

Perth And Kinross Council

22 January 2024

LEARNING ESTATE

Report by Strategic Lead, Property Services and Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)

(Report No. 24/20)

1. PURPOSE

1.1 As requested at the meeting of Learning and Families Committee on 2 November 2022 ([Report No. 22/263](#)) and the meeting of Perth and Kinross Council on 1 March 2023 ([Report No. 23/73](#)), the purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work undertaken to review the Learning Estate.

1.2 The report considers the following:

- The feasibility of introducing Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provision in all rural primary schools currently without one;
- Perth and Kinross wide catchment analysis that seeks to utilise available capacity to ensure all current schools have a sustainable future roll; and
- Review of secondary learning estate in Perth City.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that Council:

- i. Agrees with the recommendation of no further action following the outcome of the feasibility of introducing Early Learning and Childcare provision in all rural primary schools currently without one as there are no solutions that would help to generate a sustainable school roll.
- ii. Agrees with the recommendation of no further action following the outcome of the work undertaken on catchment analysis that seeks to utilise available capacity in low occupancy primary schools as there are no solutions that would help to generate a sustainable school roll.
- iii. Instructs the Director, Strategy, People and Resources to commence community engagement to seek the views of stakeholders and communities regarding the vision and future of the secondary learning estate in Perth City.
- iv. Notes that a review is underway relating to the timing of a new primary school at Bertha Park.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)
- Section 6: Primary School Catchment Analysis
- Section 7: Secondary Learning Estate
- Appendices

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 The Learning Estate Strategy was agreed at Lifelong Learning Committee on 3 November 2021 ([Report No. 21/202](#)).

- It aligns with and complements the Council's approved Investment Blueprint and 30-year Investment Plan.
- It identified actions that are being taken forward through the Learning Estate Management Plan which partners the strategy.

4.2 As requested at the meeting of Perth and Kinross Council on 1 March 2023 ([Report No. 23/73](#)), this review will now be incorporated into the work on developing the Council's Corporate Asset Management Framework. This paper is presented as an earlier agenda item at Committee today.

4.3 It is essential in moving forward to complement the Corporate Asset Management Framework. Appendix 1 shows how the Learning Estate Strategy currently sits within the wider corporate estate, this will be reviewed following adoption of the Council's operating model and proposed Corporate Asset Management Framework.

4.4 The review in this part of the report considers the following:

- The feasibility of introducing Early Learning and Childcare provision in all rural primary schools currently without one;
- 'A Perth & Kinross wide catchment analysis that considers the projected population expansion as a consequence of current and projected new housebuilding and seeks to utilise available capacity to ensure all current schools have a sustainable future roll'; and
- A review of secondary learning estate in Perth City.

5. EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE (ELC)

5.1 This section considers the feasibility of introducing Early Learning and Childcare in all rural primary schools currently without one.

ELC Background Information

5.2 There are 11 ELC communities within Perth and Kinross. Each of these communities has access to a mix of attendance options at local authority, funded provider setting and childminders offering flexibility of choice within the private, voluntary and independent sector. The offering is detailed on the Perth and Kinross Council website link below:

<https://www.pkc.gov.uk/article/22938/Nursery-locality-and-attendance-patterns>

5.3 Funded provider settings include private nurseries, playgroups, nursery classes and childminders within the private, voluntary and independent sectors.

5.4 The ELC provision within Perth and Kinross consists of:

- 49 local authority nursery settings operating within our primary schools.
- 46 funded provider settings offering funded ELC.
- There are 19 rural primary schools that do not have nursery provision onsite.

5.5 Major housebuilding is underway within the catchment area of Ruthvenfield Primary School and Pitcairn Primary School. A new primary school within this area is planned which will include nursery provision. It is considered that the impact of housebuilding, as identified in the Local Development Plan, on the remaining rural primary schools identified can be accommodated.

5.6 Local Authorities have a statutory duty to consult every two years on the provision of ELC to inform the planning and delivery of services. Additional engagement was undertaken in 2022 to further understand the uptake of ELC models and also to understand overall parent satisfaction with the expansion to ELC within Perth and Kinross. This additional consultation indicated that most parents are satisfied with the offer within Perth and Kinross. More than 90% of families received their first choice of model in phase one, with the offer of an alternative accepted by most of those who did not receive their first choice.

5.7 The consultation reports are available from the links below:

[Early learning and childcare consultation 2021 - Perth & Kinross Council Citizen Space - Citizen Space \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)

[1140 hours - Early Learning & Childcare Consultation - Perth & Kinross Council Citizen Space - Citizen Space \(pkc.gov.uk\).](#)

5.8 The latest consultation is due to be undertaken by March with results published later in 2024. This data is used to support further planning and improvement in this area.

- 5.9 As part of the 1140 hours programme a strategy was developed for the delivery of nursery education ([Report No. 21/134](#)). The Council has recently invested £17.5m as part of 1140 hours expansion programme and as a result Perth and Kinross Council have planned for sufficient Early Learning and Childcare places to meet their statutory duty to provide 1140 hours of ELC for all 3 and 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds. Each year when applications for places in Local Authority ELC settings close in April, the Early Years team work to ensure that children gain one of their 3 choices. This is achieved across all ELC communities by reviewing capacities and staffing allocations annually in readiness for the new session starting in August.
- 5.10 There is currently no funding allocated to undertake ELC expansion related works in the 19 rural primary schools.
- 5.11 There is currently no requirement placed on Local Authorities to provide other forms of childcare. PKC await further guidance on the Scottish Government's Programme for Government with reference to the expansion of ELC for 2 year olds and provision for 1 year olds, along with the expansion of school aged childcare and Wraparound Care.

Rural Schools without nursery provision on site

- 5.12 An analysis has been carried out on each of the rural schools that do not have nursery provision on site. This provided information in terms of ELC provision within the ELC community. Details of the analysis is provided in Appendix 2. The analysis considered ELC provision in the area and community and whether there was a current requirement for additional nursery places. When considering this, the Council need to be mindful of the impact on business sustainability of funded providers.
- 5.13 The outcome of the analysis identified:
- There is sufficient capacity and sufficient partner providers in the ELC nursery communities identified currently.
 - There is no demand led need for additional nursery provision in the 19 rural primary schools.
- 5.14 Provision of Early Learning and Childcare across Perth and Kinross is reviewed annually as part of the ELC application process and staffing exercises to ensure there is sufficient capacity within each ELC community for all eligible children.

Recommendation to Council

- 5.15 Based on the above factors no further action following the outcome of the feasibility of introducing Early Learning and Childcare provision in all rural primary schools currently without one as there are no solutions that would help to generate a sustainable school roll.

5.16 We will continually review capacity and vary our planning if, and when needed.

6. PRIMARY SCHOOL CATCHMENT ANALYSIS

6.1 This section considers the Perth and Kinross wide catchment analysis that seeks to utilise available primary capacity to ensure all schools have a sustainable future roll.

6.2 Based on most recent approved Census, 19 primary schools have an occupancy of under 60% based on the planning capacity of the school.

6.3 The 19 primary schools are:

- Abernethy Primary
- Abernyte Primary
- Alyth Primary
- Breadalbane Academy (Primary)
- Collace Primary
- Coupar Angus Primary
- Errol Primary
- Glendelvine Primary
- Glenlyon Primary
- Guildtown Primary
- Invergowrie Primary
- Kenmore Primary
- Kinloch Rannoch Primary
- Logiealmond Primary
- Logierait Primary
- Meigle Primary
- Royal School of Dunkeld
- St. Ninian's Episcopal Primary
- Stanley Primary

6.4 See Appendix 3 for further details on the occupancy levels.

School Catchment – Background

6.5 Education Authorities have a statutory duty in terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their area. This duty applies in respect of both the current school population and future pattern of demand.

6.6 All primary and secondary schools have agreed catchment areas. Any proposed changes to catchments areas are required to be considered under the process of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

6.7 Generally, catchment areas are not changed unless there is a specific requirement to do so, such as new additional schools where significant housebuilding is planned or school closures.

- 6.8 It should be noted any change in school catchment should be evidence based and should be underpinned by an educational benefits statement.
- 6.9 Proposed housebuilding within Perth and Kinross is detailed in the Local Development Plan (LDP) and collaborative work across the Council is undertaken to continually monitor the effects of housebuilding. The larger density of housing developments tends to be urban.
- 6.10 Approx 93% of current primary pupils live within the statutory walking distance of their catchment school.

Work Undertaken

- 6.11 An exercise has been undertaken looking at each of the 19 schools identified. Examples of the considerations are:
- Transport – Is there a requirement to transport children who would previously have been within statutory walking distance of their catchment school?
 - School rolls – Is there a positive or negative impact on the school rolls of identified neighbouring schools?
 - Neighbouring schools – Are there nearby neighbouring schools that could reasonably be considered?
 - Catchment boundaries – would pupils need to cross another school catchment area?
- 6.12 From the work undertaken to date:
- The analysis of the 19 schools using the above considerations showed that there were no identified solutions involving catchment change that could improve the situation without a level of detriment. This is due to several factors such as no neighbouring schools with roll pressures, lack of actual pupil numbers living in the school catchments and travel distances to more populated areas.
 - When actual utilisation of classroom space is analysed alongside planning capacity, in some schools there is less available space than initially perceived i.e., a 2-classroom school has an occupancy level of 55% but is using both classrooms due to staffing/pupil ratios.
- 6.13 Major housebuilding has been ongoing within the catchment area of Ruthvenfield Primary School and Pitcairn Primary School. A new primary school within this area is planned which will include nursery provision.
- 6.14 On 2 November 2022, Learning and Families Committee approved the catchment for a new primary school at Bertha Park, with a target completion date of August 2026 for it. ([Report No. 22/265](#)).

- 6.15 We continue to analyse house building data in the catchment area detailing the pupil product numbers generated from the new housing at Bertha Park. Given recent economic slowdown in house building and the localised pupil numbers to date, a review of the timescales associated with the need for a new primary school in this area is being undertaken. The outcomes from that will be reported to the Finance & Resources Committee.

Recommendations to Council

- 6.16 Based on the work undertaken, no further action is recommended following the outcome of the work undertaken on catchment analysis, that seeks to utilise available capacity in low occupancy primary schools as there are no solutions that would help to generate a sustainable school roll.
- 6.17 Notes that a review is underway relating to the timing of a new primary school at Bertha Park.

7. SECONDARY LEARNING ESTATE

- 7.1 This section considers the review of the secondary Learning Estate in Perth City following instruction at the meeting of full Council March 1 2023.

Key Drivers

- 7.2 The Learning Estate Management Plan (LEMP) details that the Council will undertake a review of the secondary Learning Estate in Perth City.
- 7.3 The LEMP noted the occupancy in the Perth City secondary learning estate needs rebalanced after the opening of Bertha Park High School.
- 7.4 Consideration also needs to be given to the investment required within the secondary learning estate in Perth City. The current position is as follows:

School	Capacity	Roll	Condition	Suitability	Current Approved Investment (2023/2028)
Bertha Park High School	1100	645	A	A	n/a
Perth Academy	1218	1011	B	C	£8.1m
Perth Grammar School	1182	728	B	C	£4.9m
Perth High School	1546	1487	B	C	£80.2m
St John's RC Academy	838	641	B	A	n/a
Total	5884	4512	-	-	£93.2m

Review Considerations

- 7.5 The review will consider how best to:
- Ensure the secondary learning estate in Perth City is well aligned with service need and corporate estate priorities.
 - Improve operational efficiency of school/community facilities.
 - Consider compliance with statutory carbon emission reduction targets.
 - Consider future requirement for investment in multiple buildings.
- 7.6 It should be noted that St. John's RC Academy is out-with the scope of the review due to its denominational status.

Key Influences

- 7.7 The following are factors that will influence the review process:
- LDP3
 - Road networks via the new CTRL
 - One public estate and leisure assets review
 - ASN provision
 - Transport
 - Transition arrangements

Community Engagement

- 7.8 Undertaking informal engagement, or consultation, before a proposal is fully developed is recommended in the Statutory Guidance on the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The process can assist communities to understand and help shape proposals that affect them. The feedback provided to Council can provide valuable information to inform further consideration of proposals.
- 7.9 It is therefore proposed that the views of key stakeholders are sought in considering the future of the secondary learning estate in Perth City in the longer term. These stakeholders will include pupils, parents, staff, communities and other partners as appropriate. Should council permission be granted for the review a strategic working group will be formed to set out the engagement approach.

Next Steps

- 7.10 The following work would require to be undertaken:
- Analysis of roll projections.
 - Consider secondary catchments.
 - What are the viable options that could be explored further?
 - Undertake engagement with stakeholders which will include pupils, parents, staff, communities and other partners as appropriate.

Recommendation

- 7.11 It is recommended to commence a community engagement exercise with all relevant stakeholders regarding the vision and future of the secondary learning estate in Perth City.

Authors

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Stephen Crawford	Strategic Lead, Property Services	scrawford@pkc.gov.uk
Brian Reid	Service Manager, Resource Management	breid@pkc.gov.uk

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Clare Mailer	Director, Strategy, People & Resources	13 December 2023

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Learning Estate Strategy Flowchart.

Appendix 2 – High Level Analysis – Rural Primary Schools that do not have nursery provision on site.

Appendix 3 – Primary Schools – Under 60% Occupancy.

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes/None
Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement	None
Corporate Plan	None
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	Yes
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 N/A.

Corporate Plan

1.2 N/A.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 N/A.

Workforce

2.2 N/A.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 There are no direct asset management implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 The proposals contained within this report have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and has been assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
- 3.4 The proposals contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Sustainability

- 3.5 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.
- 3.6 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Legal and Governance

- 3.7 The Strategic Lead, Legal and Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Executive Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

5. Communication

5.1 N/A.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report: