

Notes from school review workshops

Kirknewton Primary School: Workshop held on Monday 19 February 2018

The following notes are separated by discussion group and have been categorised by subject discussed. The discussion group notes were taken by different council officers and in some cases by group members. The representations below are as faithful to the original notes as possible. Accordingly, the written approach of the notes taken at each discussion group will vary. None of the notes taken are verbatim. We have not included comments which may identify an individual who is not a Council Officer.

Discussion Group One

Item	Discussion / Comments
Published Proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The group liked the proposal to keep Balerno Community High School on its existing site and refurbishing as necessary.• However, they had concerns around the decant and would prefer to look at other options before going down this route (suggestions below).• They also would like to be consulted on the renovation work of Balerno Community High School if it goes ahead as they have some suggestions for improvement (see below for examples).• They were against the amalgamation of Currie Community High School and WHEC on a new South West site (see below for reasons).• Performance and exam results – Balerno Community High School is a well performing school compared to West Calder.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They felt that another school in West Calder was not an option for them.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ There is less travel time to Balerno than West Calder.○ They have more community links with Balerno than West Calder, e.g.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Church▪ Sport Club▪ Swimming▪ Brownies, Scouts, Clubs.○ They have family ties / traditional ties relating to Balerno.• People bought houses in Kirknewton due to the catchment school being Balerno Community High School.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ People have moved from Currie / Balerno to Kirknewton based on the existing school catchment.• There is a sense of belonging with Balerno and the high school.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The group, however, felt that Currie was a separate community to Balerno.• They feel like a community with Balerno.• They like the village feel.• They thought that we will need Kirknewton Primary School to continue to feed into Balerno Community High School to keep it open.• The group would be happy with a refurb of Balerno Community High School. It could provide opportunities, e.g.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Better cloakrooms
--	---

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ More toilets○ More showers in swimming pool.○ It could be a better community hub.● They felt the community should feed into a consultation for a refurbishment.● The group had concerns around the suggested decant of pupils while renovation work takes place.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ It would be challenging and cost a lot.○ It would add on extra travel.● It was suggested that the PE department pitches could be built on or have portacabins and pupils could be transferred to there and the building renovated.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The rugby land could possibly be temporarily shared with the rugby club for PE.● The group felt that they would still want this as the preferred option even if they had to put up with a decant. They would, however, want to look into the other options first.● The group were against the proposal of Currie merging with WHEC on any of the proposed new South West High School site, due to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Currie Community High School is also a well performing school.○ They wouldn't like to divide the Currie Community in two.○ Social integration challenges○ Concerns around building on green spaces.
--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They thought with the suggested council proposal attainment could actually go down for Wester Hailes area.
Summary of Published Proposals:	
The rest of the pupils from Currie Primary would go to Balerno Community High instead of Currie Community High once South West Edinburgh High opens in August 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group would prefer Currie Community High School to remain on its existing site.
Balerno Community High would be expanded and refurbished on its existing school site. Capacity would increase from 850 to 1200 pupils.	<p>Same as above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group thought that population is projected to increase in the future and Dean Park Primary will increase, due to new housing. • They felt that Balerno Community High School has a school roll sufficient going forward. • However, there was discussion around the changing demographics and the increase in older people. • They thought that we will need Kirknewton Primary School to continue to feed into Balerno Community High School to keep it open.
Pupils from Ratho Primary would no longer go to Balerno Community High but to the new West Edinburgh High when it opens in August 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was some concern about a possible drop in numbers attending Balerno Community High School if all the catchment changes take place. • The group would want to keep Balerno Community High School on its existing site.
Pupils from Kirknewton Primary would continue to go to Balerno Community High.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They thought that we will need Kirknewton Primary School to continue to feed into Balerno Community High School to keep it open.

Alternative Proposals	
<p>Retain all schools on their existing sites refurbishing or rebuilding as require.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was the preferred option of the group (see above for benefits and reasons).
<p>Amalgamate Currie and Balerno Community High schools in a new building on the existing Currie Community High School site.</p>	<p>The group were against this suggestion due to a number of reasons, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would make a larger school which they wouldn't want. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With a bigger school there would be less of an opportunity to have bi-level classes or less ability to have focused, targeted teaching at all levels. • Balerno would lose its community hub. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It would be ripping the heart out of Balerno. ○ If we take the school away there would be no village, no cohesion. • Parents would have to transport children the opposite way causing more traffic problems on the Lanark Road. • It is too far for many children in Balerno to walk. • It would add on extra travel. • How would this cope with the rising population around this area? • It is an unsafe walk from Balerno to Currie along busy roads. • There would be additional costs for transporting Balerno children to Currie. • The group were concerned about local business, e.g. community café.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were also concerned about after school clubs. It would take longer to get home and children would either be getting home too late or be discouraged from attending after school clubs.
Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was some concern that Balerno Community High School will be at capacity in two years' time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One group member pointed out that if the school roll increases a bit above capacity – this will have serious consequences on health and safety, e.g. toilet facilities, etc. • The group thought that the capacity was already there in the existing structure just in the wrong place.
Other suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was suggested that a new idea is needed for WHEC, e.g. specialist school and hub. • It was suggested that Currie Community High School should be rebuilt on its existing land. • It was suggested to extend Currie Community High School and include WHEC pupils in the catchment. • It was suggested that a new Balerno Community High School could be built on a close by greenfield site and the existing site be demolished and turned into a green space. • The group suggested making WHEC a smaller or specialist school. • It was suggested that if we did have to merge Balerno Community High School with Currie Community High School then it would be better to merge it on a site in Balerno.

Discussion Group Two

Item	Discussion / Comments
<p>Published Proposals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Currie community together • Kirknewton projections are not included, can this be addressed. • Disappointed to see that feedback given at the Balerno Workshop to amalgamate Currie Community High School with Balerno Community High on the Balerno site has not been included on any slides at workshop.
<p>Summary of Published Proposals:</p>	
<p>Pupils from the Cherry Tree area of Currie Primary School would go to Dean Park Primary and then to Balerno Community High from August 2019.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not change the Cherry Tree catchment. • Cherry Tree pupils continue to Currie. • The Council previously closed Currie Hill and Riccarton, Currie Primary is too small. This has been previously proven.
<p>The rest of the pupils from Currie Primary would go to Balerno Community High instead of Currie Community High once South West Edinburgh High opens in August 2022.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nether Currie Primary School should remain with Currie.
<p>Balerno Community High would be expanded and refurbished on its existing school site. Capacity would increase from 850 to 1200 pupils.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within two years Balerno Community High School will be at capacity, will Balerno be extended in time to meet capacity?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently 29% of out of catchment placements and this has a knock-on effect for the school. • No concerns over decant when Balerno Community High School is refurbished. • Very good sport facilities. • This has been improved by the new Head Teacher
Pupils from Ratho Primary would no longer go to Balerno Community High but to the new West Edinburgh High when it opens in August 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not change Ratho catchment. Ratho pupils continue to go to Balerno Community High.
Pupils from Kirknewton Primary would continue to go to Balerno Community High.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All happy to know that there was no catchment change for Kirknewton.
Alternative Proposals	
Retain all schools on their existing sites refurbishing or rebuilding as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less upheaval for everyone if Currie Community High was rebuilt on existing site. • There is a train line between Wester Hailes and Currie. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Train could be an option for WHEC pupils travelling to Currie.

Open Discussion

- The land needs to be future proofed.
- People have bought property in Kirknewton due to link to Balerno Community High.

Travel

- Balerno Community High School has a wide rural catchment
- Children travel by bus.
- Horsburgh ran the no. 24 bus service, St Johns to Juniper Green. This was withdrawn.
 - Can Edinburgh Council and West Lothian Council subsidise this service?

Woodlands School

- Would Woodlands move with Currie if proposal goes ahead?
- How many pupils attend Woodlands School?
- Incorporate Woodlands School into the new school.

Discussion Group Three

Item	Discussion / Comments
<p>Published Proposals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirknewton continue to feed into Balerno Community High School • Kirknewton are 'Edinburgh facing' and feel like a suburb of Edinburgh • Larger school will offer greater subject choice and more curriculum pathways • Growth likely to attract more funding for extracurricular activities, i.e. music. • Refurbishment and extension presents opportunity to provide community facilities, after school clubs. • Loss of WHEC's community facilities • Concern about how decant will be managed • Concern about condition of Currie Community High School used for decant because of its condition • Currie Community High School is difficult for buses to access – how will that be managed • Are the proposals future proof? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concern if projections are wrong and Balerno Community High School cannot support Dean Park, Currie, Ratho and Kirknewton. • Concern that Kirknewton will be forced to move to another school in West Lothian because it is not an 'Edinburgh' school.

Alternative Proposals	
Amalgamate Currie and Balerno Community High schools in a new building on the existing Currie Community High School site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Currie Community High School site is not suitable for buses to access• Balerno Community High School site should be retained because its condition is better – council has already invested in it.