

Public Document Pack

SECOND ADDITIONAL CIRCULATION



To: Councillor Wheeler, Convener; Councillor Lesley Dunbar, Vice Convener; Councillors Boulton, Cameron, Copland, Councillor Donnelly, the Depute Provost, Duncan, Flynn, Greig, Henrickson, Hutchison, Imrie, Laing, Lumsden, Catriona MacKenzie, Malik, Nicoll, Samarai and Jennifer Stewart and Mrs Stephanie Brock (Third Religious Representative), Mrs Louise Bruce (Parent Representative (Primary Schools)), Mr John Murray (Roman Catholic Religious Representative), Mr Colm O'Riordan (Parent Representative (Secondary Schools)), Mr Mike Paul (Teacher Representative (Secondary Schools)), Miss Pamela Scott (Teacher Representative (Primary Schools)) and Reverend Hutton Steel (Church of Scotland Representative).

Town House,
ABERDEEN 14 November 2017

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

The undernoted items are circulated in connection with the meeting of the **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE** to be held here in the Town House on **THURSDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2017 at 1.00 pm.**

FRASER BELL
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BUSINESS

REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATION

- 5.2 Item 11.2 - Request from Julie Pose (Pages 3 - 6)
- 5.3 Item 11.2 - Request from Andy Finlayson (Pages 7 - 8)
- 5.4 Item 11.3 - Request from St Peter's RC Primary School Parent Council (Pages 9 - 10)

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Allison Swanson, tel 01224 522822 or email aswanson@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Name:
Julie Pose

Council/Committee:
Education and Childrens Services Committee

Agenda Item:
11.2 Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy

The action I wish the Council/Committee to take:
Can the Council or Committee please take into consideration and reply to the following points and observations leading from the reading of Report ECS/17/060:

Recommendation (v) of Report ECS/17/060 states that a review of the travel arrangements for Lochside will take place after three years. This is not in line with the advice given that there would be a continuous assessment process and the period seems inappropriately long considering the importance of the issue.

As per Section 3.2.2 of Report ECS/17/060, the safe walking and cycling route which was agreed by the Planning Development Management Committee in 2015, wherein the addition of a toucan crossing on Wellington Road was agreed, includes the said route along the A956 dual carriageway along which there are no safety barriers other than at the Sainsbury's junction. I believe this is neither reasonable nor safe as a designated safe route for children to walk or cycle along at any time.

Section 51 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 states that authorities can charge parents for using school transport if they feel that the charge can be paid by the parent without undue hardship. There seems to be an assumption that all parents in the Cove area would not experience the undue hardship that all parents in Torry and Kincorth would.

Section 3.3.4 of Report ECS/17/060 states that Authorities must consider the safety of walking and cycling routes to school for pupils living within statutory walking distances from their designated school. If the routes could be considered unsafe, then transport should be provided, even when distances fall short of the eligibility criteria. The route proposed from Cove to Lochside Academy is indeed within the three-mile distance but the children will need to walk along the unprotected A956 and cross at a so far non existent and thus non-tested new crossing. There is not actually a safe route to Lochside Academy from Cove – the route is based on what should be there, not what actually is. There is nothing reassuring for parents, for whom their children will be travelling to Lochside in August 2018, in that the route is appropriate and safe. Cove parents will have to hope that the route will be safe for their children and I do not believe that this acceptable.

Section 3.3.6 of Report ECS/17/060 states that authorities have a duty to carry out school education functions in a way which is designed to reduce inequalities of outcome for those pupils experiencing them as a result of socio-economic disadvantage. Excluding Cove families from the possibility of any free bus transport is creating inequality rather than addressing it. This is very unfortunate given the

work between the current catchment schools to create a collective and inclusive transition for all of the future pupils of Lochside Academy.

Section 3.4.2 states that an exception to the policy of free transport, if more than three miles from the school, is applicable if the child cannot reach that school either by an available transport service or by an available safe walking route. There is no current safe walking route from Cove to Lochside Academy.

Section 3.5.2 of the Report ECS/17/060 states that the saving of £83,000 will be used to help offset some or all the costs of any new arrangements to subsidise travel to Lochside Academy. Why, when money has been earmarked to fund the travel arrangements which already exist, are Cove pupils then completely excluded?

Section 3.6.19 of the report states that no subsidies would be given to Cove pupils as they could be more reasonably expected to walk to school. This does not seem to take into account the children living at the far coast end of Cove, where the distance to school is much greater than those children living in Charleston, and the crossing of Wellington Road which ALL Cove children must do. It is not the existence of the route which is in question, it is the safety of it.

Sections 3.6.24 and 3.6.25 of the report state the risk identified for children walking from Torry and Kincorth (narrowness of Wellington Road and unsuitability of the Kincorth Hill respectively). Can the committee please consider the inherent risk of children walking along a dual carriageway which leads onto a 70mph limit A90 (driver behaviour on a road like this is vastly different to an in-city 40mph dual carriageway with multiple lights, junctions and speed cameras).

The traffic flow measurement was carried out in July 2017, as stated in Report CH/17/192, section 3.5. This was during the school holidays as the last day of Aberdeen City term was June 30th, 2017. This thus provides an inaccurate measurement of the traffic which will be encountered by the children during term time.

Speed recordings taken during this measurement activity were taken from the Souter Head roundabout, where the crossing will be put in place. Recordings also needed to be taken further down the A956 around the Sainsbury's junction as this is another area where children can and will cross the dual carriageway.

Section 3.6.41 states that a varied level of subsidy was considered but, because parents in Torry have been assured that the full cost of travel to the academy would be provided by the council the, varied subsidised option was not considered. This seems to suggest that Cove parents have no option to a varied subsidy provision because Torry parents have been assured they are getting the transport for free.

There is caution on the part of the council to not set a precedent wherein all other schools and parents in Aberdeen city school seek and expect to have free / subsidised school transport. Report ECS/17/060 Section 5.5 states that this situation is unlikely as there are no similar circumstances anywhere else in the city where a large number of pupils would be choosing a walking route which is not considered to be safe. The section goes on to state that it's therefore unlikely that providing similar

subsidies for school transport within the three-mile limit in other areas of the city would be considered necessary.

Section 6.4 of Report ECS/17/060 states that the council would be going beyond the level of support provided to other schools and pupils in the city but the location and safe route constraints around Lochside Academy make that the Academy is unique in its transport and safe route requirements, already acknowledged through Section 5.5 which states that this particular transport situation would not be replicated within the city.

For clarity, Section 6.7 of the report states that it is unlikely that providing similar subsidies to other schools in the city would be considered necessary.

Pupils in Torry and Kincorth have been identified as being able to choose a route to school which has not been identified as safe. The Cove children need to cross a crossing which neither exists and so has not been tested as fit for purpose and walk along the A956 which has no safety barriers along its entire length other than at its junctions. Cove children can also choose a route to school which has not already been identified and can be considered unsafe such as crossing the A956 at a previously unidentified points or using direct routes across fields surrounding the housing estates and the academy.

Reputational risks to the council following the exclusion of Cove pupils being offered free or subsidised travel to Lochside are absolutely applicable as laid out in Section 6.10. This creates a very unfortunate and unequal atmosphere for the different school catchment parents as they come together within Lochside Academy.

Section 7.3 of Report ECS/17/060 states that providing free travel to school for pupils living in Kincorth and Torry would impact positively on pupils living in these communities. The effect of the exclusion of Cove pupils seems not to have been addressed.

Section 7.4 of Report ECS/17/060 states that the council are helping to improve equity in educational outcomes and contributing to the drive to close the poverty related attainment gap, but not if their decision excludes an entire zone of the academy's catchment.

This page is intentionally left blank

Request for Deputation

Name

Andy Finlayson

Committee

Education and Children's Services

Agenda Item

11.2 Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Route to Lochside Academy

The action I wish the Council/Committee to take

Agree as a part of the safe walking route for pupils from Cove attending Lochside Academy to provide an overbridge or underpass for the crossing of Wellington Road and instruct officers to report to the appropriate Committee for consideration of the implementation of this measure.

Please note that in submitting a deputation your name will be placed in the public domain and recorded in the minute.

Return by email to committeeservices@aberdeencity.gov.uk or by post to:

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

1st Floor

Town House

Broad Street

Aberdeen

AB10 1AQ

This page is intentionally left blank

Request for Deputation

Name Anna-Maija Rist

Committee Education and Children's Services Committee, 16 November 2017

Agenda Item 11.3: St Peter's School - Long Term Educational Provision

The action I wish the Council/Committee to take

On behalf of the St Peter's Parent Council, I wish the Committee to note our Parent Council's disappointment with the recommendation in Maria Thies's report, and our dissatisfaction with the process that the report is based on. The stakeholder engagement in the working group process was tokenistic rather than properly collaborative. The recommendation put forward is in direct breach of the purpose of the process, expressed in point 3.4.1 (and also in the working group's Terms of Reference), which was to identify site options for a future **new build** two stream school. A new consultation on the Riverbank School site is unnecessary since our community has already decisively rejected this site less than 12 months ago. Since the 'new build option' scored equally in the Option Appraisal with 'relocation to Riverbank option', this option should be progressed instead.

We wish the Committee takes our deputation under advisement when voting on Maria Thies's recommendation.

Please note that in submitting a deputation your name will be placed in the public domain and recorded in the minute.

Return by email to committeeservices@aberdeencity.gov.uk or by post to:

Head of Legal and Democratic Services
1st Floor
Town House
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AQ

This page is intentionally left blank