

ANGUS COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

22 JANUARY 2002

PRIMARY 7/SECONDARY 1 TRANSFER FOR NEWTYLE PUPILS

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

ABSTRACT

This report seeks Committee approval for a consultation exercise to widen parental choice of secondary school for pupils living in the Newtyle area.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Education Committee:

- a authorises me to undertake a formal consultation exercise on a proposal that:

the delineated area of Webster's High School should be extended to incorporate the delineated area of Newtyle Primary School

AND

either the delineated area of Forfar Academy should remain unchanged (ie it should continue to incorporate the delineated area of Newtyle Primary School)

or the delineated area of Forfar Academy should be reduced by deleting from it the delineated area of Newtyle Primary School

- b instructs me to report back on the outcome of the aforementioned consultation exercise as soon as possible
- c authorises me to alert specifically parents of pupils currently in P7 of Newtyle Primary School to this consultation exercise lest they wish to take advantage of any extended parental choice which may become available for their children's secondary education

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Reference is made to the meeting of the Education Committee on 14 October 1997 (Article 12 refers) when the Committee agreed that the secondary department of Newtyle should be closed with effect from 3 July 1998, and that the existing delineated area of Monifieth High School should be extended to include the whole of the delineated area of what was to become Newtyle Primary School, which should in turn also continue to be subsumed within the delineated area of Forfar Academy.

2.2 Members may recall that considerable discussion took place in 1997 about the closure of the secondary department of Newtyle School and about the most appropriate location(s) for secondary school provision for pupils coming from Newtyle itself. In 1997, a number of Newtyle parents indicated a general view that perhaps Webster's High School would be a suitable secondary school for Newtyle children. At that time, Webster's High School was experiencing a degree of overcrowding (its roll in the September 1997

Census was 763 pupils set against a notional capacity of 740 pupils). Since then, the roll of Webster's High School, after rising slightly to a peak of 773 pupils in 1998, has gradually decreased and is now 721 pupils. In addition, a small extension has been built to the school, thereby increasing its notional capacity.

- 2.3 Since 1998, only one pupil has taken up the option of transferring from Newtyle Primary School to Forfar Academy, the remainder having enrolled in Monifieth High School.
- 2.4 Reference is also made to the Committee's deliberations on roll-capping relating to Monifieth High School (Education Committee – 20 November 2001 – Article 14 of the note of the meeting refers; this is also an item for discussion on the agenda of the Education Committee on 22 January 2002).

3 POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 Given the background described above, it would be unreasonable to remove from Newtyle parents the option of sending their children to Monifieth High School if they so wish. However, extending parental choice by offering Webster's High School as a possible location for Newtyle pupils on completion of their primary education may well be an attractive option for some families.
- 3.2 I have discussed this possibility informally with the School Board of Newtyle Primary School and they have undertaken their own parental survey. This survey shows that no less than 76% of families have indicated support for an alteration of parental choice of the type indicated.
- 3.3 If this option were to be pursued a linked question would be whether or not simply to add Webster's High School as an additional choice of school, thereby offering a choice of three schools to Newtyle parents, or simply replacing Forfar Academy by Webster's High School as one of the secondary schools to which Newtyle parents can choose to send their children without having to make a parental placing request. In order to progress this matter, a formal consultation exercise would be necessary, with the statutory consultees including the School Boards of Webster's High School, Forfar Academy, Monifieth High School and Newtyle Primary School, as well as parents of pupils likely to be affected by the proposal.
- 3.4 In all the circumstances, it is believed that a statutory consultation exercise would be worthwhile and that is what is being recommended.
- 3.5 If the Committee approves a consultation exercise on these proposals, it would be prudent to alert parents of pupils currently in P7 of Newtyle Primary School of the possibility of an extension of their parental choice, should they wish to exercise it.

4 HUMAN RIGHTS

- 4.1 There are no Human Rights implications arising directly from consideration of this report.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6 CONSULTATION

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

Jim Anderson
Director of Education

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.

JAA/CJ