

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET15 AUGUST 2024Report by the Director of EducationIMPROVEMENTS TO EDUCATION INFRASTRUCTURE AT CROOKFUR PRIMARY SCHOOL
AND EASTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. This report asks Cabinet to homologate the decision to spend development contributions on necessary improvements in education infrastructure at Crookfur Primary School and Eastwood High School.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Cabinet:
- a. Notes the availability of development contributions and capacity pressures faced by Crookfur Primary and Eastwood High schools.
 - b. Homologates the decision of 22 July 2024 to authorise the spend and instruct the Education Department and Property and Technical Services to proceed to tender with these proposals immediately.

BACKGROUND

3. The Council's Development Contribution Guidance is clear that housing developments should be facilitated without adversely affecting service provision and infrastructure. Development contributions are sought for necessary additions/extensions and/or improvements in education infrastructure arising from the cumulative impact of all sites within the Local Development Plan.
4. Development contributions are allocated for use solely within the catchment area where the development giving rise to the issue is located.
5. Development contributions must be spent or committed within 10 years of receipt of the final payment. If contributions have not been spent or committed within the timeframe they require to be returned to the Developer.
6. East Renfrewshire Council is currently in receipt of development contributions for use by Education in the Crookfur and Eastwood catchment areas, of which £122k must be spent or committed by 30 October 2024.
7. The latest published documentation, [Planning for the Future of East Renfrewshire 2024](#) notes that Crookfur Primary and Eastwood High schools had occupancy levels of 99% and 97% respectively (based on September 2022 rolls). The 2023-24 data indicates that Crookfur remains at 99% occupancy, whilst Eastwood has increased to 102% with further increases expected over the next couple of school sessions.

8. On 26 June 2024 the Council agreed to place on hold a 4 classroom extension to Crookfur Primary School pending clarification of projected school rolls.

9. Notwithstanding the possible withdrawal of the capital spend on an extension for the school it remains under significant pressure due to the significant increase in the school roll, its' multi-purpose dining and gym hall and the topography of the school playground.

10. The current dining capacity at Eastwood High is already considerably smaller per pupil than other high schools. For example:

	School capacity	Dining capacity
Eastwood	1220	279
Mearns Castle	1540	604
Williamwood	1710	848

REPORT

11. Section 14.3 of the financial regulations states that capital expenditure must only be incurred *'if the project has been included in the Capital Plan, or if funding for the project has been made available from other sources (such as external grants)'*; and that *'any additional grant funding in excess of £50k must be reported to Cabinet as part of the Capital Budget Monitoring reports'*.

12. The rationale for expediting this spend is both to ensure development contributions are not lost to the Council, and also to urgently mitigate the capacity issues these schools are facing. Given the imminent need to progress these projects written approval was sought and obtained from Councillors O'Donnell and Anderson on 22 July 2024.

13. The proposal for Crookfur Primary School is to create a hard games court on the site of the recently demolished Style Academy within the school's grounds. This will include appropriate fencing lining and basketball nets.

14. At Eastwood High School an external 150 m² dining pod is proposed. This is a freestanding structure at the rear exit of the current canteen which will be accessed via a basic covered walkway to enhance the link to the existing dining space. The pod will be fully enclosed with 2 doors and double glazed with toughened glass. Basic heating and LED lighting will also be installed. Flexible furniture will ensure that the space will be suitable for a range of other activities including teaching and larger gatherings.

15. It is anticipated that planning permission will be required for the Eastwood project which, if expedited will take 6-8 weeks.

16. Property and Technical colleagues are currently firming up design and costs. In the event that tender prices exceed the total development contribution sum available to the Council, Education and Environment colleagues will value engineer the project(s) to contain the total project costs within the available funding envelope.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

17. The proposed spend will be met exclusively from development contributions and will not impact on the Council's revenue estimates for borrowing or General Fund Capital Plan.

18. The Facilities Management budget for Eastwood High School will be reviewed as part of the annual revenue estimates processes.

CONSULTATION

19. This report has been prepared following consultation with appropriate staff from various departments within the Council including Property and Technical Services, Planning and Finance.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

20. The improvements to Eastwood High School and Crookfur Primary School set out in this report will not have an impact on legal, IT or subsidy control.

21. As part of these improvements a climate change impact assessment has been submitted.

CONCLUSIONS

23. Utilisation of development contributions to progress a games Court at Crookfur Primary and dining pod at Eastwood High school respectively will enhance the experience of children and young people at these establishments. This will mitigate capacity issues both schools are currently facing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Mark Ratter
Director of Education
15 August 2024

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Planning Guidance: Development Contributions](#)
[Planning for the Future of East Renfrewshire 9January 2024 update](#)
[ERC Financial Regulations](#)

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