
Report to Special Meeting of Council

Date of Meeting: 7 March 2023

Subject: Public Petition

Report by: Monitoring Officer

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The report summarises the petition which has been received following the 2023/24 budget engagement process. The full petition does not accompany this report but is available for inspection by all Councillors.

2.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

- 2.1. hear the Principal Petitioner, seeking information from them as appropriate; and then, having done so, dispose of the petition by agreeing either that:
- the issue does not merit further action ; or
 - that the information contained within the petition requires consideration by Council within the context of deliberations associated with the upcoming General Revenue Fund budget for 2023/24.

3.0 Considerations

Review of Early Learning and Childcare Provision

The petition is in electronic form and has been verified with 461 signatures of people living in the Clackmannanshire Council area. It includes a change.org petition. During the verification process, a number of signatures were discounted as they were from people living outwith the Council area.

The name of the principal petitioner is Kathryn Beaton, who has submitted the petition on behalf of Banchory Parent Council. She meets the principal petitioner criteria. Kathryn Beaton has been invited to attend the Special Council meeting to speak to the petition.

The title of the petition is "*Hands off our nursery! Keep enrolment at Banchory ELC*". The information contained in the petition statement is as follows:

“Banchory Parent Council (BPC) ask Clackmannanshire Council to remove the budget proposal “Banchory ELC would not accept any new admissions for the session 2023/24 and that instead, families would be offered child places in surrounding nurseries”. Whilst currently stated for the 23/24 intake, BPC unanimously agree that this move is both surprising and damaging to our community, with a potential route for Clackmannanshire Council to close our nursery permanently thereafter. The initial one-off saving of £483,333 will simply be lost to increasing costs in other areas of education and social care provision. Currently, 67% of out catchment children attend from SIMD Deciles 1 and 2, extreme markers for poverty, disadvantage and those targeted by attainment gap policy. Furthermore, approximately 50% of our Banchory community are currently under staged intervention. Despite these challenges, the contextual analysis of our school and early years performance shows consistent growth and transformational change on all fronts under the current resource and staffing model. The recent Grade 5 Care Inspectorate reports praise Banchory ELC on its transition experience from ‘home to the setting and on to school’ in particular ‘Children being settled and secure’ by positively affecting children’s trust and confidence through personal development and strong relationships. Finally, Clackmannanshire Council itself states, “Banchory’s catchment area has been designated an area of educational priority which entitles additional resources which ensures good staff/pupil ratio” and “The addition of the ELC has been an asset to the school both in the preparation for primary education and in many aspects of early intervention.” Enrolment removal and future potential closure only seeks to undermine this and we seek to maintain current operations. Our robust defence against this proposal is to ensure the opportunities and good work are not lost to our future generations. Thusly the community have rallied around the undisputable facts and want to protect the future of our School and ELC in this petition as dictated below. We look forward to your consideration of our petition.”

4.0 Sustainability Implications

- 4.1. This report has no direct sustainability implications. It is possible once the petition has been heard, that there may be financial or sustainability considerations arising from any outcomes.

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1. Financial Details

- 5.2. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes

- 5.3. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes

5.4. Staffing

6.0 Exempt Reports

6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

(1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all
Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life
Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential
Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

(2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

Petitions policy

8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
Yes No

An Equality and Fairer Scotland Impact Assessments have been carried out in context of the 2023/24 budget engagement.

9.0 Legality

9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes

10.0 Appendices

10.1 Please list any appendices attached to this report. If there are no appendices, please state "none".

None

11.0 Background Papers

11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes (please list the documents below) No

Petition: “Hands off our nursery! Keep enrolment at Banchory ELC”.

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Stuart Crickmar	Strategic Director	2127

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Lee Robertson	Monitoring Officer	
Stuart Crickmar	Strategic Director, Partnership and Performance	