

ANGUS COUNCIL

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 5 DECEMBER 2000

EDUCATION COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2001

**CAPITAL PROJECT APPRAISAL – FORFAR ACADEMY – CURTAIN WALLING
JOINT REPORT BY THE DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION AND PROPERTY SERVICES****ABSTRACT**

This report outlines proposals to undertake the replacement of the curtain walling system at Forfar Academy during financial year 2001/02 at a cost of £960,000. This work will significantly improve the accommodation for staff and pupils at the school.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee:

- i) approves the replacement of curtain walling at Forfar Academy;
- ii) note that a separate report by the Director of Property Services addresses procurement of the works.

It is recommended that the Education Committee notes the content of this report for its information.

2 REFERENCES

The Final Revenue and Capital Budgets 2000/2001 volumes contain provision for this project in the 1999/20003 Financial Plan.

3 IDENTIFIED NEED

Forfar Academy is a large secondary school with a pupil roll of 1,141 and a capacity of 1,270. There are two buildings, the smaller of which has 2 floors housing teaching facilities as well as a Community Education Wing. The main teaching block, which has 4 floors, is contained within the larger building, and was built in 1965. As was common with schools constructed in this era, the walls in this building were built using prefabricated sections which were then connected together forming a 'curtain walling' system.

The smaller of the two buildings at the Academy is in reasonable condition and does not require upgrading. However the curtain walling in the teaching block within the main building is in very poor condition. In particular there is significant water penetration to the elevations to the north and west of the building, those being the most exposed to the elements. During periods of heavy rainfall a large number of classrooms are affected by water ingress which results in a slipping hazard for both staff and pupils.

4 OPTIONS

- i) **Do nothing** – Given the poor condition of the walls it is not considered acceptable to allow pupils in the 21st Century to continue to be educated in accommodation which falls short of the standard Angus Council would wish.
- ii) **Build a new school** – The main structure of the building is reasonable and while (like any building of this age) is in need of refurbishment, it is generally sound.

Although there are extensive school grounds on which a new school could be constructed, it is estimated that the cost of this option would be in the order of £12m - £15m, an option for which the Council does not have adequate financial resources, and in any case could not be justified on Best Value criteria.

- iii) **Replace existing curtain walling** – It is possible to replace the existing walls of the four storey teaching block within the main school building. This would result in a significantly improved working environment for pupils and staff at the school and would substantially improve energy efficiency of the building as a whole.

A neighbouring education authority has recently completed a similar, albeit a smaller scale project, which appears to be proving highly effective.

By liaising with colleagues in other authorities and after informal discussions with potential contractors, it has been established that the majority of the work needed to undertake this option could be undertaken during the school holiday period reducing the impact on the school and removing any requirement to use temporary classrooms to decant classes during the construction period. While most of this work would be undertaken in the summer holiday period, with the balance being undertaken in the October holidays, preparatory work would be undertaken in term time.

The estimated cost of this project is £960,000, including £40,000 for minor improvements such as painting, replacement blinds etc.

5 PREFERRED OPTION

The preferred option is option (iii) as this would ensure the learning and teaching environment within Forfar Academy is of a standard which is expected in the 21st Century and is both stimulating and comfortable for staff and pupils alike.

As the majority of works require to be undertaken during the school holiday periods, it is essential that the project timetable is rigidly adhered to. Accordingly the Director of Property Services will bring forward a separate report on procurement which will be considered by the Personnel and Property Committee of 28 November 2000.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

i) Capital Expenditure

	Total £000s	2000/01 £000s	2001/02 £000s	2002/03 £000s	Later Years
Revised Phasing*	960	5	905	50	
1999/2003 Financial Plan Provision	1,020	20	100	700	200
Variation	(60)	(15)	805	(650)	(200)

* This is reflected within Provisional 2000/2004 Financial Plan

ii) Revenue Expenditure

It is estimated that there will be savings in both energy and property maintenance costs. The current energy cost at the school is approximately £50,000 per annum and savings of the order of £8,000 can be anticipated in a full financial year. Other energy efficiency measures are being undertaken during the current financial year which will result in a significant improvement in the energy efficiency for the school as a whole. Additional loan charges are estimated at £78,000 per annum over a 40 year period.

The revised proposal brings forward the project by approximately one year and refocuses the main expenditure from 2002/03 to 2001/02. The revised phasing has been incorporated in the Financial Plan for the period 2000/04 (Report 1278/00 refers).

7 CONSULTATION

In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council the Chief Executive, Director of Law & Administration and the Director of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report. Discussions about the details of the proposed project have also taken place with the School Board of Forfar Academy.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

