

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

19 NOVEMBER 2015

Report by Directors of Education and Environment

UPDATE ON CART MILL FAMILY CENTRE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Education Committee on the current position regarding Cart Mill Family Centre and its proposed permanent site.

RECOMMENDATION

2. The Education Committee is asked to note the terms of this report.

BACKGROUND

3. The Education Committee previously considered reports in relation to prefive provision to serve the areas of Busby, Clarkston and Eaglesham in April and August 2014.

4. At its meeting held on 28 August 2014, the Education Committee approved the proposal to establish a Family Centre with a capacity of 90:90 places for 3 and 4 year olds and 20:20 places for 2 year olds.

5. At a meeting held on 10 June 2015, the Planning Applications Committee considered a report in relation to the proposed Family Centre at a location in Newford Grove, Clarkston. This application was recommended for approval by the Director of Environment.

6. However, the Planning Applications Committee refused to grant planning permission. The reasons for refusal were noted as being "Road safety grounds, the lack of an Ecology Report, alleged pre-determination of planning application and misled over the land acquisition".

7. At its meeting held on 11 June 2015, the Education Committee agreed the name of the Cart Mill Family Centre.

REPORT

8. Following the decision of the Planning Applications Committee, Council Officers reviewed the options available including the possibility of appealing the decision. In the circumstances it was decided to commission additional studies to inform the future strategy for the delivery of a permanent site for Cart Mill Family Centre.

9. Officers from within the Environment Department subsequently undertook a review of an alternative design/access put forward by local residents, and commissioned both an ecology report for the site (although there was no requirement to do so) and an addendum to the transport assessment previously carried out. Specifically, the external transport consultants were asked to carry out an appraisal of the original and the alternative proposed access options put forward by the residents. These studies are all now complete. Copies of the reports are available in the Members Lounge.

10. The ecology report found no significant ecology issues on site which would prevent either design from progressing.

11. The additional work carried out by the independent transport consultants found that the original access solution scored **substantially** better than the alternative design put forward by residents. This was mainly due to the key Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance criteria of risk and uncertainty associated with the alternative design. These risks include the need to commission flood studies, the design and scale of the culvert/bridge required, earthworks necessary, internal access road and flooding mitigation. All these areas of risk and uncertainty would need to be fully understood and carry both cost/programme impact and uncertainty regarding the level of mitigation and remedial measures ultimately required. These would only be able to be fully understood and costed following further extensive detailed design work and discussion with statutory consultees, in particular SEPA.

12. Further design work carried out by Property and Technical Services on the alternative proposal has established that there would be significant additional costs (in the region of £400,000 and possibly substantially more) on top of an estimated total original cost of £1.556m. Assuming the proposal was actually feasible (see above) there would be the additional costs associated with the provision of a bridge, flood prevention works, clearance of shrubs and trees, professional fees and land acquisition.

13. Taking all this into account, it has been concluded by Council Officers that the original design/access is the preferred one for the new Cart Mill Family Centre. Accordingly, a Planning Application has now been re-submitted. It is hoped that this new application will be able to be determined over the coming weeks. If approved, it will be possible for the new Family Centre to be constructed and open for August 2016.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

14. In view of the decision taken by the Planning Applications Committee to refuse the application, there have been project delays which will have some cost implications as a consequence of construction inflation. In addition, there are additional costs associated with the continuation of the temporary nursery provision at Williamwood. Further, there were costs associated with the Ecology report and Transport Appraisal Addendum which were necessary in view of the reasons given for refusal of the Planning Application. Moreover, the Council at its meeting on 28th October 2015 noted the sharp increase in construction inflation and the potential impact on the Capital Plan.

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

15. This report has been prepared by officers within Property and Technical Services in consultation with officers in Education.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

16. In the event of the proposal not being approved by December 2016, there will be further costs and project delays. Any further delay to the project would mean that the Cart Mill Family Centre would not be able to open for the new school year in August 2016.

CONCLUSION

17. Having regard to the options available, Officers have concluded that the original design and access are the preferred option for the proposed Cart Mill Family Centre. The Ecology report found no significant ecology issues and the Transport Addendum included an appraisal which favoured the original access when this was assessed against the access which had been proposed by residents.

RECOMMENDATION

18. The Education Committee is asked to note the terms of this report.

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Director of Environment

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19 November 2015

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Key Words

Cart Mill Family Centre, Planning, Application