

ANGUS COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE
20 JANUARY 2011

CONSULTATION ON EXTENDED SUPPORT FOR PUPILS PROVISION (ESP)
REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This report provides an overview of the recently completed consultation exercise in relation to Extended Support for Pupils Provision (ESP) and details the outcomes of that exercise.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Education Committee:
- (i) note the terms of this report
 - (ii) note the responses to the proposal document (provided as [Appendix 1](#)) and note, in particular, the response from HMIE
 - (iii) approve the specific proposals to:
 - (a) relocate by August 2011 the Extended Support for Pupils Provision (formerly offsite) from the existing three sites to one site at Panbride, by Carnoustie
 - (b) close the facilities at COMPASS, Kingsmuir and MAP, Friockheim
 - (iv) authorise me to publish this report in accordance with the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and
 - (v) authorise me to notify Scottish Ministers of the Committee's decision within six working days of today's date, as required by that Act

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 At its meeting on 3 June 2010 (Article 8 refers), the Education Committee authorised a consultation exercise in accordance with the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 in relation to a proposal to re-configure existing ESP accommodation. That proposal was underpinned by a growing belief that ESP could best be managed and delivered from one high quality learning environment, based at Panbride Centre.
- 2.2 This report has been drafted by Angus Council to comply with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The report, if approved by the Education Committee, will be deemed to be a formal proposal in accordance with the terms of that Act and will require thereby to be published in electronic and printed form.
- 2.3 Scottish Ministers have the power to call in closure decisions. From receipt of the notification of the decision and the proposal paper, Ministers have six weeks to decide whether or not to issue a 'call-in' notice.
- 2.4 The formal aims of this report are to:
- provide a record of the total number of written representations made to the Council by any person during the period of the public consultation exercise
 - summarise those written representations
 - summarise the oral representations made to the Council at the public meeting held at Carnoustie High School on 14 September 2010

- present a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations including the report from HMIE
- provide a copy of HMIE's report
- explain how the Council reviewed the above proposal having had regard to:
 - a) relevant written representations received from any person during the consultation period
 - b) oral representations made at the public meeting held on 14 September 2010
 - c) the report from HMIE

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Offsite provision was first established in Angus in the COMPASS project at Kingsmuir and the MAP project at Friockheim, as a joint undertaking by the departments of Education and Social Work & Health, to provide an alternative to placement in residential schools for very challenging young people.
- 3.2 To date, both provisions (COMPASS and MAP) have supported at any time on a full or part-time basis up to six secondary aged pupils. There has been a strong emphasis on personal and social development, and specialist staff have provided a variety of practical and outdoor learning programmes working with a range of partners including CLD and Angus College. A limited range of accredited courses have been offered, with pupils placed in these settings achieving a restricted number of passes in SQA examinations.
- 3.3 The 3Ss (*Secondary School Support*) project was first established in Addison Place, Arbroath by the Community Education Service (now Community Learning and Development). Youth work support was provided to secondary school-age pupils as part of an overall package of support. Following the appointment of a teacher to the project, this facility gradually evolved into a third offsite provision. However, its structure and staffing, comprising one teacher and two youth workers, made it significantly different from the two other provisions. In 2006, a Principal Teacher was appointed to lead the project which then moved in spring 2008 from its increasingly unsuitable accommodation in Arbroath to the site of the former Panbride Primary School.
- 3.4 It is recognised that, for a small minority of troubled and troublesome pupils, educational provision outwith school may sometimes be necessary. However, wherever possible, such pupils should maintain close links with their 'home' school, with the clear goal of returning to mainstream education, as and when practicable.
- 3.5 The offsite services described in the foregoing paragraphs are jointly funded by Education and Social Work & Health. Access to an extended support placement is managed by the Social Work and Education Resource Management Team (RMT) which considers joint referrals from Education and Social Work staff. This team operates at Stage 4 of the 'Staged Intervention Five Stage Process', set out in the Education Department's *Support for Learners Policy* (October 2006), and in the joint Education and Social Work document, '*Practice and Procedures for Inter Departmental Liaison*' (November 2004).
- 3.6 The nomenclature *offsite* and related references to 'offsite provisions' or 'projects' are no longer considered appropriate or inclusive. '*Extended Support for Pupils*' is increasingly used nationally to describe a flexible, inclusive and responsive service designed to meet the needs of a small but significant group of pupils whose challenging behaviour has contributed to them being excluded, often repeatedly, from school.
- 3.7 During session 2008/09, it was increasingly clear that the existing offsite provisions were experiencing considerable challenges in their efforts to meet pupil needs. It was recognised that, although the wellbeing of pupils was being addressed effectively, formal learning and achievement opportunities were too limited. In addition, their very troubled circumstances resulted in too many pupils receiving only part-time education. Arrangements were made to review the nature and scope of current provision. Staff in the three centres began to meet as a team and undertook training in relation to self-evaluation and improvement planning procedures to support that review exercise.
- 3.8 In the course of the review, it was agreed that, in order to deliver learning experiences which responded to the challenging needs of these pupils, placement in an Extended Support for Pupils (ESP) centre could only ever be **one** element of an effective package of support targeted at specific pupils. To take forward a more holistic approach, the 'home' school would require to be a key player in planning the pupil's learning activities, in liaison with staff from ESP and other agencies providing support. All pupils would receive full-time education, some aspects of which would be undertaken in the ESP centres. In reviewing current provision, staff increasingly recognised that accommodation in all three ESP locations was no longer fit for purpose.

- 3.9 Physical improvements were made to the former Panbride School in February 2009. These have created a wider range of learning and social spaces and appropriate space for meetings. The improvements helped staff to identify and plan opportunities for more varied and innovative approaches to learning and teaching.
- 3.10 All three ESP facilities were inspected by HMIE in January 2010. The inspection report published on 2 March 2010 can be found at the following internet address: <http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/inspection/AngusCouncilESP1.pdf>. The report identified a number of positive features across the provisions, including the relationship between staff and young people and the range of partners linked with the service, including work experience placement providers. The report also offered unambiguous advice about areas for improvement. HMIE recommended that the authority should:
- (i) implement a clear strategy across council services to secure high-quality outcomes for young people in the Extended Support for Pupils service.
 - (ii) develop more innovative approaches to the curriculum and provide high-quality learning experiences for all young people.
 - (iii) ensure the service and mainstream schools work together to provide a clear rationale and objective for shared placements, identifying roles and responsibilities linked to young people's outcomes, including attendance, achievement and attainment.
 - (iv) ensure mainstream schools, the service and partners meet the needs of young people through high-quality coordinated planning and review.
 - (v) implement rigorous quality assurance arrangements to monitor and evaluate the quality of the curriculum, and of partnership working as a basis for further improvement.
 - (vi) review staffing and leadership.
- 3.11 A detailed action plan was put in place to address each of these improvement actions. In addition to the critique of the support arrangements and the learning and teaching environment, HMIE's observations about the ESP physical accommodation also highlighted anxieties about the fitness for purpose of the current sites. Feedback from HMIE indicated that 'overall, accommodation is limited and not fully fit for purpose.' This observation related to the Kingsmuir and Friockheim sites. It was, however, noted that the 'Panbride facility was of a generally good standard'.
- 3.12 In August 2010 a secondary school Depute Head Teacher was seconded to co-ordinate current ESP provision and to lead the implementation of the ESP inspection follow-up plan.

4 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 4.1 The formal consultation period ran from 23 August 2010 to 29 October 2010.
- 4.2 In accordance with the requirements of the 2010 Act, the following parties were consulted about the proposal to relocate the three current provisions to the Panbride site:
- The parents and pupils of the three existing ESP sites
 - The teaching, social work and health and support staff working in ESP
 - Trade Unions
 - Headteachers in all Angus Schools
 - The Community Learning and Development Service
 - The Educational Development Service
 - Active Schools Co-ordinators
 - The staff of Carnoustie High School
 - The Director of Social Work and Health
 - Elected Members of Angus Council
 - Neighbours of the Panbride site
 - The appropriate members of the Scottish Parliament and the appropriate Member of Parliament
- 4.3 The proposal document (Appendix 1) was published on the Angus Council website at www.angus.gov.uk. A copy was also sent to HMIE, who are statutory consultees under the 2010 Act.
- 4.4 A public meeting was arranged by the Council and took place on Tuesday 14 September 2010. That meeting was attended by two members of the public, Education Department staff and a representative from HMIE.

- 4.5 The meeting offered an opportunity for open discussion and clarification of the proposals as well as a forum for people to express their views about the consultation process itself. The agenda included a presentation on the proposals and the consultative process. A written record of the meeting was kept and is provided in [Appendix 2](#).
- 4.6 The proposals which were the subject of the consultation exercise are set out below, together with a commentary on each:

Option 1 – Do nothing

It would be possible to improve some aspects of service delivery based on the current model. However, given the terms of the HMIe Inspection Report and the limited accommodation available at MAP (Friockheim) and COMPASS (Kingsmuir), it would not be possible to provide significant improvements in current provision.

Accommodation at Kingsmuir which consists of 2 large teaching areas, a kitchen and associated offices and toilets, is particularly poor and does not lend itself to providing the range of services and the depth of curriculum required by the young people placed in extended support provision. The accommodation is in need of general upgrading and modernisation. The design and construction of the building would prevent the accommodation from being improved in ways needed to provide the flexibility to deliver a modern curriculum.

Option 2 – Provide the service in 2 locations (Panbride and Friockheim)

This option would enable aspects of the service to be consolidated and enhanced, in particular, the range of staff, at both locations. Accordingly, curriculum opportunities for young people would be improved.

However, the Friockheim accommodation is less than ideal since the campus incorporates a number of non-related services. It serves as an office base, a pre-school lending resource and a base for the Education Department's Technician Team. In addition, the physical accommodation is restricted, comprising of one large teaching area, a small teaching area and a kitchen with a dining space and toilets. Due to the building's close proximity to other services and to car parking within the campus, it is very difficult to utilise external areas to enhance pupils' learning.

However, the Panbride facility is fit for purpose and could readily provide for an increase in the numbers of pupils and staff. As indicated in paragraph 2.9 above, this facility was recently refurbished to a high standard, providing modern showers and toilets along with three large teaching areas, two smaller breakout/activity rooms and an Art and Craft Technical Workshop and kitchen arrangements have been made to offer pupils school lunches available in any Angus school. Learning outdoors would be supported by the enhanced practical learning areas and improved facilities for personal hygiene. There is ample parking for staff and outdoor social areas for pupils. There is also the opportunity to further develop some of the outbuildings, if required, for vocational activities.

A developing aspect of ESP is joint work with partners to provide a range of motivating learning opportunities for young people in different locations, for example, Angus College, Outdoor Education activities, Murton Wildlife Trust. By maintaining two locations the co-ordination of these activities would be more difficult, as would be arrangements to provide adequate staff cover.

Option 3 – Provide all services at Panbride

Panbride has excellent accommodation, with easy access to good external facilities including local schools.

While all pupils would be located in the same building, there are sufficient resources to enable the number of pupils in each group to be kept to a manageable number.

Locating provision in this single centre would enable the skills of individual team members to be fully utilised by allowing them to focus on particular aspects of the curriculum and by encouraging collegiate working within the wider team. As, in most cases, pupils would not spend the entire week at Panbride, the co-ordination of activities to be undertaken in other settings would be easier to achieve. It would be possible, for example, to provide the facility with a vehicle to enable transport to and from Angus College, Murton, the 'home' schools of pupils and to outdoor and vocational education settings. Therefore, locating services in one location would make the staffing of such activities much easier to arrange.

The location is relatively close to the public transport network, making it possible for a number of pupils to make their own way to the facility thus enhancing their independence and responsibility. For other pupils it

will be possible for staff to utilise the centre's vehicle to pick up/drop off pupils, thus avoiding the need to use commercial operations.

The former Panbride Primary School had a capacity for 75 pupils and generally had a role of around 30 pupils before it closed. Angus Children's Services would continue to offer provision for around 20 secondary aged pupils in the Panbride ESP centre. However, the flexible nature of the ESP curriculum would mean that 20 pupils would rarely be at the centre at the same time.

4.7 Preferred Option – Option 3

Since option 1 does not address current challenges, it should be discounted. While Option 2 would undoubtedly improve the current position, it would not significantly improve the responsiveness of the service. The range of opportunities for young people would be limited. In particular, accommodation difficulties at Friockheim would not be overcome and it would be difficult to co-ordinate service provision effectively over two centres.

Option 3, which provides the opportunity to provide an enhanced and flexible curriculum for a vulnerable and needy group of young people, is the preferred option.

5 RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

5.1 Written responses were received from:

- all eight Angus Secondary Schools.
- the EIS Angus Local Association
- the Angus Council Community Learning and Development Service
- Andover Primary School
- one member of the public

5.2 Head Teachers from each of the eight Angus Secondary schools had consulted with staff as part of the consultation process. They were unanimous in supporting the option (Option 3) to provide all services at Panbride. It was the view of the head teachers that support to schools focused on one location with one staff team would provide an opportunity to better meet the needs of the young people of Angus. Head Teachers also expressed the view that the proposed merger would strengthen the ability of staff to link with pupil's home schools and provide enriched learning and teaching activities. Head Teachers hoped that a relocation to one site would also provide an opportunity to improve access to ESP and to conduct a review of the Additional Support Needs Staged Intervention Process. They expressed a degree of disquiet about the current approach to allocating places at the three ESP locations.

5.3 Andover Primary School also supported Option 3. However, its response suggested that efforts should be made to ensure that all pupils placed in any offsite or extended support provision retained contact with their own local school community.

5.4 The Council's Community Learning and Development teams also offered support to Option 3. The co-location of young people on a single site would, in their view, offer new opportunities to tailor outdoor education provision to meet the needs and interests of the young people concerned.

5.5 The Angus Local Association of the EIS welcomed its involvement in the consultation exercise and was pleased to offer its support for the preferred option, outlined in Option 3. It was considered that this option would support a more planned, systematic and regular use of outreach facilities for challenged and vulnerable young people.

5.6 The one member of the public to respond to the consultation exercise expressed concerns about pupils travelling unsupervised to and from the proposed location.

5.7 In addition to the written submissions, the meeting of 14 September 2010 allowed a number of issues to be raised. The two members of the public in attendance raised issues in relation to:

- security around the Panbride centre
- the numbers of young people likely to be on site at any one time
- a potential increase in the number of vehicles using the road and car parking
- the importance of young people travelling to and from the centre unaccompanied

- arrangements for supervision at break times for the young people
 - concerns about young people smoking on or around the Panbride site
- 5.8 Council officers noted these concerns and sought to reassure the members of the public, indicating that these issues could be managed sensitively and effectively by the manager of the new provision.
- 5.9 HMIE visited the three existing sites in October 2010 and met pupils and staff. A formal response to the proposals from HMIE was received in November 2010.
- 5.10 The full text of the HMIE report is set out below:

“1. Introduction

- 1.1 *Angus Council proposes to merge the projects operating at the existing three sites of its Extended Support for Pupils provision to one site at Panbride, Carnoustie, which currently houses the Secondary School Support Project. These projects exist to provide education for young people who are experiencing difficulties in sustaining their secondary school placements, often for reasons related to behavioural difficulties or non-attendance. The council further proposes that the educational facilities at COMPASS, Kingsmuir, and MAP, Friockheim, are closed thereafter. It is proposed that the merger is completed by April 2011.*
- 1.2 *This report from HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) is required under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. It has been prepared by HMIE in accordance with the terms of the Act.*
- 1.3 *HM Inspectors undertook the following activities in considering the educational aspects of the proposal:*
- *attendance at the public meeting held on 14 September 2010 in connection with the council's proposals;*
 - *consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, including specifically the educational benefits statement, and related consultation documents and written and oral submissions from parents and others;*
 - *consideration of further information on all schools affected; and*
 - *visits to the site of COMPASS project (Kingsmuir), MAP project (Friockheim) and the Secondary School Support project (Panbride), including discussion with relevant consultees.*
- 1.4 *HMIE considered:*
- *the likely effects of the proposal for young people of the centres, for any other users, and for young people likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper;*
 - *any other likely effects of the proposal;*
 - *how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and*
 - *benefits which the authority believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.*

2. Consultation process

- 2.1 *Angus Council undertook the initial consultation on its proposals with reference to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.*
- 2.2 *Staff who work in the three current centres are, on the whole, positive about the proposal, and think that it will be helpful to have all of the young people and staff involved with Extended Support for Pupils provision based in the same building. They feel that they will be able to provide a broader curriculum for young people, given that staff, with their range of skills and abilities, will be available on the same site. They will also have better opportunities to consult with each other and standardise*

their practice. They feel that the timescale for the proposed merger, which the published proposal indicates will be complete by April 2011, is unrealistic.

- 2.3 *Young people have a variety of opinions about the proposal. Some of them are keen to keep the three current centres as they prefer to be educated in establishments with lower numbers of pupils. They also think that travel times could be increased for them. Others like the idea and feel that there would be a wider range of facilities and activities available at Panbride than in the current provision.*
- 2.4 *Parents have been invited to share their views about the proposal in a range of different ways, and the authority has given them a number of opportunities to express their opinions. Despite this, they have not returned any consultation forms or attended any of the consultation meetings which have been held.*
- 2.5 *A small number of Panbride residents have expressed concerns regarding the increase in numbers of young people based in the building as a result of the proposal. The council has indicated that it is willing to work in partnership with residents to promote active involvement for the young people in the life of the local community and to support their suggestions to improve road safety in the area.*

3. Educational aspects of the proposal

- 3.1 *All three Extended Support for Pupils facilities were inspected by HMIE in January 2010. The published report noted that accommodation was limited and not fully fit for purpose. Young people who currently attend the three centres are likely to benefit from having a wider choice of courses. This should help staff to meet more of the young people's needs. Staff currently travel around the three centres to deliver courses to young people, but this will no longer be necessary and the time which staff spend working directly with young people is likely to increase. Some of the young people do not react well to change and it will therefore be a priority for staff to work with them to prepare them for the merger.*
- 3.2 *The proposal will result in some further alterations and enhancements being made to the Panbride building. It will be important for the council to schedule these works so that they do not interfere with the education of the young people at Panbride. The Panbride site is the most appropriate site for a merged provision as it is the largest and most flexible of the current centres. It also has the most modern facilities and there are plans to upgrade it further.*
- 3.3 *The council has taken a number of steps to minimise or avoid adverse effects that may arise from the proposal. The appointment of a coordinator for the Extended Support for Pupils provision has encouraged a more unified approach across the three centres and has improved teamwork. Staff from the three centres now meet and plan together regularly, and joint training has taken place on several occasions recently. There are also plans for more joined-up working with other council initiatives that meet similar needs.*
- 3.4 *Having a single coordinated resource led by one Extended Support for Pupils Coordinator will offer the potential for staff expertise to be deployed more effectively than at present. It is likely to strengthen the service's ability to provide flexible responses to the varied and challenging needs of the young people in question.*

4. Summary

- 4.1 *This proposal is likely to rationalise and standardise the work of the Extended Support for Pupils provision on a single site and lead towards better outcomes for the young people who attend it. The young people will have a wider range of curricular opportunities available to them which can be used flexibly to meet their needs. The Panbride site is best suited for this single site as it is largest and has the best facilities.*
- 4.2 *The council will wish to continue to attempt to engage with parents in order to keep them well informed and to consult them about the proposed changes. The council is working to clarify the arrangements and the timing for the merger as some aspects are not yet fully clear to all of those involved."*

6 THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO WRITTEN AND ORAL REPRESENTATIONS AND HMIE'S REPORT

- 6.1 It can be seen from section 5 of this report that the consultation generated only limited involvement of stakeholders. However, the overall response to the consultation proposals was wholeheartedly in favour of relocating the three provisions to one site at Panbride.
- 6.2 HMIE have taken a broadly similar view to the Council about the advantages and educational benefits of merging ESP provision on one site at Panbride. They have also highlighted a small number of issues which the Council should address.
- 6.3 The recommendations of HMIE relate to (a) the need to continue to engage with parents and keep them informed about the proposed changes and (b) clarify the arrangements for and the timing of the merger.
- 6.4 With respect to the first of these, the ESP Co-ordinator has been in regular contact with all parents. Regular review meetings are held to discuss pupil progress, and proposed changes to the service are also now discussed at these meetings. Only a few pupils will be affected by the move to a single site. They have been included in discussions about the layout of facilities at Panbride and in identifying a broader range of learning activities.

With respect to the second HMIE recommendation, it had been our original intention to relocate to one site by April 2011. On reflection and taking account of the views of staff and HMIE, it was felt that this would not be ideal for pupils or staff. A number of the pupils would be leaving school by 31 May 2011. It was agreed that these pupils should not be transferred to a new location prior to their school leaving date. Therefore, staff should remain in both MAP and COMPASS to support these pupils. All staff working in ESP have been advised that the relocation to Panbride, if approved, would be completed by August 2011. A phased move to Panbride would serve to ensure that staff and learning resources are in place for the start of the new session in August 2011. Between January and June 2011, any new pupils attending ESP will be placed at Panbride. The staff at ESP are comfortable with these arrangements. They are looking forward to working as one team, and welcome the move to a single site.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 It should be noted that, in considering all 3 options, it is assumed that the overall resources available will be unchanged. Accordingly, any savings generated through property savings in approving Option 3, and the more effective use of staff, would be reinvested at least in part in the ESP service.

8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 I have carefully reviewed the proposal, and given detailed consideration to :
- (a) relevant written representations received during the consultation period
 - (b) oral representation made at the public meeting held on 14 September 2010
 - (c) the terms of the very favourable response from HMIE
- 8.2 In light of my review of these matters, I am of the view that the proposal to relocate ESP provision to the Panbride site should proceed, subject to the provision of the 2010 Act set out in paragraph 2.3 above.
- 8.3 It is concluded that the decision to proceed with the consultation proposal was valid. It is clear from all the responses which the Council has received that the educational experiences of young people in an ESP environment would be improved and enhanced if Angus ESP were located on one site.

9 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising from the consideration of this report.

10 SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

- 10.1 This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Angus Single Outcome Agreement:
- Young people and adults in Angus maximise their potential through learning opportunities (National Outcome 3)

- Children and young people in Angus will have access to positive learning environments and opportunities to develop their skills, confidence and self-esteem to the fullest potential (National Outcome 4)
- Children and young people in Angus and their carers will have access to high quality services and be assisted to overcome the social, educational, physical environmental; and economic barriers that create inequality (National Outcome 7)

11 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An [equalities impact assessment](#) is not required.

12 CONSULTATION

- 12.1 In accordance with the Standing Orders of the Council, this report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law & Administration.

NEIL LOGUE
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Note: 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.