

## ITEM No ...4.....

**REPORT TO:** CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE – 21 JUNE 2021  
**REPORT ON:** PRIMARY PROVISION OPTIONS FOR THE WESTERN GATEWAY  
**REPORT BY:** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE  
**REPORT NO:** 171 – 2021

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Children and Families Services Committee various options for primary provision to serve the Western Gateway.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes and approves that the following be taken forward;

- i. Option 2: Continue to use existing catchment and local primary provision to manage the expansion resulting from the Western Gateway and concurrently seek to secure funding through the Scottish Government LEIP to allow the construction of a new school. Continue to work with the Western Gateway Community on all issues relating to education.
- ii. Further updates on progress and developments will be included in the annual School Estate Management Plan (SEMP) Committee report SEMP in December 2021.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Dundee City Council continues to secure developer contributions towards educational provision within the Western Gateway from new housing developments. At the end of financial year March 2021 this amounted to £1.21m. This amount increases on an annual basis and is paid to the council by the developers towards the end of each financial year. The amount paid varies year on year, based upon the number of completed residences sold, with developer contributions currently set at approx. £5352.70 per dwelling.
- 3.2 Anticipated contributions received from the developers by August 2025 will be approximately £3.5m and the total sum of monies provided by circa 1,073 constructed residential units by 2030 will amount to approximately £5.4m. All developer contributions must by legal agreement contribute toward “the reasonable and properly incurred costs of constructing a primary school for the Dundee Western Gateway”. If any part of the Educational contributions have not been applied by the tenth anniversary of the agreement date then payment must be returned to the owner or its successor. Educational contributions are deemed to be applied by the council once committee approval has been granted for any works or preparatory works relating to the construction of a primary school for the Dundee Western Gateway. The first agreement was signed in May 2015.
- 3.3 The Councils Capital Plan includes allocated funds toward future schools’ estate and was reported to the Policy and Resources Committee Article VIII of the Minute of the Policy and Resources Committee 11 January 2021 (Report No 1-2021 refers). There is no funding allocated in the current plan for any school estate development in the Western Gateway but funding for school estate in general is noted in later years but currently undefined.
- 3.4 Using construction cost metric provided by Scottish Future Trust the estimated capital cost of a 2-stream primary school within the Western Gateway could cost approximately £16m based on financial close in quarter 3 of 2023.

- 3.5 Based on the building described in paragraph 3.4 the revenue costs of operating a 2-stream primary school could amount to approximately £2.1m (Appendix 2 provides further information). It should be noted that there is currently no allowance in the revenue budget to cover any of the capital and revenue costs discussed in the proposed options.

#### **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 At the meeting of the Children and Families Service Committee on 27 January 2020, reference Article V of the minute of meeting of this Committee, consideration was given to Report No **41-2020** from the Executive Director of Children and Families Service outlining the current position around educational provision for the Western Gateway. The Executive Director was tasked with bringing back more detailed information that set out options for educational provision.
- 4.2 The extensive schedule of informal school estate engagements undertaken during the spring of 2019, provided evidenced feedback from consultees that there was a desire and urgency for primary school provision within the West of Dundee. Feedback also suggested this option to be favored regardless of the challenges experienced in reaching agreed consensus on the development of Tri-council educational provision. Following the outcome of the Children and Families Service Committee in January 2020 council officers have continued informal engagement with the Western Gateway Community to keep them informed on any developments. Feedback from work undertaken by the Western Gateway Community has also helped inform elements of the projections and details in this report.

#### **5.0 DEVELOPMENT TO DATE IN THE WESTERN GATEWAY**

- 5.1 There have been 346 new residential units completed in the area between 2015 and April 2021. A further 727 units are programmed to be built between May 2021 and August 2030, bringing a total forecast new units of 1,073 anticipated by August 2030 based on the 2020 Indicative Housing Land Audit and the April 2021 as built figure. There will then be a further circa 270 units to be built post-2030.
- 5.2 If these units are occupied by a similar demographic to existing Dundee City Council greenfield developments, then we could expect up to 344 primary aged pupils to be living in the area by 2030. (See Table 3. Appendix 1).

#### **6.0 POSSIBLE SITE CONSIDERATIONS FOR A WESTERN GATEWAY EDUCATIONAL PROVISION**

- 6.1 The size of site for any new school is prescribed in the School Premises (General Requirements and Standards) (Scotland) Regulations 1967 and the 1973 and 1979 amendments to those regulations. Approx. five acres would be required for a 2-stream primary school and nursery.
- 6.2 A site for a new educational provision within the Western Gateway area has been identified by the developer, Springfield Properties, which forms part of their future proposed residential development area. The size of this identified area is 5.2 acres. Initial discussions have taken place between the developer and Dundee City Council in relation to the site and financial considerations around its acquisition, future dialogue will be required regarding procurement of the land in legal or financial terms.
- 6.3 In order to provide any new educational provision within the Western Gateway, the Executive Director of Children and Families Services would be required to formally consult on proposals under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and advise committee of the consultation process.

## 7.0 CATCHMENT AND EXISTING LOCAL PRIMARY ROLL PROJECTIONS

*The method used to calculate the primary/nursery roll projections is explained in Appendix 3.*

- 7.1 We have used the estimated roll projections in Table 1 below, to predict the potential scope and size of nursery and primary provision within the Western Gateway. These are based on existing occupation rates of development sites across Dundee:

*Table 1: Projected occupation rates for new build housing*

	Nursery	Primary
Number of children per 100 properties	8	35

- 7.2 Numbers are in line with previous council projections based on past occupancy rates for greenfield housing. Actual schools and nurseries attended by pupils and children already living in the Western Gateway are listed in Table 4 Appendix 1.
- 7.3 The projected additional capacity that will exist in catchment schools, other local Dundee City Council schools that are proving popular for Western Gateway children and local schools in neighboring councils is provided in Table 5 Appendix 1. This indicates there would be sufficient spaces available to meet the needs of families up to 2027/28.
- 7.4 It should be noted that neighboring Local Authority primary schools continue to be a popular choice by Western Gateway families due to their proximity to the residential development. Projections suggest that Liff Primary School will run close to capacity over the next few years and it is expected to be at capacity for session 2021/22. As a result, places for Dundee children cannot be guaranteed at Liff PS, or indeed any other primary school out with Dundee and may be refused if the demand exceeds the pre-agreed intake cap.

## 8.0 NURSERY PROVISION

- 8.1 Based on Dundee City Council estimates and information provided from the residents' survey, Table 3 Appendix 1 indicates the estimated number of 83 nursery children that could be living within the area by 2030.
- 8.2 Nursery settings do not have catchments in the way that schools do. Parents are free to choose to apply to any local authority or funded provider nursery. They may choose a location close to where they live, or they may choose other locations such as close to where they work or where siblings go to school. Families are not restricted to remaining in their home local authority.
- 8.3 Across Dundee as a whole, around 75% of 3 to 5-year olds take up their funded ELC provision in an LA setting. The overall capacity to meet the projected funded entitlement is delivered by either Dundee City Council or funded providers.
- 8.4 There remains appropriate capacity within the West of Dundee to accommodate entitled children from 2 years old. The challenge remains for Dundee City Council to implement the Funding Follows the Child Policy and to provide high quality, accessible, affordable and flexible provision for families. Sustainability of nursery places provided by funded providers is a key factor in the success of the 1140hrs offer. Work is currently being completed to relocate a private nursery within the Springfield development, adjacent to the proposed school site.
- 8.5 Although projections show a steady increase in need for early years provision for children from the Western Gateway, capacity will be sustained across Dundee and its neighbouring Local Authorities, with the support of funded providers, to deliver nursery provision to meet the needs of families both within the locality of the Western Gateway and across the city. Table 2 below sets out the current capacity in the West of Dundee.

Table 2: Nursery Capacity West of Dundee, 2021/22

Capacity	Nursery (age 2+)
DCC	1,362
DCC funding providers	533
Total Available Capacity	1,895

**9.0 OPTIONS FOR THE WESTERN GATEWAY**

9.1 The following options have been explored for the provisions of Primary Education to meet the needs of the Western Gateway community. The following three points are relevant to all three options:

- The estimated programme for building a new 2 stream primary school from public consultation to the date of the opening would be in the region of 3.5 years.
- The ongoing revenue costs for running a 2-stream primary school are estimated to be approximately £2.1m per annum (See Appendix 2).
- There will be a requirement for revenue savings to cover the ongoing additional annual costs of operating a new school. It should be noted that there is currently no allowance in the revenue budget to cover any of the capital and revenue costs discussed in the options and meeting this financial requirement will involve savings in other aspects of the council and/or Children and Families budget.

**Option 1**

*Consultation and construction of a primary school through DCC capital investment within the Western Gateway area.*

- 9.2 Dundee City Council would require to commit to the full capital cost of £16m for the construction of a new 2-stream primary school in the Western Gateway based on financial close in quarter 3 of 2023. This would require capital borrowing from Dundee City Council of around £9m and necessitate revenue savings of £405k to support the capital borrowing. In order to cover the full anticipated cost of the primary school, the Council may require to undertake some short term borrowing to cover any funding gap that may occur during the programme of work and the final receipt of the developer contributions.
- 9.3 At the point of a school opening, all young people living in the Western Gateway of primary age will be enrolled in a school. It is unlikely that all children will transition from their current school to the new provision immediately, particularly those in their final years of primary education. It is likely therefore that it will take a number of years for the school to increase to a normalized capacity. It is also unclear how many families in the area will continue to seek a primary placement in a non-catchment school to better facilitate a particular secondary pathway.
- 9.4 Early engagement with the Western Gateway Community could support the transition of a considerable number of younger children between P1-P5. Similar engagement would be undertaken with early years and nursery aged children. These factors will all affect the settled school roll and thus the total revenue costs of any new school.
- 9.5 The obvious advantages in this option are that sufficient primary capacity would be provided for the Western Gateway based on the anticipated housing developments and this would be provided at the earliest possible point.
- 9.6 A disadvantage of this option is that the current Dundee City Council capital plan currently has no provision for funding a project of this scale in the next 5 years without significant revision. Furthermore, there is no allowance in the revenue budget to cover any of the capital and revenue costs. Meeting this financial requirement will involve savings in other aspects of the council and/or Children and Families budget.

- 9.7 Another disadvantage is that a successful bid for LEIP funding cannot be guaranteed to support an existing project. This would of necessity mean that Dundee City Council would require to fund the bulk of the capital costs.

## **Option 2**

*Continue to use existing catchment and local primary provision to manage the expansion resulting from the Western Gateway and concurrently seek to secure funding through the Scottish Government LEIP to allow the construction of a new school. Continue to work with the Western Gateway Community on all issues relating to education.*

- 9.8 Table 5 Appendix 1 demonstrates that there continues to be available capacity across both catchment primary schools, Ardler Primary and St Fergus Primary and other primaries within the west of Dundee to accommodate young people from the Western Gateway for the foreseeable future. Currently, where required, Dundee City Council provide travel assistance to families whose children attend their catchment primary school. It is acknowledged that this catchment primary provision is not based in the immediate community of the Western Gateway. Although across the city similar situations exist for secondary education, denominational provision and very specific ASN provision, primary provision is almost exclusively community based.
- 9.9 Provision in Angus and Perth and Kinross does bring a greater range of options for families living in the Western Gateway.
- 9.10 As per para 9.6 no provision is included in the current capital plan however, the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) provided by the Scottish Government is a funding model which could support such a project based on up front Local Authority capital borrowing. Specifically, for areas such as the Western Gateway, successful submissions to the LEIP receive ongoing revenue support investment because of population growth within that area of the city. Annual funding support will be contingent upon the delivery of outlined outcomes, over a 25-year period.
- 9.11 Consistent with the Scottish Government's learning estate strategy, the investment programme is designed to deliver high quality, suitable, sustainable, low carbon, digitally enabled learning environments. Full funding contributions from the Scottish Government is dependent on achieving certain conditions and outcomes which align to these criteria.
- 9.12 If a successful bid to the LEIP was accepted, the contribution from Scottish Government plus the realised developer contributions could provide a new local school with limited impact on the capital plan and cover the majority of the capital costs. Any risk of shortfall will be influenced by the rate of house building and associated developer contributions.
- 9.13 Community involvement and benefits are key elements to the delivery principles of LEIP projects. Children and Families Service Officers have undertaken regular dialogue with the Western Gateway Community and have met on several occasions over the past year to discuss education related issues, including paper development, population statistics, transport related issues and placing requests.
- 9.14 Work has been undertaken by both Dundee City Council and the Western Gateway Community, including recent surveys, to contribute to the projections and information supplied within the tables provided in this paper.
- 9.15 At the moment, approximately two thirds of families residing within the Western Gateway choose to send their primary aged children to Angus or Perth and Kinross with one third attending Dundee Primary Schools. Table 5 Appendix 1 demonstrates significant capacity in Dundee to provide primary provision for the Western Gateway families both in their Dundee catchment schools as well as other schools in the west of the city. It would be necessary to continue collaboration with Angus, and Perth and Kinross Councils to identify any opportunities within existing primary estate until such time as a future school is constructed for the Western Gateway.

- 9.16 Until such time as a new school is built there will be increasing revenue costs for educating children of families residing in the Western Gateway and choose a Dundee school for their primary education. These interim changes are difficult to fully calculate as there are variable costs including transportation, teacher/support staff overheads and resources expenditure depending upon changes in specific primary school populations and the choice made by these families.
- 9.17 The timescales for the provision of a new school required in the Western Gateway would be subject to continued growth, as well as successful bidding for funding from the LEIP and the necessary identification of the additional revenue funding from council budgets. The anticipated period between formal consultation and completing of the necessary design, planning and build is estimated to be approximately 3.5 years. The timing of any build is critical as you would not wish to deliver a building which could spend a significant period of time running under capacity.
- 9.18 An advantage of this option is when a new primary school is required in the Western Gateway, then the majority of the capital costs of the project will be covered from external funding and developer contributions.
- 9.19 A further advantage results from the timescale as this period could allow a more definitive guide to the scale and size of any new school being achieved as well as providing extended time for the revenue costs of a new school to be planned in for longer term budget planning.
- 9.20 The disadvantage is the lack of immediate community primary provision availability which has travel implications for the local community. It should be noted though that Dundee City Council provides transport support for all pupils to attend their catchment schools. Children from the Western Gateway who have attended a number of local primary schools may move to different secondary schools and therefore not in their same friendship groups. Nursery capacity may also change as a result of the introduction of national policy changes.

### Option 3

*Consultation and construction of a phased approach primary school through DCC capital investment within the Western Gateway area.*

- 9.21 The initial building requires the greater part of the general facilities, full plant installation and infrastructure.
- 9.22 Longer phasing of the build costs and staged construction process would enable the council to spread overall cost over a greater period of time and respond in different ways to population changes during later staging of the school construction.
- 9.23 Timing of later phases of the build might not articulate directly with numbers of pupils transitioning to the school as the length of time required to take Option 1, 2 or 3 to completion is in the region of 3.5 years. During this time period, the requirement for classrooms may differ from that which might have been projected for the first phase. There are also general difficulties in determining how many children might desire a place in the initial building (see para 9.4).
- 9.24 A two phased option would be an overall costlier approach to constructing a school than the single phased approach suggested in Option 1 or Option 2 due to the integration of future elements. This would result in a less efficient building processes for phase 2 of the project and increased construction costs over a longer period.
- 9.25 As per Option 1 and 2, in Option 3 there will be a requirement for revenue savings to cover the ongoing additional annual costs of operating a new school. It should be noted that there is currently no allowance in the revenue budget to cover any of the capital and revenue costs discussed in the options and meeting this financial requirement will involve savings in other aspects of the council and/or Children and Families budget.

## **Alternative Options Considered in the Review**

- 9.26 Extensive consideration was given to the possibility of shared educational provision between Dundee City Council, Angus Council and Perth and Kinross Council and how this might provide support for the emerging Western Gateway. A considerable amount of work and collaboration was carried out over the last 3 years on proposals for a Tri-council 3-18 campus. Due to a variety of reasons this project was not taken forward. It is clear from the projections that Angus and Perth and Kinross Councils have more than sufficient primary capacity for their own families and indeed have surplus capacity in relation to onward population projections.
- 9.27 As regards to secondary capacity, Angus Council and Perth and Kinross Council have recently announced projects that will enhance their secondary estate, both of which successfully gained LEIP contribution. Given the current position, at this time the probability of a Tri or Bi -council school is a less likely prospect than when the informal consultation was undertaken during the spring of 2019.

## **10.0 CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 An appraisal of the three options above has been carried out which highlights that Option 2 is the most affordable and presents best value for money. (Appendix 4) This option allows, through successful bidding to the Scottish Government LEIP investment strategy, the capital costs of a new school to be met along with developers' contributions.
- 10.2 Final decisions on developers' contributions are not required until the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the agreement date. This provides sufficient time to monitor the ongoing developments and plan accordingly on successful receipt of LEIP funding. Option 2 also provides additional time for the council to plan and prepare necessary revenue savings to meet the costs of a new school, minimising significant capital investment.
- 10.3 Roll projections indicate that sufficient primary capacity exists in the current catchment primary schools. This is supplemented by significant provision in primary schools in the west of Dundee that are receiving placing requests from Western Gateway families as well as local neighbouring council primary schools.

## **11.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 This report has been subject to an assessment of any impact on equality and diversity, fairness and poverty, environment and corporate risk. There are no major issues.

## **12.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 12.1 None.

Paul Clancy  
Executive Director of Children and Families Service

Gordon Laidlaw  
Project Officer

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## Appendix 1:

Table 3: Projected number of Nursery and Primary aged pupils living within Western Gateway area.

Prior to 2015 there were 206 residential properties in the Western Gateway area, this combined with the 346 new build properties gives the baseline cumulative properties of 552.

Year built	New build properties	Cumulative properties	Estimated total # of Nursery (aged 3+) pupils	Estimated total # of Primary aged pupils
2020/21	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>552</b>	(Actual) 25	(Actual) 89
2021/22	79	631	31	117
2022/23	60	691	36	138
2023/24	70	761	42	163
2024/25	50	811	46	181
2025/26	75	886	52	207
2026/27	83	969	59	236
2027/28	75	1,044	65	262
2028/29	75	1,119	71	288
2029/30	80	1,199	77	316
2030/31	80	1,279	83	344

The total anticipated properties within the Western Gateway by August 2030 is expected to be 1,073 new builds and 206 pre-existing buildings giving a total of 1,279 cumulative properties.

Table 4: Number of children identified living in Western Gateway area, by Local Authority September 2020

Local Authority	School	Nursery	Primary	Secondary
<b>Angus</b>	Auchterhouse Primary	1	2	
	Birkhill Primary	2	11	
	Liff Primary	5	37	
	Tealing Primary		1	
	Monifieth High School			24
Subtotal	Angus	8	51	24
<b>Perth and Kinross</b>	Longforgan Primary		1	
	Invergowrie Primary	1	6	
Subtotal	Perth and Kinross	1	7	0
<b>Dundee City ELC Partner Provider</b>	Oranges and Lemons Tech Park	1		
	Red Squirrel Nursery	10		
	Teddy Bear Club Nursery	3		
<b>Dundee City</b>	Frances Wright Nursery School	1		
	Hill View Nursery	1		
	Ardler Primary School		0	
	Blackness Primary School		2	
	Craigowl Primary School		4	
	Downfield Primary School		1	
	Mill Of Mains Primary School		2	
	Our Lady's RC Primary School		2	
	St Andrew's RC Primary School		3	
	St Fergus' RC Primary School		2	
	St Joseph's RC Primary School		6	
	St Mary's RC Primary School		1	
	St Ninian's Primary School		2	
	Tayview Primary School		6	
	Baldragon Academy			7
	Craigie High School			1
Harris Academy			9	
St John's RC High School			7	
St Paul's RC Academy			3	
Subtotal	Dundee City	16	31	27
<b>Total September 2020</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>(Comparison Jan 2020)</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>51</b>

Table 5: Current and future surplus capacity for Western Gateway catchment primary schools, other Dundee schools where placing requests are being made by Western Gateway families and local neighbouring council schools.

Whilst the demand in primary places from Western Gateway will increase due to the expanding population, the available capacity within the local primary provision will also increase. Over the next 7 academic sessions, primary rolls will, on average, see a decline due to the peak in primary population being reached by session 22/23. This will help local primary schools cope with future potential increases in primary aged children within this area.

Local Authority	Primary School Capacity		Projected Roll '21/22	Available places	Projected Roll '27/28	Available places
Dundee City	*Ardler	267	127	140	117	150
* Catchment primary	*St Fergus RC	367	154	213	152	215
	St Joseph's RC	342	355	0	306	36
	Tayview	645	453	192	433	212
	Craigowl	434	404	30	408	26
	St Andrew's RC	434	374	60	370	64
Angus	Liff	118	118	10	91	27
	Birkhill	300	231	69	220	80
	Auchterhouse	67	31	41	19	48
Perth & Kinross	Invergowrie	283	165	118	155	128
	Longforgan	144	106	38	101	43

These projections take account of:

- Previous Census Figures
- Net Average Placing Requests including children from Western Gateway
- Average Deferral Numbers
- Children currently in their pre-school year currently attending an Angus, Dundee or PKC contracted Early Years Provider from Aug 2021.
- Primary School Capacity may take into account reserve places for families moving into the area therefore could be shown as less than planning capacity.

## Appendix 2

### Option 1 and 2 Annual Revenue costs for operating costs for a 2 Stream primary school

Staff costs	£1,590k
Property costs	£350k
Supplies and services (including catering)	£80k
Third party payments – Facilities service	<u>£40k</u>
TOTAL	<u>£2,060k</u>

### Option 3 Annual Revenue costs for operating an initial 1 Stream primary school

Staff costs	£1,330k
Property costs	£350k
Supplies and services (including catering)	£80k
Third party payments – Facilities service	<u>£40k</u>
TOTAL	<u>£1,800k</u>

Please note that the revenue costs for option 3 would eventually increase to the same level as option 1 and 2 as the school extended as population increases.



### Appendix 3 Method used to calculate the primary/nursery roll projections

In around 2015 City Development carried out an exercise looking at nursery children and school pupils living in:

- 16 completed brownfield developments consisting of 1,514 properties
- 5 completed greenfield developments consisting of 1,126 properties

This established that the number of children and young people per 100 residential properties was:

Table 6

	Brownfield	Greenfield
Nursery	4	10
Primary	27	37
Secondary	12	20

In a separate exercise, carried out around 2018, Children and Families Service looked at all nursery children and school pupils living in houses (detached, semi-detached or terraced) built since 2006.

This established that the number of children and young people per 100 houses was:

Table 7

	Houses
Nursery	8
Primary	35
Secondary	27

The above sets of figures give broad indications of the number of children and young people we can expect in future developments.

However, the exact number of pupils living in an area can never be accurately predicted and it is quite possible actual occupancy could even fall outside the ranges shown in Table 8.

Table 8

	Low estimate	High estimate	Used in modelling
Nursery	4	10	8
Primary	27	37	35
Secondary	12	27	27

The above figures are applied once to each development and are not 'aged on' each year. As an example, a development of 50 houses completed in 2021 would have 4 nursery, 18 primary and 14 secondary pupils (based on Table 7); five years later in 2026 we would still estimate the same numbers in these 50 houses. As pupils age and move up through the sectors they are assumed to be replaced at the same rate by new children, who were pre-nursery or not yet born in 2015. Families moving into and out of the development *following its completion* are assumed to have a net zero effect.



#### **Appendix 4 Option Appraisal.**

The net present value of the three options based on a 3.5% discount factor are as follows:

Option 1	£35.5m
Option 2	£28.3m
Option 3	£39.0m

