

Appendix D

**Public Consultation Meeting  
Closure of Longhaven School  
Microsoft Teams  
25 January 2022 11.00am**

**Aberdeenshire Council Officers present:** Anne-Marie Davies Macleod (Interim Head of Service), Maxine Booth (Quality Improvement Manager), Rachael Goldring (Learning Estates Team Leader), Anna Zadka-Labus (Learning Estates Officer, minutes), Kelly Tennant (Learning Estates Officer), Amanda Roe (Buchan Area Manager), Katie Boyle (Head Teacher, Boddam School)

**Elected Members present:** Cllr Gillian Owen (Chair), Cllr Stephen Calder, Cllr Stephen Smith, Cllr Alan Fakley

**HMI Inspectors present:** Barbara Daly, Victoria Morgan, David McKellar

One member of the public attended the meeting

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Cllr Owen introduced herself and welcomed everyone to the meeting. She introduced the Aberdeenshire Council Officers and Elected Members present and laid out the format of the meeting.

In consultation with the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland which includes representation of every authority within Scotland along with our own Risk Assessment a decision was made to hold both public meetings online to remove the risk element to both members of the public and officers of the Council.

If at any point anyone having difficulty hearing or having technical difficulties preventing them from participating in the meeting, should contact the Learning Estate Team to arrange an individual appointment.

Cllr Owen remained that the meeting will be recorded for minute purposes and the minutes will be made public as part of the consultation.

**2. Consultation Overview**

Anne-Marie Davies Macleod gave an overview of the consultation proposal.

In October 2018 the Director of Education & Children's Services made a decision to mothball Longhaven school. As no pupils have enrolled at Longhaven School since the end of the 2017/18 school session, either in zone or through out of zone placing requests, it was necessary for the school to remain mothballed.

Officers have completed options appraisal for the future of the school. The Longhaven community have been given the opportunity to present alternatives to closure and to present their views for the authority to consider. Those have been thoroughly analysed. The majority of potential uses identified by the community would require the building to be discontinued as a primary school, which requires a statutory consultation under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

Officers took into account many factors when carrying out the options appraisal and preparing this proposal. A number of alternatives and 8 options in total have been taken into consideration.

This consultation proposes to discontinue education at Longhaven School and re-assigning its catchment area to either Boddam School or Port Erroll School or a combination of the two. This proposal would apply to the primary school stages (P1-P7) of education in Longhaven. The proposed changes, if approved, will take place immediately after the conclusion of the statutory process relating to school closures.

Cllr Owen handed over to Maxine Booth who presented a PowerPoint Presentation and outlined the identified options:

Maxine Booth ensured that there is no negative impact on any of the children living within the catchment of Longhaven School.

Maxine Booth outlined the proposal consisting of three options for stakeholders to consider. Option 1 – merging Longhaven School with Boddam School. All pupils residing within these areas would be zoned to Boddam School.

Option 2 – merge Longhaven School with Port Erroll School, where the Longhaven and Port Erroll areas would be within the Port Erroll catchment.

Option 3 – creating a dual zone between Boddam School and Port Erroll School. Families from the current Longhaven School catchment would be able to choose to attend either Boddam School or Port Erroll School. Siblings of children that have already made the decision will be able to go to the same school as their older siblings. No child will need to move their school. This proposal will affect new people coming into the area.

Transport would be provided to any pupil who lives over two miles from their school.

### **3. Questions from the floor**

Cllr Owen welcomed questions from the floor and asked participants to state their name and interest in the meeting to aid the minute taking process. Attendees were reminded to use 'Raise Hand' and 'Unmute' buttons when asking their questions.

**Cllr Smith** agreed with the proposal given the circumstances the school finds itself. The Council should proceed with the process as quickly as possible. There is a strong view amongst the community that this is the way forward, to move with the processes so that the school gets a new life as a productive building, public or private. Cllr Smith made a comment about the options. This comment has already been submitted formally as part of the consultation and at the Buchan Area Committee meeting.

Some children within the Longhaven zone already attend Longside, Boddam and Port Erroll, but Longside is not one of the options. The far north-west part of the Longhaven zone is more inclined towards Longside, both by distance and by the length of the unclassified roads that need to be travelled to reach any of the alternative schools. For safety considerations and convenience, consideration should be given to either splitting the Longhaven catchment between Port Erroll, Bottom and Longside, or creating a triple zone between the three schools, allowing parents to choose one of them.

Cllr Smith was aware that bringing Longside into the equation would bring implications as Longside is part of Mintlaw Cluster and a proper consultation would be required, but understanding was that it should be a fairly easy thing to overcome.

**Rachael Goldring** answered that it is certainly an option which can be considered and that Longside was one of the options that was initially in the proposal; however, it was discounted. If there is an interest in that then this option can certainly be considered as part of this consultation process.

As there was no questions or comments **Cllr Owen** identified the next steps of the process. The consultation period will run until 24 February and any comments can be submitted in writing by email to [learningestates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:learningestates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or by post to Learning Estates, Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie AB51 3WA.

Cllr Owen encouraged consultees to take part in the consultation and give their opinions via the online survey. The link to this questionnaire is on the Education consultation page on the Aberdeenshire Council website or in the comments bar.

Pupils will be involved in discussions and head teachers will be asked to work with pupils to gain their views on the proposal.

Once the consultation period is over, all written submissions, minutes of this meeting and pupil discussions will be provided to Education Scotland for their consideration. Education Scotland will produce a report on the consultation. A final report on the consultation will be presented at Buchan Area Committee, Education & Children's Services Committee and Full Council for a decision.

Cllr Owen encouraged questions or comments from the participants.

No comments were made.

#### **4. Close**

Cllr Owen thanked everyone for attending and emphasised that it is important that the Council gain feedback regarding this meeting. Anyone unable to participate fully in this online forum are welcome to get in touch with the Learning Estate Team and an alternative meeting with individuals will be provided. Any meetings will be held before the end of this consultation on 24 February 2022.

Cllr Owen closed the meeting.