

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 1 JUNE 2011

LITTLEMILL PRIMARY SCHOOL CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE AND DECANT ARRANGEMENTS

Joint Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services and Finance and Corporate Support

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to advise cabinet on the current project to upgrade Littlemill Primary School and to outline the decant arrangement for pupils during the construction phase of the project.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** Following the Better Schools Better Learning Consultation exercise, Cabinet of 19 March 2008 agreed to retain Littlemill Primary and Nursery Class as a separate establishment in its current accommodation.
- 2.2** As part of the 10 year capital programme agreed on 11 February 2009 a provisional sum of £1.32m was allocated for the refurbishment.
- 2.3** On 17 June 2009 a further report was presented detailing an excambion agreement in relation to the dilapidated school house and reallocation of ground within the school site. This arrangement allowed the development of plans for the school which mitigated initial concerns regarding health and safety for the children in the playground and impact on the adjacent school building.

3. PROGRESS

- 3.1** Progress has been reported through the period Finance and Service Strategy reports during 2010/11.
- 3.2** Work to renew the roof and down water goods to the main building and gym block were completed during the summer of 2010.
- 3.3** Finalised designs have been completed with the tender process to appoint a contractor programmed for August 2011. The final internal layouts and the external areas to include a playground, eco garden area and car park have been agreed by Asset Improvement Services in consultation with the representatives of the school, parents and Educational department representatives.
- 3.4** With the anticipated construction start date being September 2011 arrangements are therefore being progressed to accommodate the school in an alternative Education Establishment for the duration of the build from August 2011 to August 2012.

4. EDUCATION PROVISION AT LITTLEMILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

- 4.1** For academic session 2010/11. Littlemill Primary and Nursery are operating a 2 class structure comprising of a Primary 1,2,3,4 class and a Primary 5,6,7 class with a total of 27 children. In addition, projected intake for the nursery class provision is 9 children in 2011.
- 4.2** A review of available accommodation has been undertaken and the following outlines the preferred decant solution having taken into account a range of factors
- Availability of sufficient space
 - Opportunity to maintain school as an single entity
 - Distance from Littlemill Primary
 - Association with existing learning community
 - Educational impact and additional facilities
 - Additional costs for refurbishment and opportunity for betterment of receiving school
 - Planned capital work on potential receiving schools
- 4.3** This review of educational establishment has confirmed that the preferred decant location is Drongan Primary School and Drongan Nursery School. The review also considered Patna Primary, St Xavier's Primary, Dalrymple Primary, Dalmellington Primary and Bellsbank Primary.
- 4.4** St Xavier's Primary, Dalmellington Primary and Dalrymple Primary were ruled out initially as there is currently not sufficient capacity in the building to accommodate Littlemill Primary as a single unit within the school. St Xavier's also has no nursery provision or accommodation.
- 4.5** Patna Primary currently would offer the capacity to accommodate Littlemill, there is nursery provision and they would retain the link to the learning partnership. However due to the planned development of the new school building at Patna due to start construction in line with the development work at Littlemill this would add unnecessary complexity to the planning and logistical considerations and following consultation with the Patna Project Board it is also planned that the additional capacity in the school will be required to decant the Community Facilities and Library during the construction at Patna. It was therefore proposed that Patna be ruled out.
- 4.6** The remaining options were therefore Bellsbank Primary and Drongan Primary. Both locations offer available capacity, existing nursery provision and would require minor refurbishment to accommodate Littlemill. Bellsbank Primary is within the Doon learning partnership although is a significant 10 miles from Littlemill Primary School. Drongan Primary although not within the Doon learning partnership is only 2.3 miles from Littlemill Primary school.
- 4.7** It is therefore proposed to decant Littlemill Primary school to Drongan Primary school, as there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the school and retain the existing class structure, with ancillary spaces for the school staff. The distance from Littlemill to Drongan will minimise the journey time for children relative to the alternative and free transport will be provided.

- 4.8** Although Drongan is not within the Doon Learning Partnership, the current arrangements for Littlemill would be retained and therefore activity with other schools and links to Doon Academy would remain. Day to day activities and special events would allow opportunities to integrate with Drongan Primary as currently happens with activities such as Christmas shows.

5. ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1** The preferred option in principle is always to decant to an existing Educational Establishment where possible as another school offers accommodation and facilities that are designed for Educational purposes and therefore requires limited adaptations. Options to retain the Littlemill Primary in temporary accommodation within Rankinston were however considered, although discounted.
- 5.2** The only property within Rankinston that could be considered was the Community Centre, although the current accommodation of a main hall, computer suite and meeting room would require temporary modification and would be restricted with no assembly area, dining area, gym or outside play areas, if the main hall was utilised for class accommodation. Adaptations to toilets would also be required for the period of the decant and subsequently be reverted to current arrangements resulting in no long-term benefit. There is also currently activity in the centre 4 mornings and 2 afternoons per week.
- 5.2** Temporary Accommodation was also considered however again the area is limited for a location that would accommodate the requirements of the school sufficiently and again the expenditure for temporary accommodation could be in excess of £400,000 with no long-term benefit.

5. DECANT IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1** With the site anticipated to be handed over to the successful tenderer in September 2011 and initial site investigations required prior to this date it would be the expectation that the transition of the decant to Drongan Primary School and Nursery School would take place for the start of the 2011/2012 academic session in August. This would also ensure children did not have additional disruption within a few weeks of starting the term. It would be anticipated that the construction phase would take less than a full calendar year allowing the school to return to Littlemill no later than August 2012.
- 5.2** During the summer term of 2011 a number of actions will require to be planned and undertaken in preparation for the decant.
- 5.3** School staff are currently indentifying resources required to be transferred for the continuation of education provision during the decant, with other equipment and materials being stored for future return.
- 5.4** Parent and pupil visits will be arranged for all Littlemill Primary and Nursery children to see the location to be used within Drongan Primary and Nursery schools, with appropriate practical information being available.
- 5.5** Discussions will require to take place with the Head Teachers and staff of Littlemill Primary, Drongan Primary and Drongan Nursery to agree and reorganise the

current use of the existing space at Drongan to free the required space for Littlemill Primary.

5.6 To facilitate the effective transfer and set up of the new arrangement it is anticipated that an exceptional closure days for Thursday 30 June and Wednesday 17 August 2011 at Littlemill Primary will be requested to allow staff to ensure all classrooms and resources are appropriate prior to the children attending.

5.7 Communication to Parent Council's of both schools will be maintained during the implementation and operation of the decant.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Allocation of costs associated with the decant will be part of the Capital project however, anticipated additional costs for 1 years would be

Transport	£ 29,450
Staffing	£ nil
Property	£ 5,000

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Nil

9. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Nil

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) note the progress to date of the project;
- (ii) endorse the decant proposals for the continued education of the Littlemill pupils;
- (iii) otherwise, note the contents of this report.

Graham Short
Executive Director
Educational and Social Service

Alex McPhee
Executive Director
Finance and Corporate Support

AK/JW
6 January 2011

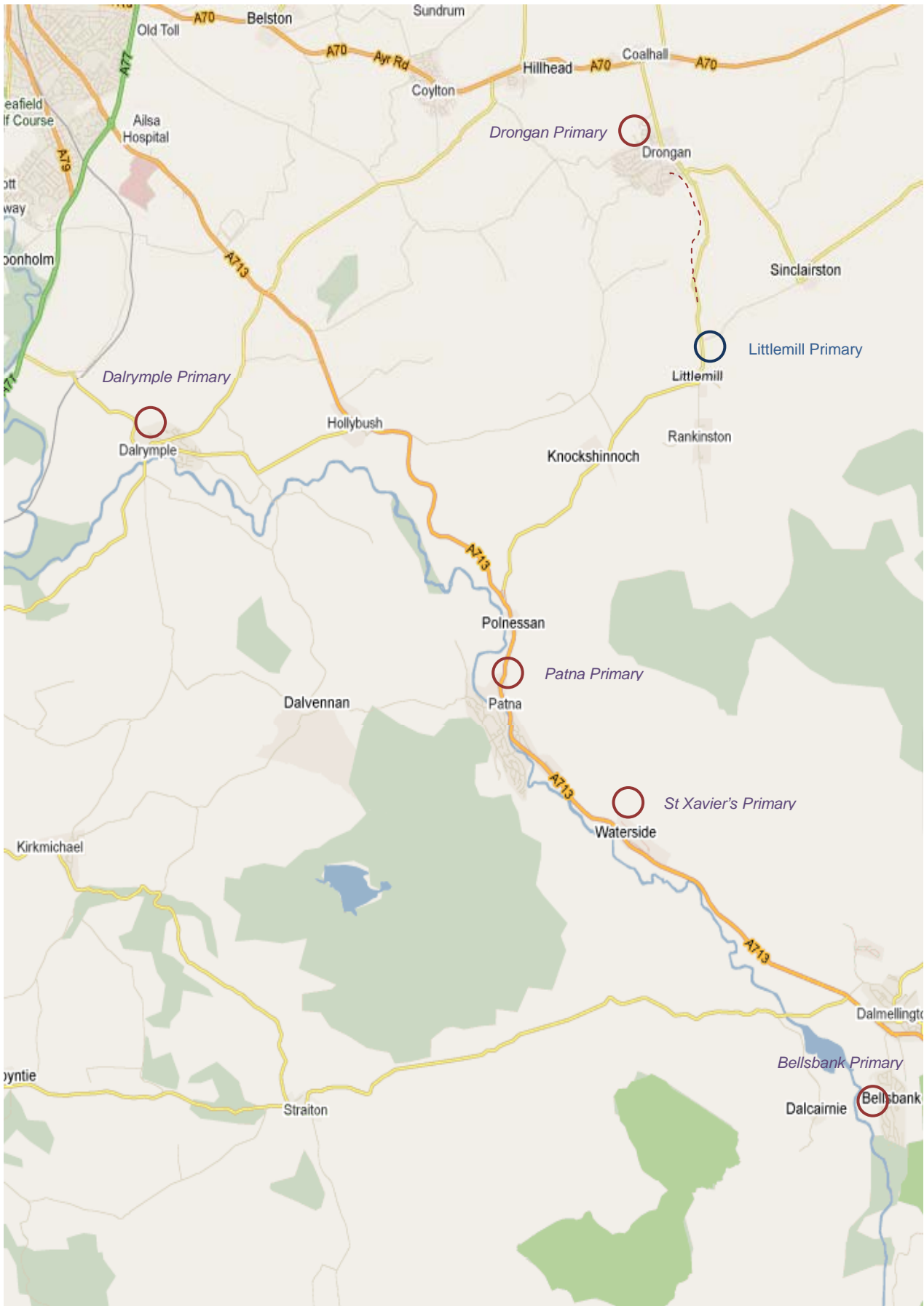
List of Background Papers

1. Cabinet report 19 March 2008
Cabinet report 11 February 2009
Cabinet report 17 June 2009

Members wishing further information should contact Andrew Kennedy, Acting Head of Facilities Management, Tel: (01563) 576089.

IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: ANDREW KENNEDY

LITTMILL PRIMARY DECANT LOCATION MAP OF OPTIONS



APPENDIX A – COMPARISON OF DECANT OPTION LOCATIONS FOR LITTLEMILL PRIMARY

Location	Roll / Capacity	Education Spaces available	Building Condition	Building Suitability	Learning Partnership	Distance	Other issues
Drongan Primary	285/529	6 of 19	B	B	Auchinleck	2.3 miles	
Patna Primary	161/303	5 of 13	C	C	Doon	4.1 miles	Construction of new Patna and St Xavier's building
St Xavier's Primary	29/116	2 of 4	D	C	St Josephs	2.5 miles	No nursery
Dalrymple Primary	133/166	0 of 6	B	C	Doon	6.5 miles	
Bellsbank Primary	105/259	3 of 9	C	C	Doon	6 miles	
Dalmellington Primary	119/166	0 of 6	A	B	Doon	5 miles	

Building Condition and Suitability ratings are based on the existing building and not taking into account the decant.