exercise that genuinely seeks to ask the community what type of solution(s) it would seek, to serve its needs.
- 3.6. The Council now having to commence another tranche of consultation, in a legally compliant manner, now has further opportunity to make the current tranche of consultation available for parents, pupils and the public to contribute and suggest what solutions they feel might best serve their respective and collective needs and aspirations i.e. a *real* consultation exercise.
- 3.7. This report seeks to require an open consultation engagement process to be undertaken, as opposed to the one-option only, non-legally compliant communication exercise undertaken previously. The December Report included a multi-option business case citing various potential options. The current/to-be-undertaken consultation exercise, should actively seek to consult on all such (and any other) options.
- 3.8. A full Report should be brought back to Council at the end of such a consultation exercise, which information could be used by Council to allow it to make a fully formed opinion, balanced against the normal constraints, as to how to best serve the stated needs, requirements and aspirations of the community concerned.

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Councillor Gary Womersley	Councillor	2281
Councillor Mark English	Councillor	2281

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Councillor Gary Womersley	Councillor	
Councillor Mark English	Councillor	