

2009.M.L.D.G.

THE FIFE COUNCIL – MADRAS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP

Monday, 27th October 2009

6.00pm-8.00pm

PRESENT: Ian Jones, Rector, Madras College, Adam Smallwood, Teaching Staff Representative, Andy Primmer Madras College Parent Council, Arlene Herzog , Lawhead Primary School Parent Council, Diane McGhie Wormit Primary School Parent Council, Dr Jeremy Howard, University of St Andrews, Sally Walker, Tayport Community Council, Andy Herd , head of Community Use, Madras College, Morag Wilson, Non-Teaching Staff Representative, Emily Foster , Pupil Representative, Rebecca Brown, Canongate Parent Council, P Uprichard and Ian Goudie, St Andrews Community Council

ATTENDING: Councillor Tim Brett, Councillor Ron Caird, Councillor Elizabeth Riches, Councillor William Sangster, Councillor Robin Waterston, Colin McCredie, Service Manager, Property Services, Alan Paul, Corporate Asset Manager

APOLOGIES: Jane Pettegree, Canongate Primary School Parent Council, Zoe Smith, Chair of Madras Parent Council, John McLaughlin, Education Officer, Jason Judson, Client Agent, Education, Councillor Frances Melville, Councillor Mike Scott-Hayward,
FOR ABSENCE: Bruce Kennedy, Lead Officer Property Services, John Lilley, Project Manager, Property Services

22. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Ian Jones welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies.

23. MINUTES OF MEETING OF 15th SEPTEMBER 2009

The Group considered the minute of the Madras Local Development Group held on 15th September 2009.

A Hertzog enquired as to what sites 19 (a) was referring to. A Paul advised that one site was on the lower level at St Andrews West and the other was the higher level near Sports Facilities.

The Group asked that the minute be amended as follows:

(i) Paragraph 19 ‘The Parent Council..... Add “A Smallwood, Teaching staff Representative advises that the consensus of opinion with in the Teaching Staff of Madras was also that a new build was the preferred option”.

Briefing Note: Alan Paul, John McLaughlin and I Jones- to organise a meeting with all Cluster Primary Schools Parent Councils. Zoe Smith is the new Chair of Madras Parent Council.

I Jones issued to the Group a Report prepared by John McLaughlin and Jason Judson - ‘Building Fife’s Future – Madras College Progress Update’.

24. PROGRESS UPDATE AND NEXT STEPS – Alan Paul

Two options being considered are renewal of Kilrymont Road or new build at University.

More work on the new build option is needed before it is brought to the Education Children Services Committee in April.

An update on progress will be provided for the Committee meeting in November.

Three work streams are under way:

1. High level discussions are taking place between Fife Council and the University. This is an exceptional opportunity for Fife Council and University to work together and an opportunity to provide a unique learning base for Madras College. There is not another school that sits in the heart of a University Campus. More discussion is required – but there is broad acceptance which Fife Council and University will have to explore in more depth.

2. Official led discussions to examine practical options – St Andrews West – 3 sites

- Site in North Haugh – immediately next to Melville Hall and A91
- Site field rear of Andrew Melville Halls - Langlands
- Site close to existing University Sports Centre – Langlands ‘B’ site

Attributes of these sites, constraints, practical issues, utilities and education benefits were all considered. The key is the school - conclusion at officer level that there are significant advantages of Langlands ‘B’ site.

Co-invest with University:

Benefits: Immediate access to University facilities

Immediate access to existing playing fields

Site lies closer to Campus than other sites – opportunity educational benefits –

Science and teaching benefits

Work will take place over next couple of months – this will be the basis of the status quo, K/Rd option and 3rd option new build located at Langlands.

3. Ground Investigation work will be undertaken

In response to a question regarding transportation on the new site – it was explained that a number of issues had to be addressed – recognising the catchment area of the school – most pupils bussed – logic made sense to capture the traffic at edge of town.

Envisage bus and car traffic on North Haugh site close to the Andrew Melville Halls with service road to site up escarpment.

Ensure solution works for all users of school able/less able bodies.

Aspects to consider are pupils currently residing within St Andrews, the need to map out pathways that exist – good structure in place for location of new school - pupils that live close to Kilrymont, how will they get to school – cycle paths, pedestrian and traffic.

Cllr Caird raised the following 2 points:

Proposed extension to town – visual impact – what would be the height anticipated for the new school (3 storeys) that this would not predominate the skyline or impact on view that is currently enjoyed from Strathkinness High Road.

Has site focused on significant amount of trees screening exists envisage that building will particularly be visible? Major building needs to have a presence – not wish to hide – need to ensure building reflects both organisations.

A Paul said that the site would sit on top of where the astro turf is at present. He mentioned that strong integration with school/university/community. He now had a very good idea of what the school required, beginning of understanding of what the university required – bring together to ensure the best blend.

Cllr Brett asked if investigations had been done on the site.

A Paul answered that no detailed studies had been carried up but desk top studies did not envisage problems – local history of site no problems – crop field stable environment.

The point was raised that the new build would be at a disadvantage at the Committee meeting in November as all studies had not been completed.

A Paul advised that they were not proposing to present a business case for Kilrymont road, but would work in detail with University.

Cllr Riches explained that a lot of work had to be done. It would be difficult to have a business case done by the end of March. Any proposals had to go to the University Court, Council proposals to Fife Council Children Services. She said this was a unique opportunity. We have to be prepared to be very patient. Made point very clearly that any proposal must tie in with the University Court Calendar.

A Paul described discussions with University and key principles:

Steering group board discussed-

On going management arrangements

Single building sensible to run as one

Academic benefits

Taking relations to next level both parties provide services to community

What form of agreement would University take – Memorandum of Undertaking Key principles will be addressed in the very near future.

A Primmer - Disappointment at the time scale – delay is damaging to current school.

Cllr Riches – said that we are proposing to clarify what both parties want to achieve and that we are in-powered to deliver that a single team report to both parties.

Needed to have detailed discussions with University- have had discussions and very positive

End point of process still 2013.

A Paul August 2013 achievable.

A Herd said that he had been involved in the meetings with the university and that design to provide a school that is right size and can deliver what we require –significant commitment emerged through discussions with the University.

J Howard said that this was a great opportunity for University – complicated, as this is unprecedented – nothing else like it in the country- will take time - location close to science and research base – ideas which can be developed and brought on board in future.

Concerns were raised that these educational opportunities arising from the joint venture with the University should not just be for the brightest pupils. Alternative learning centre could be something to develop.

D McGhie said that the great concern from the last meeting is the length of time everything is taking and that we really had not moved on since the last meeting.

Cllr Waterston explained that we had to look at every site as an investment.

There is a need to keep K/Rd refurbishment option as. Langlands B could encounter difficulties.

Cllr Caird stated that the refurbishment option the pool would be retained. A pool on Langlands A & B may be considered in a future phase linked to the future of East Sands Leisure Pool.

C McCredie said that the University had pointed out the lack of an on site pool- figures negatively in students minds.

Distribution road – school would be built in advance of housing and other buildings. FC would have to pay in advance –this was included in the budget but would be expensive.

A Paul – Apply for Outline Planning – consultation process 12 weeks – all parties and all views known.

25. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and arranged the next meeting for Tuesday 26th January 2010.