

(vii) Mr K Gowans

To the Chair of the Corporate Resources Committee

“Culloden Academy is experiencing chronic overcrowding which has been well documented over many years on the school roll projections. The school is currently on track to be over capacity by 300 pupils by 2022 which the school will not be able to accommodate.

In 2018, this Council agreed an allocation of £7.5m from the Capital Budget to fund a new extension to be completed by 2022. There is now no prospect of this being delivered. Lack of activity has delayed this project and the Council is now in a position where demountables, or portakabins as they are more commonly known as, will need to be deployed.

To reassure pupils, staff and parents, will you confirm the extension will be completed by August 2023, the provision of demountables will be not funded from the £7.5m allocation and that the scale of the extension will not be compromised to “fit” the budget?”

- All staff in the Property teams have had to deal with significant additional workload for several months as a result of the impact of the pandemic, with live construction projects (including for example only, major projects at Alness Academy, Inverness High and Merkinch Primary) having to be suspended and then recommenced in a phased manner. There has also been an impact on the combined Early Learning and Childcare/Estate Improvement Programme approved in June 2019, with projects having to be reprogrammed to meet revised delivery targets. The combined effect of this has impacted on progress on other major projects that are still at design stage, and this includes Culloden Academy.
- The revised programme for each of the elements of the project is currently being finalised. However, construction work will commence on site in 2021. It is our intention that the new extension will open, as planned for, in August 2023.
- In respect of Modular Units – Classroom units will be required for August 2021 and additional units will now be required for August 2022. The appendix to the capital report elsewhere on the Council agenda identifies that these will be funded from the Modular Units budget heading. The units can be relocated to other schools at some point in the future once they are no longer required at Culloden. The length of time that these units will require to remain at Culloden is being assessed as part of the work currently underway and will take account of the updated school roll forecasts that will be published early in 2021.