



AIRTH PARISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Secretary Mr W. Douglas
34 South Green Drive
Airth
Falkirk
K2 8JP
Tel. 01324 831690

Convenor Mr R. Smith
100 South Green Drive
Airth
Falkirk
FK2 8JR
01324 831538

walter@wdouglas89.freemove.co.uk

J. Swan
Director of Education
Rezoning Consultation
Education Services
McLaren House
Marchmont Avenue
Polmont FK2 0NZ

27/10/09

Reference **PROPOSAL FOR THE REZONING OF SECONDARY SCHOOL CATCHMENTS**

Dear Mrs. Swan..

Thank you for this opportunity to respond to your proposal to rezone Airth Primary School children to Grangemouth High.

We believe it was evident at the public meeting held in Airth that the majority of tenants of Airth Parish are opposed to the proposals. Indeed as our survey proved 97% believe the Education Authority should maintain the status quo for Airth Parish children. Parents are angry that Falkirk Council has waited until school rolls are at such a perilous level before taking action to resolve the problem.

Our Survey highlighted a number of concerns which we will draw your attention to;

1. Their first area of concern was the problem facing children and parents when travelling to Grangemouth High. While we agree the children will be bussed to Grangemouth the problems will arise when children are taken ill and both parents are working and grandparents have no cars, past experience has shown that the school will book a taxi with the cost falling on parents this can be in the area of £10/12.

The alternative is for the child to take public transport entailing a four (4) mile journey to Falkirk and an eight (8) mile journey to South Alloa the furthest point from the School, a lengthy and expensive journey.

There are also the problems arising from after school activities, parents evenings etc. where the parents with no car must use public transport again a lengthy and expensive journey.

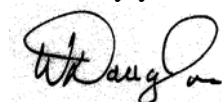
The argument put forward by yourself at the public meeting was that it also requires two (2) buses to travel from Larbert High, this may be true, however the journey to Larbert High is only four and a half miles (4.5) as opposed to twelve (12) miles from Grangemouth via Falkirk.

2. In terms of tradition a large number of the comments in our survey focused on the fact that over a considerable length of time (100 Years+?) Airth Parish pupils have interacted with pupils from Larbert through the various clubs and social events and many lasting friendships have been created, parents believe a natural link has been created between Airth Parish and Larbert & Stenhousemuir. It is difficult to see how a similar link could be created at Grangemouth without the passage of a considerable lengthy period of time..
3. There is real anger among parents that Airth Children should be transferred to accommodate children from the new developments at the Inches and Kinnaird Park. They cannot understand why the obvious increases in the population brought about by the grant of planning permission for new residential developments was not factored in when the school at Larbert was at the planning stage. It is obvious from figures produced for the 2002 Structure plan that land audits proved that Larbert & Stenhousemuir area would be under pressure to provide land for at least 1,000+ new dwelling houses. Issues regarding capacity at the new Larbert High School could and should have been addressed at that time.
It is also noted that consideration was given to zoning The Inches and Hill of Kinnaird children to either Graeme High or alternatively Denny High, both within easy reach of the Bellsdyke area. Airth parents require an explanation as to why this was not followed through.
- 4 Parents are concerned that their children would be disadvantaged by low attainment levels at Grangemouth High. School reports from both schools over a period 4/5 years prove that children at Larbert High are achieving a much higher level of attainment. 2007/8 show Larbert achieving higher percentages at all levels in S5 and S6.
You attempted to give assurances that Grangemouth were improving their attainment but differences of 3.5% , 7% and 18% in S5 Higher results and 6%, 13% and 10% in S6 Highers will not be improved overnight. It must be obvious that Airth Parish pupils will be disadvantaged and this situation will remain for a significant period of time.

As you will have gathered from the results of the survey conducted by the Community Council and from the level of opposition at the Consultation meeting Airth Parish parents do not want their children to be rezoned to Grangemouth High. They are convinced that the rezoning of 20/25 pupils annually from Airth Primary to Grangemouth High will not be sufficient to resolve the problem of overcapacity in Larbert High. They believe there must be an alternative solution involving much greater numbers of children which would provide a resolution to the problems facing the Education Authority.

Airth Parish parents are determined to ensure their children will not lose the opportunity to gain full time Higher Education because Falkirk Council has decided to take the easy option and rezone Airth Primary Pupils to Grangemouth High School.

Sincerely yours



W. Douglas
Secretary A.P.C.C

C.C.

Cllrs C. Martin, C. McDonald, S. Carleshi & L. Kenna.