



**EDUCATION PROVISION: STORNOWAY PRIMARY SPORTS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Report by Chief Officer for Education and Children's Services

**PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide a progress update to the Comhairle about the proposed sports facility at Stornoway Primary.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Comhairle has made a commitment in the 2023-28 Capital programme of £2M for the construction of a new sports facility at Stornoway Primary to increase access to high-quality teaching spaces for PE and sport and to increase dining capacity in the school by reducing the demand on the current assembly hall as a combined dining and PE teaching space.
- 2.2 Over the last three years, the Comhairle has worked to develop a design and explore the market for the construction of a large games hall using a metal frame and tensile fabric skin, which was considered to offer the potential for a larger and more versatile space than the use of traditional construction methods. This approach resulted in the proposal to construct a building offering a total area of 565m<sup>2</sup>, with a useable hall area of 470m<sup>2</sup>, a little larger than three badminton courts in size.
- 2.3 Further design development and exploration of the market for construction of such a building that is insulated, heated and equipped as a teaching space, confirmed that cost would be in the region of £2.25M. The increase in costs is proposed to be funded from Universal Free School Meal (UFSM) expansion in respect of creating additional off-set dining capacity in the main school hall by reducing the demand on that space to be used for PE, as agreed in February 2024.
- 2.4 The procurement of such a specialist building has been complex and time-consuming but has resulted in identification of a preferred supplier operating internationally that can supply a proprietary aluminium frame and tensile fabric building to meet the project specifications.
- 2.5 A planning application was submitted for the proposed building in September 2024 and was successfully granted in late December. This has permitted completion of the design process, full cost planning and preparations for tendering for the proprietary building, groundworks and construction contracts throughout January to March 2025.
- 2.6 Progression through the latter stages of the design process identified an issue with the proposed heating system of the building that resulted in a requirement to make alterations to the proposed system and specifications. This has incurred a small additional cost to the overall project, which is now estimated to be totalling £2.3M. Sufficient funding is in place to meet this cost from the previously agreed source.
- 2.7 At the time of writing, tender documents have been published, with returns due in early May. If the tendering process is successful, it is expected to have contract awards by early summer, with work



commencing on-site shortly after. Based on that timescale, it is forecast that the building will be ready for occupancy by early 2026.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Comhairle note the Report, including the increase in the total project cost to be met from external grant funding.**

Contact Officer: Donald Macleod, Chief Officer for Education and Children's Services

Appendix: Drawing – Site Plan

Drawing – Roof Plan and Building Elevations

Drawing – Floor Plan with Building Sections

Background Papers: ESCS Committee Report: Stornoway Primary Development 15/06/21

ESCS Committee Report: Stornoway Primary AWP Development 21/09/21

ESCS Committee Report: Stornoway Primary Development Update 30/11/21

ESCS Committee Report: Stornoway Primary Sports Development 21/06/22

ESCS Committee Report: Stornoway Primary Sports Development 21/06/22

ESCS Committee Report: Stornoway Primary Development Update 06/02/24

ESCS Committee Report: Stornoway Primary Development Update 26/11/24



## IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

| <b>Resource Implications</b>  | <b>Implications/None</b>  |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Financial                     | The project has an estimated construction cost of £2.3M with core funding of £2M identified with the Comhairle's Capital Programme and the remaining balance being secured from external grant funding.   |
| Legal                         | None in relation to the recommendation of the report.   |
| Staffing                      | None in relation to the recommendation of the report.   |
| Assets and Property           | The development of a sports facility within the footprint of the Stornoway Primary campus will contribute to the amenity on-site but will increase utilities, servicing, and maintenance costs over the lifespan of the building.   |
|                               |   |
| <b>Strategic Implications</b> | <b>Implications/None</b>  |
| Risk                          | <p><b>Strategic Risk Register:</b> None</p> <p><b>Financial Risk:</b> There will be a significant degree of risk in financial exposure for investment of this degree of Comhairle funds in a single development project.</p> <p><b>Project Risk:</b> A full summary of the construction risks has been compiled, and a Risk Register is being maintained. This is reviewed and updated regularly by the project oversight team.</p> |
| Equalities/Child Rights       | None in relation to the recommendation of the report.   |
| Corporate Strategy            | <p><b>Support Children, Families and Young People:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support children and their families to be health and active.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strengthen the Local Economy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prioritise investment in Comhairle buildings and infrastructure, maximising effectiveness of available internal and external funding sources.</li> </ul>           |
| Environmental Impact          | None in relation to the recommendation of the report.   |
| Consultation                  | None in relation to the recommendation of the report.   |



## BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The development of a new sports facility at Stornoway Primary has been considered by the school and its Parent Council for a considerable number of years as part of wider discussions about the school's facilities and overall capacity.
- 5.2 Following a decision made as part of the Comhairle budget-setting meeting in February 2021, a commitment was made to explore options to develop an all-weather pitch facility at Stornoway Primary. Further discussion and consultation throughout 2021 indicated that the preferred development option was for a covered sports hall rather than an open all-weather facility.
- 5.3 The Education, Sport and Children's Services Committee decided at its meeting of 30 November 2021 to approve, in principle, the design, costs and finance package for the Stornoway Primary Sports Development based on a maximum construction cost of £1.8M and to devolve powers to the Director of Education, Skills and Children's Services, Head of Property and Infrastructure and the Head of Exchequer Services to oversee and approve final design proposals following consultation with stakeholders on condition of final proposals being within the agreed financial envelope.
- 5.4 After the project design was developed further and more detailed information was gathered about the costs of erecting a tensile fabric style building, it was agreed by the Comhairle in June 2022 to increase the project budget to £1.95M for the construction of a four-court sports facility at Stornoway Primary.
- 5.5 The setting of the Comhairle's Capital Programme for 2023-28 confirmed the provision of £2M for the development of a sports facility at Stornoway Primary.
- 5.6 Subsequent development of the design and exploration of the market for the proposed building type, it was confirmed by February 2024 that the cost of the project had increased to £2.25M. It was agreed at meetings of the Education, Sport and Children's Services Committee and the Policy and Resources Committee in February 2024 that the increase in project cost beyond the £2M identified in the capital programme would be met from the Universal Free School Meals Expansion Programme funding in respect of the new facility increasing dining capacity in the school to permit the expansion of meal provision.

## DETAIL

- 6.1 The proposed sports development at Stornoway Primary is situated to the north-east of the current building within the bounds of the school playing fields, a short distance from the rear of the school. It comprises a building of steel frame and tensile fabric construction that is double skinned, insulated and heated and is fitted out to the standard of a multi-sports games hall.
- 6.2 The building offers a gross internal floor area of 564m<sup>2</sup> that is divided into a games hall of 468m<sup>2</sup>, equipment storage of 44.6m<sup>2</sup> and toilets and changing area of 26.8m<sup>2</sup>. The proposed games hall is of a size to permit three badminton courts and is intended to be able to be used either as single large space or divided into two separate teaching spaces, each offering 235m<sup>2</sup> of playable area. For comparison, the current gym hall at Stornoway Primary offers a single space of 147m<sup>2</sup>, which is combined with shared use of the Assembly Hall of 202m<sup>2</sup> for PE, dining and school events. The proposed new building increases total hall capacity at the school from 349m<sup>2</sup> to 817m<sup>2</sup>.



- 6.3 The specialist nature of the building construction meant that, whilst it offered the ability to maximise size in relation to cost, it also presented challenges in sourcing and procurement in a limited market for the specification required. An international supplier was identified and, following initial procurement processes, was confirmed as the preferred supplier.
- 6.4 Planning permission for the project was submitted in September 2024 and subsequently granted in late December. The application can be viewed on the Comhairle website using this link: [Stornoway Primary Sports Development Planning Application](#). The application includes a number of maps, elevations and plans of the proposed building, a selection of which are appended to this report.
- 6.5 Following receipt of planning consent, work was undertaken to finalise the design, conduct full cost planning and to make preparations for final tendering of the proprietary building and the groundworks and construction contracts. During this work, it was identified that change was required to the specification of the heating system that had to be incorporated into the design at a later stage.
- 6.6 As the project reaches the final tendering stage, there is increasing certainty about cost, which is now estimated to be £2.3M. The increase from the previous report of approximately £50,000 is as a result of the changes required to the specification of the heating system.
- 6.7 The tender for the construction works was published in April, with submissions due by early May. Subject to there being no issues at that stage, contract awards are expected in early summer, with commencement on-site shortly afterwards. As a result, the indicative completion and entry date is January 2026.

## CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The project continues to progress through the development and procurement stages and is currently on course for commencement on-site in summer 2025, which completion estimated for early 2026. The project has an estimated total development cost of £2.3M, funded from £2M from the Comhairle's Capital Programme and £300,000 from Universal Free School Meal expansion funding.

