

**Shawfair Learning Community****Report by Mary Smith, Director, Education, Communities and Economy****1 Purpose of Report**

To seek approval from Council to establish a 0-18 Learning Community at the heart of the Shawfair development, based upon the concept of all-through schooling and also meeting new legislative requirements and responsibilities associated with early learning and childcare.

**2 Background**

The report to Council of 16 December 2014 on the Catchment Review Programme recommended that a detailed feasibility study looking at a range of options for secondary school provision for Shawfair and the option of a '3-18 School' be undertaken.

The Midlothian Local Plan makes provision for around 4,000 new houses by means of an expansion of Danderhall and the creation of a new settlement at Shawfair, which will encompass Newton and Millerhill. The Shawfair section 75 agreement makes provision for two primary schools and a secondary school as well as extensions to Danderhall and St David's Primary Schools. The Midlothian Local Development Plan allocates further housing development at Cauldcoats and Newton Farm with areas safeguarded at both sites for the provision of a primary school.

The Shawfair development presents a unique opportunity to think differently about the purpose and design of the educational provision that will serve the area. The emergence of all-through schools has been a notable recent feature of Scottish education. An all-through school is an educational establishment which combines more than one stage of education within the same building or adjacent buildings on a campus.

The Scottish Government's 2010 review of all-through provision identified more than 40 such schools providing nursery, primary and secondary education in one setting. In recent years, however, Curriculum for Excellence, together with new legislation associated with early learning and childcare, has broadened the concept of all-through schooling so that it now spans from birth to the age of 18. The concept of all through schooling has developed into a broader vision: a 0-18 Learning Community.

The Education Scotland Report on all-through schools concluded that there are significant advantages to this form of learning community and HMIE inspections have also consistently identified the following strengths:

- climate and ethos, including the quality of relationships
- partnerships with parents and the local community
- successful transition between the different stages of education
- innovative approaches to delivering the educational entitlements
- meeting the needs of young people with additional support needs
- collegiate working across sectors to support learning
- flexibility in deploying staff and resources
- planning for progression and achievement.

Midlothian staff carried out fact-finding visits to several all-through schools in Scotland and confirmed many of the foregoing strengths and benefits. Primary age children can benefit from early access to specialist secondary teachers in subjects such as music, science and art. Primary teachers can continue to work with children beyond traditional primary age to support Broad General Education, for example in literacy and numeracy. The transition between primary and secondary phases, often quite a disruptive time in children's education, becomes smoother with little or no interruption to the progress of learning.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 has created new responsibilities and opportunities for Midlothian, particularly in relation to providing 600 hours early learning and childcare to certain 2 year-old and to all 3 and 4 year-old children. In addition, national policy and guidance including the Early Years Collaborative, Child Poverty Strategy, Play Strategy for Scotland, require Midlothian Council to have a well developed vision for the future of early learning and childcare in Midlothian, providing strategic direction and a cohesive and interconnected range of services.

The provision of an integrated family learning centre would be a core part of the proposed Shawfair Learning Community. A multi disciplinary approach would bring together Early Learning and Childcare staff, Allied Health Professionals, Lifelong Learning and Employability, Family Support and Third Sector partners to work together with communities. This would enable families to access a team which could support their child, in one location and rooted in their local community.

## **2.1 Proposal**

It is proposed that a learning community be established at Shawfair, providing early/family learning (for children aged 0 to 3 years), nursery (for children aged 4 to 5 years), Broad General Education (primary P1 to P7 and secondary S1 to S3), and Senior Phase (secondary S4 to S6).

The learning community could take the form of adjoining or separate buildings within the same location comprising:

- Family learning centre
- Nursery
- 2 primary schools (or 1 larger primary school)
- Secondary school for 1,200 pupils

The scale of the educational provision would require discrete leadership structures for secondary and primary/nursery/early years.

It is estimated, given the scale of proposed housing development in and around Shawfair, that there will be a requirement in the longer term for four or five primary schools, which would cater for up to 1,800 primary aged children. This would include the primary school(s) in the Shawfair Learning Community, Danderhall Primary School and one or two additional primary schools at Cauldcoats and/or Newton Farm. Whilst these primary schools would be outwith the proposed Shawfair Learning Community, they would be close enough to be able to access the facilities including the family learning centre and the secondary school, and to work closely with the other schools in the learning community.

### **3 Report Implications**

#### **3.1 Resource**

There are no direct resource issues arising from this report. The Shawfair S75 agreement sets out the resources developers will contribute towards the required investment in the nursery, primary and secondary educational facilities. The provision of early learning and childcare is now an obligation of the Council and as such the capital costs associated with this element of the provision will need to be provided for in future years General Services Capital Plans. The ongoing revenue/operational costs, will be provided for in future years revenue budgets.

There may be some economies that can be made by delivering these facilities via the learning community model. The detail of the proposed education infrastructure for Danderhall and the wider Shawfair area, including capital and revenue budget implications, will be covered in a future report to Council.

#### **3.2 Risk**

This paper addresses the risk that the traditional approach to education infrastructure may not be the best way to provide quality teaching and learning for future generations. A comprehensive risk register will be developed as part of the process of establishing education provision for the Shawfair development.

#### **3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation**

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☒ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

#### **3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan**

This proposal addresses all areas of the Single Midlothian Plan.

### **3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes**

Not applicable

### **3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

The proposal adopts a preventative approach.

### **3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

Consultations with communities and other stakeholders will be undertaken as part of the process of establishing education provision for the Shawfair development.

### **3.8 Ensuring Equalities**

The proposed report will have a positive effect on equalities groups as it ensures the needs of the most vulnerable groups are met within each area i.e. Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Positive Destinations. An equality impact assessment will be developed as part of the process of establishing education provision for the Shawfair development.

### **3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development**

This proposal takes into account the need to deliver an educational service across Midlothian which anticipates and acknowledges the needs and views of stakeholders.

### **3.10 IT Issues**

There are no IT issues arising at this stage. The IT requirements of the education provision to serve Shawfair will be developed as part of the future project specification.

## **4 Summary**

It is proposed that a learning community be established at Shawfair, providing Early/Family Learning, Nursery, Broad General Education and Senior Phase education, based upon the concept of all-through schooling and also meeting new legislative requirements and responsibilities associated with early learning and childcare.

The learning community would take the form of adjoining or separate buildings within the same location comprising:

- Family learning centre
- Nursery
- 2 primary schools (or 1 larger primary school)
- Secondary school for 1,200 pupils

## **5 Recommendations**

It is recommended that Council approves

- (i) the establishment of a 0-18 years learning community at Shawfair;

- (ii) officers to bring forward a future report detailing the options, costs and budgetary implications of delivery of education infrastructure for Danderhall and the wider Shawfair area; and
- (iii) a Seminar to be called for Elected Members prior to the next report to Council as noted in recommendation (ii) above.

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Background Papers: None