

Public Document Pack



To: Councillor Taylor, Convener; Councillor Carle, Vice Convener; Councillors Donnelly, Boulton, Cooney, Copland, Lesley Dunbar, Flynn, Greig, Hutchison, Len Ironside CBE, Laing, Malik, Nicoll, Noble, Samarai, Jennifer Stewart, Townson and Young; and Mr M Paul (Teacher Representative (Secondary Schools)), Mr A Rafferty (Parent Representative (Secondary Schools)), Mrs A Tree (Third Religious Representative), Mrs I Wischik (Roman Catholic Religious Representative), Mrs L Bruce (Parent Representative (Primary Schools)), Miss P Scott (Teacher Representative (Primary Schools)) and Reverend H Steel (Church of Scotland Representative)

Town House,
ABERDEEN 21 February 2017

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Members of the **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in Council Chamber - Town House on **WEDNESDAY, 1 MARCH 2017 at 2.00 pm.**

FRASER BELL
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BUSINESS

REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATION

- 1.1 None received at this stage.

EDUCATION

- 2.1 Statutory Consultation - Consultation Report on the Proposals to Develop a New Primary School with Early Education and Childcare Facilities on the Site of the Existing Torry Academy (Pages 3 - 22)
- 2.2 Statutory Consultation - Consultation Report on the Proposals to Develop New Primary School Provision with Early Education and Childcare Facilities in Tillydrone (Pages 23 - 62)

2.3 Naming of the New Special School within the Centre of Excellence (Pages 63 - 66)

To access the Information Bulletins for this Committee please use the following link:
[Education & Children's Services Committee Information Bulletin](#)

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

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	1 March 2017
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT	Statutory Consultation – Consultation Report on the proposals to develop a new primary school with early education and childcare facilities on the site of the existing Torry Academy.
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/17/016
CHECKLIST:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report to Committee on the outcome of a recent statutory consultation on the proposals to create a new primary school with early education and childcare facilities in Torry.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee agrees to implement the following proposals:

- (i) To amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning the area of ground south of Balnagask Road which is currently within the zone of Walker Road School to the Tullos School zone, with effect from the start of the 2017/18 Academic Session on 22 August 2017;

Further,

- (ii) To amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning the following ground to a new, third Primary School in Torry with effect from the start of the 2020/21 Academic Session in August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter:

- ground to the north and east of houses on Brimmond Place;
- north and east of Balnagask Road from Brimmond Place;
- east of Oscar Road from Morven Place to Glenbervie Road;
- north and east of Grampian Road from Glenbervie Road to Victoria Road; and

- north and east of Victoria Road from Grampian Road to Victoria Bridge

Further,

- (iii) To locate and construct the proposed new Primary School, early education and childcare facilities and Community Hub on the site of the existing Torry Academy, once education provision at Torry Academy has ceased and pupils are relocated to the new Lochside Academy, with effect from the start of the 2018/19 academic session on 21 August 2018, or as soon as possible thereafter; and
- (iv) That the new Primary School, early education and childcare facilities and Community Hub is operational with effect from the start of the 2020/21 Academic Session in August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

At the budget setting meeting of the Council on 25 February 2016, £20 million was allocated from the 5 year capital programme to increase the Primary School capacity in Torry and create an integrated community hub. Final costs will be dependent on updating and refining the financial profiling for the project.

In creating the new early learning and child care provision, funding may be available from the Scottish Government. The Council may also be able to apply for a Regeneration Capital Grant which could be used as a contribution to the costs of developing a community hub in Torry. If available, the application would be submitted in April 2017. Developer Contributions may also be available for the development of community facilities in Torry.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Legal – The public consultations have complied with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. As these proposals do not refer to the proposed closure of any school in either consultation exercise, any decision to implement them by this Committee cannot be called in by Scottish Ministers.

Resources – Officer time and expenditure associated with these consultation exercises has been met from existing service budgets.

Personnel – Implementation of the recommendations will not result in any significant personnel implications.

Health and safety – Any new build proposals will require health and safety plans in accordance with Construction, Design and Management legislation..

Policy – there are no policy implications or risks related to this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Background

At its meeting on 8 September 2016, the Education & Children's Services Committee instructed officers to undertake a programme of formal consultation, regarding proposals to develop a new primary school with early education and childcare facilities and a community hub, on the site of Torry Academy. This report details the outcomes of the statutory consultation process.

5.2 Educational Implications

The Education Authority has a programme to ensure the provision of an affordable and suitable education service for all its pupils. Implementation of these proposals will assist in the delivery of these objectives, thereby meeting the Council's statutory obligations as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended).

5.3 Statutory Consultation Feedback

The Consultation Report and associated maps for the proposed new school, and associated proposed changes to the school zone boundaries for the existing schools in Torry, can be found at Appendix 1 of this report.

The following sections provide a synopsis of the written submissions, public consultation meetings and the reports from Education Scotland, and the Service's response to these.

Methodology

All requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended were met in full.

Feedback from Stakeholders and Education Scotland

Two public consultation events were held on 9 and 10 November 2016 to discuss the proposals. The events were attended by a total of six members of the public. Thirteen written comments were also received in response to the consultation.

Responses to the proposals were largely positive, with consultees stating that they welcomed the opportunity for services to be co-located with the new school. Some respondents raised questions with regards to the Council's ability to recruit staff for the new school, and whether operating three school in Torry in the long term would be sustainable. Several respondents also commented that the existing schools in Torry would require investment in order to maintain the buildings.

In its report on the proposal, Education Scotland noted that the existing primary school provision in Torry has little flexible space to help provide different

learning experiences, and that the proposal for a new school if accepted would offer strong educational benefits.

It was noted in the report that the parents, pupils and staff who met with HM Inspectors to discuss the proposals were supportive of them, although some had concerns about safe routes to school for primary aged children and whether it may be difficult to recruit teachers for the new school.

Finally, the report from Education Scotland included a suggestion that the council should continue to work with all stakeholders to deliver safe routes to the new school, reassure stakeholders that the school can be staffed, and develop a design which meets the needs of pupils, parents, staff and the local community. Should the recommendation to construct the new school be accepted, officers will work with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that consideration is given to each of these areas.

Overall View of the Proposals

Officers were satisfied that no comments had been received which would have caused them to review the merits of the proposals to construct a new primary school and community hub on the site of the existing Torry Academy, and to make adjustments to the existing school zone boundaries in Torry to accommodate this new school.

Consequently it is recommended that Councillors approve the original proposals, which are set out in the consultation report and illustrated in the associated maps at Appendix 1.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience

The creation of a new primary school in Torry and the implementation of the rezoning proposals for the existing schools in the area will help to ensure sustainable and manageable pupil rolls in Torry, which in turn will help to ensure that pupils attending the schools have access to high quality learning and teaching. It will also help to ensure that pupils living in the affected areas have access to safe walking routes to school.

Improving Staff Experience

Implementation of the proposals will allow school staff to plan for children's learning more effectively.

Corporate

Aberdeen the Smarter City

- (i) We will enhance the physical and emotional wellbeing of all our citizens by offering support and activities which promote independence, resilience, confidence and self-esteem.
- (ii) Working with our third, public and private sector partners, we will provide opportunities for lifelong learning which will develop knowledge, skills and attributes of our citizens to enable them to meet the changing demands of the 21st Century.
- (iii) Again, working with partners, we will create a City of Learning which will empower individuals to fulfil their potential and contribute to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of our communities.
- (iv) We will aim to have a workforce across the city which has the skills and knowledge to sustain, grow and diversify the city economy.

Public

A full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been submitted for this report.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

If the recommendations are accepted, management of risk will be identified monitored and mitigated in accordance with the ability to meet risk policy and programmed objectives. As with all Council capital projects, this project will form part of the overall reporting and progress updates reports via the Strategic, Asset and Capital Group.

If the recommendations are not accepted and a new school and community hub is not constructed in Torry, there is a high risk of reputational damage to the council, as there is strong support for such a facility amongst the Torry community. There is also a medium level risk that there would be insufficient capacity within the existing schools in Torry, particularly for early learning and childcare provision, where demand is expected to increase significantly over the coming years as a result of the increased entitlement which families will have to early learning and childcare hours.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: Consultation Report on the proposals to develop a new primary school with early education and childcare facilities, on the site of the existing Torry Academy

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Andrew Jones
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ABERDEEN

CITY COUNCIL

CONSULTATION REPORT

New Primary School – Torry, Aberdeen

This Consultation Report has been compiled in response to the recent public consultation on the proposal to develop a new primary school with early education and childcare facilities, on the site of the existing Torry Academy. The document summarises the responses received on the proposals set out below and Aberdeen City Council's response to the verbal and written comments submitted by interested parties, in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

Proposals:

- **To amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning the area of ground south of Balnagask Road which is currently within the zone of Walker Road School to the Tullos School zone, with effect from the start of the 2017/18 Academic Session on 22 August 2017;**

Further,

- **To amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning the following ground to a new, third Primary School in Torry with effect from the start of the 2020/21 Academic Session in August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter:**
 - **ground to the north and east of houses on Brimmond Place;**
 - **north and east of Balnagask Road from Brimmond Place;**
 - **east of Oscar Road from Morven Place to Glenbervie Road;**
 - **north and east of Grampian Road from Glenbervie Road to Victoria Road;**
 - and**
 - **north and east of Victoria Road from Grampian Road to Victoria Bridge**

Further,

- **To locate and construct the proposed new Primary School, early education and childcare facilities and Community Hub on the site of the existing Torry Academy, once education provision at Torry Academy has ceased and pupils**

are relocated to the new Academy, with effect from the start of the 2018/19 academic session on 21 August 2018, or as soon as possible thereafter; and

- That the new Primary School, early education and childcare facilities and Community Hub is operational with effect from the start of the 2020/21 Academic Session in August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Maps illustrating the proposed changes to the above school zone boundaries are included at Annex A of this report.

1. METHODOLOGY

This consultation was conducted in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. All requirements of the legislation have been met.

2. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Public Event

A public consultation event was held on 9 November 2016 at Walker Road School, and on 10 November 2016 at Tullos School, to discuss the proposals. A summary of the attendance at the events is shown below.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Recorded Attendees</i>
9 November 2016	7 - 8 pm	Walker Road School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 parents
10 November 2016	7 - 8 pm	Tullos School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 parent (and chair of Tullos School's Parent Council)

2.2 Comments Received

Thirteen written comments were received in response to this consultation. Two of these were in the form of emails, whilst the remaining eleven responses were submitted via online or paper based comment forms.

Copies of the responses, anonymised as necessary, are available on the Council's website: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Torrynewschool.

2.3 Issues Raised

The main issues raised at the public meetings and in the written responses to the consultation, are summarised below:

- One respondent commented positively on the proposals, noting that the opportunity to co-locate services, early years and childcare along with community facilities within a single campus in Torry was in line with the community's aspiration to increase access to facilities and services.

- A separate response, submitted by the Community Planning Partnership, suggested that a new school in Torry would help to improve outcomes for the Torry community, and that as such the proposals were very much welcomed.
- At the public meetings, a small number of parents asked for assurance that children would still be able to attend one of the existing Torry primary schools, if they have older siblings already attending those schools, and if they are zoned to a different primary school following the rezoning exercise.
- Similarly, some parents asked whether children who remain zoned to one of the existing primary schools, would be able to attend the new school if they wished to do so.
- Attendees expressed some concern about the long term sustainability of operating three separate primary schools in Torry, and held the view that investment in the existing two schools would be needed in order to maintain the buildings.
- Some respondents also expressed concern about the availability of teaching staff, and whether it may be difficult to recruit staff for a new school.
- It was suggested by some respondents that existing buildings in Torry could be used to create community facilities, and also the new school, rather than constructing a new building.
- Whilst some respondents felt that the Torry Academy site was ideal for the construction of a new school, others suggested that it was too close to the existing Walker Road School building.

2.4 Education Scotland Report

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is the involvement of Education Scotland whose report is provided as Annex B of this Consultation Report.

In its report, Education Scotland suggested that the proposal if accepted would offer strong educational benefits, noting that the existing primary school provision in Torry has little flexible space to help provide different learning experiences. The report argued that the proposed new school would have the potential to improve the delivery of early years education and the learning experiences of children in all three schools in Torry.

It was noted that all parents, pupils and staff who met with HM Inspectors to discuss the proposals were supportive of them, although some had concerns about safe routes to school for primary aged children and whether it may be difficult to recruit teachers for the new school.

The report suggested that the Council should work with stakeholders to deliver safe routes to the new school, and reassure them that the school can be appropriately staffed.

3. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD AND CONTAINED WITHIN THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

The following paragraphs provide responses to the significant points raised during the consultation period.

3.1 Rezoning of existing schools

In response to the queries raised relating to pupils' entitlement to attend specific schools in Torry, should a third primary school be constructed, the following arrangements would apply:

- Any pupil living in an area which is to be rezoned as a result of these proposals, and who is already attending either Tullos School or Walker Road School when the changes are implemented, would have the option of remaining at their current school.
- Similarly, if the proposals are accepted, any pupil living in an area to be rezoned as a result of these proposals, who reaches primary school age after the changes to the zone boundaries are implemented, and who at that time has an older sibling who attends Tullos School or Walker Road School, would have the option of attending the same school as their older brother or sister, in order to keep family groups together.
- Any pupil living in an area which remains zoned to Walker Road School or Torry School, who wishes to attend the new primary school, would be entitled to make a placing request to the new school. Where available, places at a specific school are allocated to children from outwith the school's zone according to set criteria, details of which can be obtained from the Council's website.

3.2 Sustainability of operating three schools in Torry

Whilst current school roll forecasts for the existing schools in Torry indicate that the pupil rolls at the schools will slowly reduce over the next six years, it is recognised that the potential development of housing sites in Torry, including the potential development of the former Craiginches prison site for housing, would impact on the available capacity at these schools in the future.

Moreover, recent national developments in early learning and childcare will also add additional pressures to the capacity of both schools, as children will be entitled to thirty hours per week of provision by 2020, and the Council will also be required to provide places for two-year-olds.

For these reasons, the Council is confident that a third primary school in Torry is required, and that the existing two schools will remain viable in future.

3.3 Availability of teaching staff

The recruitment and retention of teachers has been challenging in recent years, throughout Scotland and more significantly in the north-east of the country. However, the Council remains committed to recruiting high quality teaching staff for schools in Aberdeen City, and has introduced a number of strategies which have been successful in attracting teachers to work in the city.

3.4 Location of the new school

In preparation for this public consultation, the Council carried out an assessment of potential sites in Torry for the construction of a new school, and identified two possible sites: the existing Torry Academy site, and the former St Fittick's Depot site.

Public engagement events were held in April and June 2016 with members of the wider Torry community, and as a result of this, it was concluded that the St Fittick's Depot site was too distant from the centre of Torry, and therefore not appropriate for the siting of a new school and community hub.

Other sites in Torry which were identified during the public engagement process, including the site of the former Victoria Road Primary School, were considered to be unsuitable for the construction of a modern primary school, and were therefore discounted.

As a result, the site of the existing Torry Academy was identified as the best strategic fit for the range of services which are proposed to be included in the building, and was therefore put forward as the preferred site for the new school.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS

Following the conclusion of the consultation period, Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, requires the Council to review the relevant proposal, having had regard to any written representations that have been received by it during the consultation period, any oral representations made to it at the public meetings held on 9 and 10 November, and Education Scotland's report.

In terms of Section 10(2) (e) of the said Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Consultation Report is required to contain a statement explaining how the Council complied with its duty under the above Section 9(1) of the Act.

With relation to Section 9(1) of the 2010 Act and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers are satisfied that no comments have been received which would have caused them to review the merits of the proposals to develop a new primary school with early education and childcare facilities, on the site of the existing Torry Academy.

5. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Committee agree to implement the proposals to:

- To amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning the area of ground south of Balnagask Road which is currently within the zone of Walker Road School to the Tullos School zone, with effect from the start of the 2017/18 Academic Session on 22 August 2017;

- To amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning the following ground to a new, third Primary School in Torry with effect from the start of the 2020/21 Academic Session in August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter:
 - ground to the north and east of houses on Brimmond Place;
 - north and east of Balnagask Road from Brimmond Place;
 - east of Oscar Road from Morven Place to Glenbervie Road;
 - north and east of Grampian Road from Glenbervie Road to Victoria Road; and
 - north and east of Victoria Road from Grampian Road to Victoria Bridge

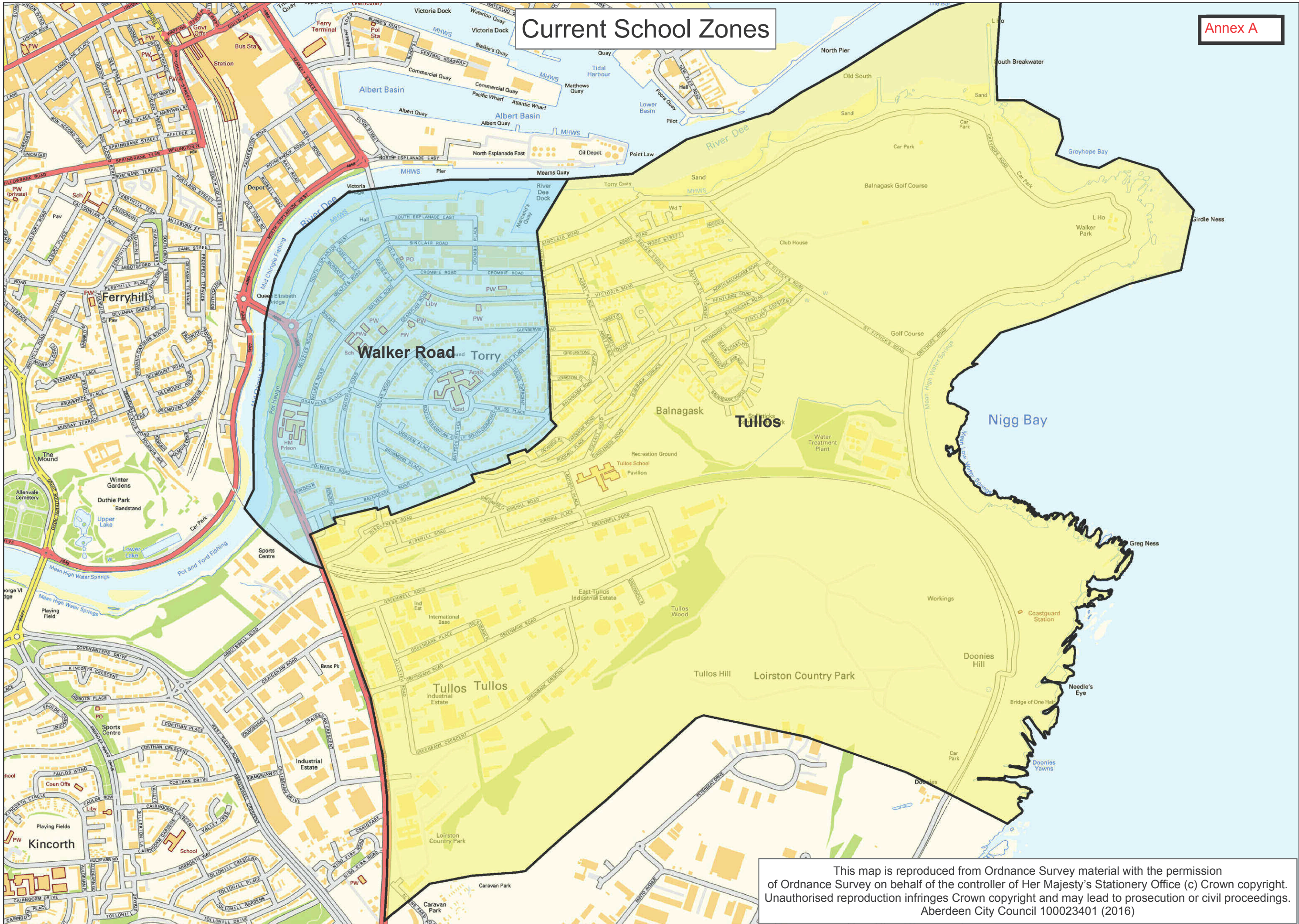
Further,

- To locate and construct the proposed new Primary School, early education and childcare facilities and Community Hub on the site of the existing Torry Academy, once education provision at Torry Academy has ceased and pupils are relocated to the new Academy, with effect from the start of the 2018/19 academic session on 21 August 2018, or as soon as possible thereafter; and
- That the new Primary School, early education and childcare facilities and Community Hub is operational with effect from the start of the 2020/21 Academic Session in August 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Gayle Gorman
Director of Education and Children's Services
February 2017

Current School Zones

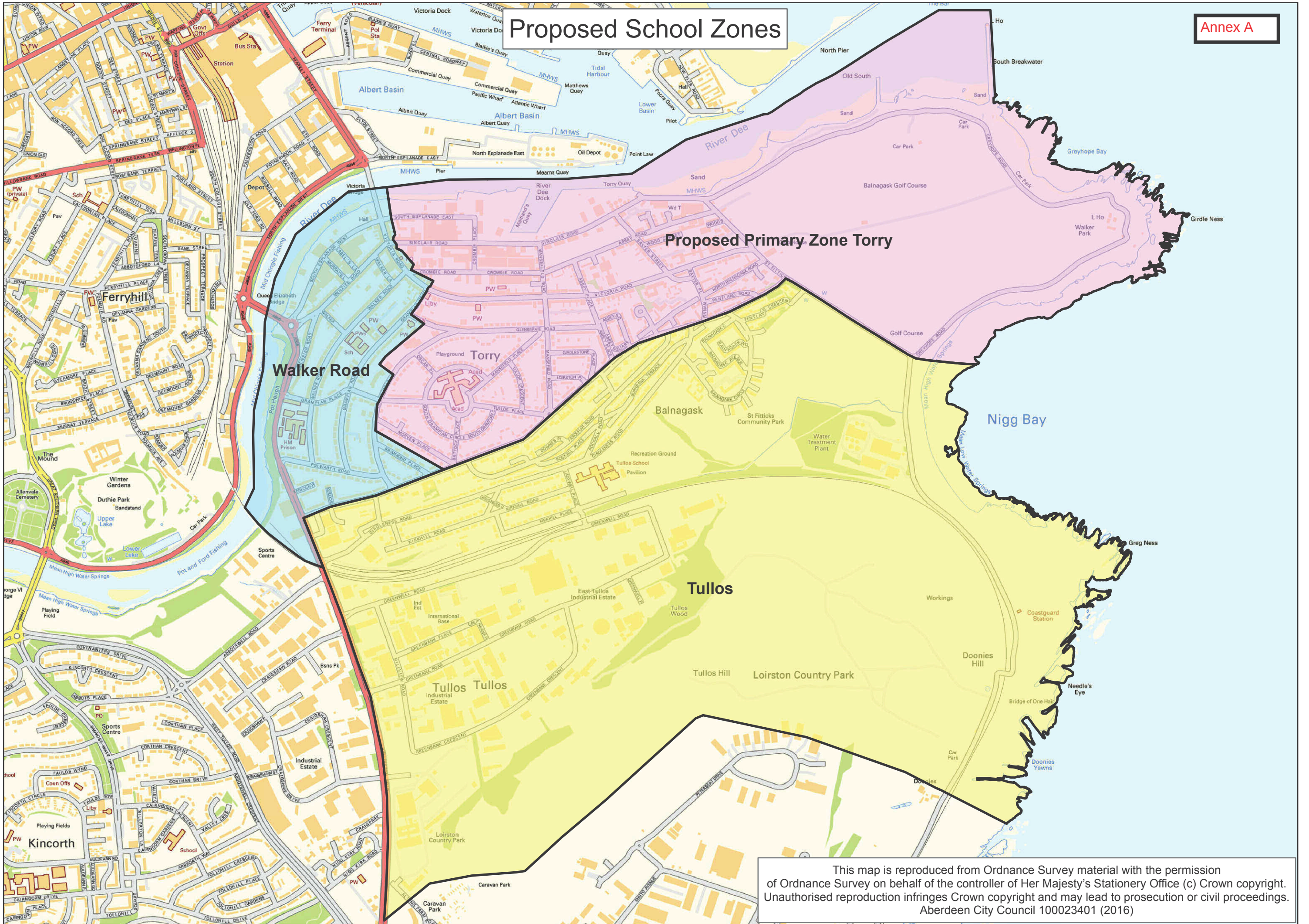
Annex A



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Proposed School Zones

Annex A



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REPORT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Aberdeen City Council to amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning ground to a new, third primary school in Torry, with effect from August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Aberdeen City Council's proposal to amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning ground to a new, third primary school in Torry, with effect from August 2020 or as soon as possible thereafter. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the school; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at two public meetings held on 9 and 10 November 2016 in connection with the council's proposals;

- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the sites of Tullos School and Walker Road School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation Process

2.1 Aberdeen City Council undertook the consultation on its proposal with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 The consultation process ran from 24 October 2016 to 9 December 2016. During this period the council held two public meetings: one in Tullos School and one in Walker Road School. Notification of the proposal was provided to all statutory consultees and the documentation was made available on the council's website, in council offices, public libraries in the vicinity and in Tullos and Walker Road Schools. A proforma was made available for submissions. The council received 13 submissions of which nine were in favour and four were against the construction of a new primary school on the proposed site. Eight stakeholders attended the public meetings and they were in favour of the proposal. The main issues raised were concerns about whether the new school could be staffed and whether investment would continue in the current schools.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 The proposal to amend the current school zones and build a third primary school and early years provision in the Torry area has strong educational benefits. The existing primary schools are at or over capacity and there is very little flexible space to provide different learning experiences. A new primary school will ease pressure on the current schools and provide a modern learning environment and much needed provision for 200 nursery children. This has the potential to improve the delivery of early years education and improve the learning experiences of children in all three schools.

3.2 All parents, pupils and staff who met with HM Inspectors support the proposal. They agree that the new primary school offers many benefits, including the potential to increase the interaction with the local community, easier access and improved facilities in which to teach and learn. They have some concerns about safe routes to school for primary aged children and whether the council will be able to staff the new school in light of the current difficulties in appointing teachers in Aberdeen. If the proposal goes ahead, they are very keen to work with the council on the design of the new school and community hub.

4. Summary

Aberdeen City Council's proposal to amend the existing school zones of Tullos School and Walker Road School by rezoning ground to a new, third primary school in Torry has strong educational benefits. It will provide modern purpose-built facilities for nursery and school children. There will be increased space and more

flexible facilities for staff and pupils in all three schools. The new school and early years provision will result in more space for children in the current schools. This will have the potential to help staff improve learning and teaching for all children. In taking forward its proposal, the council should continue to work with all stakeholders to deliver safe routes to the new school, reassure stakeholders that the school can be staffed and develop a design, within the council's budget, which meets the needs of pupils, parents, staff and the local community.

HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
December 2016

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7- EHRIA Summary and Action Planning				
Report Title	Statutory Consultation – Consultation Report on the proposals to develop a new primary school with early education and childcare facilities on the site of the existing Torry Academy.			
Assessment not required	Evidence			
Assessment completed	As a result of completing this assessment, what actions are proposed to remove or reduce any risks of adverse outcomes which were identified.			
Identified Risk and to whom:	Recommended Actions:	Responsible Lead:	Completion Date:	Review Date:
Whose who currently attend St Peters RC school, dependent on the option taken, may find the building capacity or location is not suitable.	Review options for a potential new site, capital costs being available and a suitable site.			

8: Sign off

Completed by (Names and Services) :

Andrew Jones

Signed off by (Head of Service) :

Euan Couperwhite

Only sections 7 and 8 will be attached to the committee report

The full EHRIA will be published on Aberdeen City Council's website under
http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/xeq_EHRIA_Search.asp

Please send an electronic format of the full EHRIA without signature to sandrab@aberdeencity.gov.uk

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	1 March 2017
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT	Statutory Consultation – Consultation Report on the proposals to develop new primary school provision with early education and childcare facilities in Tillydrone.
REPORT NUMBER:	ECS/17/015
CHECKLIST:	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report to Committee on the outcome of a recent statutory consultation on the proposals to create new primary school provision with early education and childcare facilities in Tillydrone.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee agrees to implement the following proposals:

- That a new 3 stream non-denominational school building with early education and childcare facilities is constructed on the site of the former St. Machar School and former Tillydrone School, and to relocate Riverbank School to this new building;
- That the new school building will become operational with effect from January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- That St Peter's School remains at its present site and officers to assess how best to alleviate short term capacity pressures at St. Peter's School;
- That officers carry out an options appraisal to determine the long term future of education provision at the existing St Peter's School site and the possibility of building a new St. Peter's School on a new location, subject to a suitable site being identified in the school zone and sufficient capital funding becoming available. Further, that officers to present the findings of this options appraisal exercise to a future meeting of this Committee in 2017.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

At the budget setting meeting of the Council on 25 February 2016, a capital budget of £17m was allocated for the Tillydrone new school project. Final costs for the new school will be dependent on updating and refining the financial profiling for the project.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Legal – The public consultation has complied with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. As these proposals do not refer to the proposed closure of any school in either consultation exercise, any decision to implement them by this Committee cannot be called in by Scottish Ministers.

Resources – Officer time and expenditure associated with these consultation exercises has been met from existing service budgets.

Personnel – Implementation of the recommendations will not result in any significant personnel implications.

Health and safety – Any new build proposals will require health and safety plans in accordance with Construction, Design and Management legislation..

Policy – there are no policy implications or risks related to this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Background

At its meeting on 6 October 2016, Council instructed officers to undertake a programme of formal consultation on options for reviewing the primary school provision at Riverbank School and St Peter's School. This report details the outcomes of the statutory consultation process.

5.2 Educational Implications

The Education Authority has a programme to ensure the provision of an affordable and suitable education service for all its pupils. Implementation of these proposals will assist in the delivery of these objectives, thereby meeting the Council's statutory obligations as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended).

5.3 Options for Consultation

Two options were put forward for comment by members of the public, as part of the statutory consultation. These options were:

Option A

- To construct a new school building on the site of the former St. Machar School and former Tillydrone School, to relocate St Peter's RC School to this new building, and to create a new shared campus on this site, incorporating St. Peter's RC School, a new one-stream non-denominational school, and early education and childcare facilities; and:
- To create a new primary school zone to be served by the new non-denominational school, with effect from August 2019; and:
- To amend the existing Riverbank School zone to allow for the creation of the new school zone, with effect from August 2019; and:
- The new school building to be operational with effect from 1st January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Or:

Option B

- To construct a new three stream non-denominational school building with early education and childcare facilities on the site of the former St. Machar School and former Tillydrone School, and to relocate Riverbank School to this new building; and:
- To relocate St. Peter's School into the current Riverbank School building; and:
- The new school building and relocated schools to be operational with effect from January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

5.4 Alternative Proposals

Within the responses received during the consultation period, a number of alternative options were put forward, and these are summarised below:

Option C: To build a three stream denominational school with Early Learning Education facilities on the former St. Machar/Tillydrone primary school site.

Option D: To extend Riverbank School to a three stream school, and build a new two stream building for St. Peter's School on the former St. Machar/Tillydrone School site.

Option E: To build a new St. Peter's School on the Dunbar Halls site, Old Aberdeen.

Option F: To build/expand on the existing site of St. Peter's School.

Option G: To explore building a new school on available land in the Seaton area.

5.5 Statutory Consultation Feedback

The Consultation Report, detailing a full summary of the responses to the consultation, can be found at Appendix 1 of this report.

The following sections provide a synopsis of the written submissions, public consultation meetings and the reports from Education Scotland, and the Service's response to these.

Methodology

All requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended were met in full.

Feedback from Stakeholders

A series of five public consultation events were held in November and December 2016 to discuss the proposals. The events were attended by approximately 120 members of the public. 267 written comments were also received during the consultation period.

A wide range of views were conveyed in response to this consultation, with no clear overall preference being expressed for any one of the options put forwards.

In commenting on Option A, respondents most closely associated with Riverbank School were concerned about the Tillydrone community being split, if it were to be served by two separate schools, whilst respondents associated with St Peter's School raised concerns that a shared campus model would limit the capacity which would be available for the school to continue growing. It was also felt that this option could result in increased tensions between communities.

Some responses in support of Option A were received, with consultees suggesting that this option would help resolve the capacity issues and allow St Peter's School to retain its values, ethos, culture and traditions.

In commenting on Option B, respondents associated with Riverbank School were largely in support of this proposal, as it was felt that this would help to build on the strong community links which had developed following the merger of Donbank School and St Machar School. Others felt that keeping the two schools on separate sites would be preferable to them sharing a campus.

Respondents associated with St Peter's School were strongly opposed to Option B, stating that the location, size and condition of the Riverbank School building would not meet the needs of St Peter's School. Some respondents felt that St Peter's School was more in need of additional space than Riverbank School, and that this option would not adequately deal with that issue.

Feedback from Education Scotland

In its report on the proposals, Education Scotland noted that the two options provided by the Council were of equal merit, and that they had strong educational benefits.

The Education Scotland report included a summary of the discussions held between stakeholders and HM Inspectors with regards to the proposals, and it was noted that whilst the staff and representative pupils of St Peter's School who spoke to HM Inspectors were positive about Option A, parents of pupils at the school were strongly opposed to this option. The report noted that parents of St Peter's School pupils were also opposed to Option B, and that they had proposed an alternative Option C, to build a new three-stream denominational school.

Stakeholders from Riverbank School who met with HM Inspectors, it was noted, were however supportive of Option B. The report highlighted the fact that these stakeholders had strong concerns about the splitting of the Tillydrone community, if Option A was to be accepted.

The Education Scotland report recommended that the council should contemplate taking more time to consider the additional proposals which were put forward during the consultation.

5.6 Overall View of the Proposals

Having considered the comments received during the consultation process, and the range of views which were put forward regarding the options for consideration, officers have concluded that it would be appropriate to revise the original proposals. It is therefore recommended that elected members approve the following:

- To construct a new three stream non-denominational school building with early education and childcare facilities on the site of the former St. Machar School and former Tillydrone School, and to relocate Riverbank School to this new building;
- That the new school building is operational with effect from January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.
- To instruct Officers to investigate options in the short term to help alleviate capacity pressures at St. Peter's RC school, and to examine the possibility of building a new St. Peter's School in a new location, subject to (a) a suitable site being identified in the school zone, and (b) capital funding availability.

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience

The creation of a new primary school in Tillydrone and the further investigation of options for St Peter's School will help to ensure sustainable and manageable pupil rolls in this area of the city, which in turn will help to ensure that pupils attending the schools have access to high quality learning and teaching.

Improving Staff Experience

Implementation of the proposals will allow school staff to plan for children's learning more effectively.

Corporate

Aberdeen the Smarter City

- (i) We will enhance the physical and emotional wellbeing of all our citizens by offering support and activities which promote independence, resilience, confidence and self-esteem.
- (ii) Working with our third, public and private sector partners, we will provide opportunities for lifelong learning which will develop knowledge, skills and attributes of our citizens to enable them to meet the changing demands of the 21st Century.
- (iii) Again, working with partners, we will create a City of Learning which will empower individuals to fulfil their potential and contribute to the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of our communities.
- (iv) We will aim to have a workforce across the city which has the skills and knowledge to sustain, grow and diversify the city economy.

Public

A full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been submitted for this report.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

If the recommendations are accepted, management of risk will be identified, monitored and mitigated in accordance with the ability to meet risk policy and programmed objectives. As with all Council capital projects, this project will form part of the overall reporting and progress updates reports via the Strategic, Asset and Capital Group.

If the recommendations are not accepted and a new school is not built in Tillydrone, there is a high risk of the pupil roll at Riverbank School continuing to increase year-on-year over the next seven years, taking the school far beyond its current capacity. Alternative measures would need to be introduced in order

to accommodate the numbers of pupils expected to be living in the Tillydrone area, and opportunities to increase the capacity of the school on its existing site are very limited. Consequently there would be a significant negative impact on the school and its ability to deliver high quality learning and teaching, as a result of this additional demand on school capacity.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1: Consultation Report on the proposals to create a new primary school in the Tillydrone area, in order to alleviate capacity pressures at both Riverbank and St. Peter's RC School.

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Andrew Jones
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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

CONSULTATION REPORT

This Consultation Report has been compiled in response to the recent public consultation on the proposal to create a new primary school in the Tillydrone area in order to alleviate capacity pressures at both Riverbank School and St. Peter's School. The document summarises the responses received on the proposals set out below and Aberdeen City Council's response to the verbal and written comments submitted by interested parties, in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

Proposals:

Option A

- To construct a new school building on the site of the former St. Machar School and former Tillydrone School, to relocate St Peter's School to this new building, and to create a new shared campus on this site, incorporating St. Peter's School, a new stream non-denominational school, and early education and childcare facilities; and:
- To create a new primary school zone to be served by the new non-denominational school, with effect from August 2019; and:
- To amend the existing Riverbank School zone to allow for the creation of the new school zone, with effect from August 2019; and:
- The new school building to be operational with effect from 1st January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Or:

Option B

- To construct a new 3 stream non-denominational school building with early education and childcare facilities on the site of the former St. Machar

School and former Tillydrone School, and to relocate Riverbank School to this new building; and:

- **To relocate St. Peter's School into the current Riverbank School building; and:**
- **The new school building and relocated schools to be operational with effect from January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.**

Maps illustrating the proposed changes to the above school zone boundaries are included at Annex A of this report.

1. METHODOLOGY

This consultation was conducted in the accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. All requirements of the legislation have been met.

2. INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

2.1 Public Events

Prior to the commencement of the statutory consultation period, Officers organised a number of community engagement meetings with the Riverbank and St. Peter’s School communities in May 2016. These meetings were held to informally engage and discuss options to create additional school capacity for both denominational and non-denominational education in the area. A number of public consultation events were held during the consultation period to discuss the proposals. The table below details the number of attendees at each public meeting:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Recorded Attendees</i>
29 th November 2016	7- 8 pm	St. Peter’s School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 parents / guardians • 3 members of school staff • 3 community members • 5 Aberdeen City Council officers
30 th November 2016	7- 8 pm	St. Peter’s School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 parents / guardians • 1 pupil • 2 representatives of the Diocese of Aberdeen • 2 members of school staff • 5 community members • 5 Aberdeen City Council officers
1 st December 2016	7- 8 pm	Riverbank School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 parents / guardians • 2 members of school staff • 3 community members • 2 Aberdeen City Council officers
7 th December 2016	3.30 – 4.30pm	St. Peter’s School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 parents / guardians • 17 members of school staff • 2 representatives of the Diocese of Aberdeen • 2 community members • 3 Aberdeen City Council officers
8 th December 2016	3.30 – 4.30pm	Riverbank School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 parents / guardians • 3 members of school staff • 5 community members • 3 Aberdeen City Council officers

2.2 Comments Received

The following written submissions were received:

<i>Format</i>	<i>Number of submissions</i>
E-mail	30
Letters	2
Comment Forms	147
Posters/submissions from Pupils	88

The submissions, anonymised as necessary, are available on the Council's website: <http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/Tillydrone-OldAberdeen/>

2.3 Alternative Proposals:

Within the responses received during the consultation period, a number of alternative proposals were put forward, and these are summarised below:

Option C: To build a 3 stream denominational school with early education and childcare facilities on the former St. Machar/Tillydrone primary school site. This option was proposed by the St. Peter's School Parent Council as a solution to the current and future capacity issues at St. Peter's School but which would also allow children from the Riverbank zone to opt to attend the new school which would help ease the capacity pressure forecasted for future years. It was also expressed that this option would allow a more diverse school to evolve in the future.

Option D: Extend Riverbank to a 3 stream school and build a new 2 stream school for St. Peter's School on the former St. Machar/Tillydrone school site with early education and childcare facilities. The option was suggested by an advisor to the RC Diocese.

Option E: A new St. Peter's School on the Dunbar Halls site, Old Aberdeen. This option was proposed by the Old Aberdeen Community Council as it would retain the school in Old Aberdeen and close to the existing site. It was stated that this site was the preferred and most supported site at the pre-consultation meetings in May 2016.

Option F: To build/expand on the existing site of St. Peter's School. This option was expressed by some respondents who felt a desire to preserve the unique ethos and excellent school that St. Peter's School stood for in the community. It was also felt that due to the close proximity to the University and its highly valued reputation, a lot of University staff opted for St. Peter's School irrespective of that fact that it was a denominational school.

Option G: To explore building the new school in the Seaton area as it was suggested that there was a lot of available land in this part of the city.

Reference was made to the rising rolls at Seaton School and the difficulties of enrolling local children at Seaton nursery.

2.4 Issues Raised

2.4.1 General Comments on Option A (creation of a new shared campus)

With regards to Option A, the creation of a new shared campus to relocate St Peter's School to this new building, a new 1 stream non-denominational school, and early education and childcare facilities; respondents to the consultation were generally unsupportive of this option. It was noted that whilst the staff of St. Peter's School and the Diocese of Aberdeen were positive about Option A, parents of pupils at the school were strongly opposed to this option. Stakeholders from Riverbank School also had strong concerns about potential future divides in the Tillydrone community, if Option A was to be pursued.

Comments received on these proposals at the public meetings and through written submissions are summarised as follows:

2.4.2 Comments unsupportive of Option A:

Several respondents commented that Option A wouldn't allow enough space for St. Peter's School to grow and flourish and become a more diverse school. It was felt that providing a bigger school uniquely for St. Peter's School would mean that more applications from either non-faith or other faiths could be received thereby creating a more diverse school. Some people had expressed that whilst they were not Roman Catholic, they had chosen St. Peter's School as they believed the ethos of a catholic education was holistic and inclusive and something they wished for their children to experience. It was also expressed that the Council should be expanding and promoting the excellent model of St. Peter's School which is highly regarded by the pupils and families. There were concerns about future capacity issues at the proposed Shared Campus and how this might result in only RC children being able to access future education at St. Peter's School.

Issues around segregation were expressed as divides between denominational and non-denominational schools could become more visible with a Shared Campus school model. Two schools with distinct identities and religions sharing one building and common facilities could magnify and divide the communities. It was felt that although this model of school has been developed elsewhere in Scotland and Northern Ireland, it was felt that it wouldn't be appropriate for Aberdeen where a sectarian attitude is currently not present. Some respondents felt that a "Shared Campus" school could mean that the catholic community could not exhibit religious imagery throughout the school leading to an "impoverished faith based community which would impact on St. Peter's School maintaining its unique ethos as a Catholic/faith-based school.

Comments were received around fears that a Shared Campus could increase tensions between communities which could create incidents around bullying

and racial tensions and inhibit the denominational children to express their beliefs and practices.

A query was raised whether the single stream non-denominational school proposed (217 capacity) would allow sufficient capacity for Tillydrone given the projected roll of 685 in 2023.

Several stakeholders felt that they wished for St Peter's to remain independent, "close knit", with their own rules, one Head Teacher etc. which would be hard to achieve if a Shared Campus was progressed. A general feeling was expressed that mixing a denominational and non-denominational school wouldn't work and shouldn't be progressed.

Questions posed about how the children would feel and cope moving to a Shared Campus option, new environment, new friends and new teachers. This was felt may have more of an effect on some children i.e. those with additional support needs. There was a feeling that class sizes could be bigger and would impact on the teaching and learning provided in the future.

Feedback from the Riverbank community expressed real concerns about the possible division option A would cause within the Tillydrone community. It was strongly expressed that following the merger of the former Donbank and St. Machar primary schools over 8 years ago which had created much tension and conflict, the community has spent a vast amount of energy in building and creating a more vibrant, successful and cohesive community that is now successfully represented at Riverbank school. The introduction of a new Tillydrone school alongside St. Peter's School would be detrimental and could have a huge negative split across the community. Concerns were expressed that whilst the St. Peter's School community is already in existence, the new Tillydrone school community would not be in existence until the new school opened in 2020 which would mean that relationship building between the two future schools could not be developed before then.

There were expressions from both the public meetings and in writing that the options presented were biased and in favour of Tillydrone. It was felt that the other site options discussed at the pre-consultation meetings in May 2016 were not considered and that the capacity issues at both schools should be tackled and resolved separately. It was felt that as over 80% of the St. Peter's School parents who attended the May meetings voted to opt for a new stand-alone school, both option A & B did not represent the views of the parents. There was discontentment around the lack of other possible options for St. Peters and that the alternative option C should be considered for further consultation.

Comments were received both at the public meetings and from the written submissions questioning the statistical/projected roll forecasts supporting the shared campus option. There was a feeling that the numbers have been wrong in the past and the Council needs to demonstrate the robustness of this data.

Some comments expressed concern about the disruption to the children's learning and friendships that would be caused by the new catchment zone associated with the Shared Campus option.

Questions were raised about how the Council would be able to resource the proposed Shared Campus in view of the current difficulties it is facing with teacher recruitment. It was noted that reference was also made to the additional costs of having two Head Teachers and Senior Management Teams.

A general comment was made as to why the Council should progress with a Shared Campus school when both communities were clearly unsupportive of this option.

2.4.3 Comments supportive of option A:

Some views expressed that this option (Shared Campus) would resolve the current capacity issues with an informed timeline and would allow opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in the planning of the new school whilst also incorporating St. Peter's School values, ethos, culture and traditions into a new building.

Comments were received which commented on the close proximity of the potential new school site to its St. Machar School site and how the closeness to the current St. Peter's School site would not pose too much of an additional journey for pupils and families, especially those families living in Seaton.

Respondents commented on the current links with Old Aberdeen Community and Aberdeen University and how they could be more easily maintained if option A was progressed. It was also noted that opportunities to continue to use Seaton Park for ongoing curriculum work with the children could also be maintained.

One submission believed that the integration of a Shared Campus would be down to the ethos created by the staff and community and felt it was important that St. Peter's School children, parents and staff deserved a new school to reaffirm its identity in the local community.

2.4.4 Comments on Option B (creation of a 3 stream non denomination school and the relocation of St. Peter's School into the current Riverbank School)

With regards to Option B, the creation of a new 3 stream non-denominational school for Riverbank with early education and childcare facilities; and to relocate St Peter's School to the current Riverbank School; respondents to the consultation were generally very supportive from the Riverbank stakeholders expressing the opportunities this would bring in maintaining the current strong and cohesive community links that had been built up since the merger of Donbank School and St. Machar School. However, St. Peter's School community were completely against this option. Comments received on these proposals at the public meetings and through written submissions are summarised as follows:

2.4.5 Comments unsupportive of Option B:

Comments were raised that due to the current condition of St. Peter's School and the fact that the pupils, families and staff have coped with this situation for the last number of years, it would only be right that St. Peter's School was provided with a new school building that could be designed according to their needs. It was very much felt that St. Peter's School deserves a new school rather than inheriting another school's premises and associated problems. Reference was made to the expanding roll and whether Riverbank could provide the long-term capacity for St. Peter's School as a lot of Non-Catholics opt to send their children to St. Peter's School due to its excellent reputation, ethos and values that are in high regard. It was also felt that this option would involve a longer wait for the St. Peter's School children as the necessary repairs and refurbishment work would only be carried out after the new school was built on the St. Machar primary school site.

Feelings raised that if St. Peter's School relocated into Riverbank school this would inhibit a lot of families from Seaton (who currently attend St. Peter's School) to continue to send their children to St. Peter's School due to the distance and lack of transport links from Seaton to Riverbank. It was felt that both St. Peter's School and Seaton School's roll could be affected by this proposed relocation in the future.

Several comments expressed dissatisfaction on how the two options were arrived at and how they didn't represent the initial options presented to the communities in May 2016 nor were they supported by the St. Peter's School Community. It was felt that the initial pre-consultation meetings were tokenistic. There was a feeling that the Council was trying to address two problems with one solution i.e. future capacity issues in Tillydrone and current capacity issues at St. Peter's School.

Some comments received about the current condition of Riverbank school and the need for future investment in order for it to be fit for purpose. It was generally felt that this option was not based on an appraisal of the needs of St Peter's and because the school building was now unfit for Riverbank it should not been seen as fit for purpose for St. Peter's School.

Some respondents commented that Riverbank was currently not over capacity and questioned the validity of the forecasted roll figures over the next five years. Some comments referred to the current premises having sufficient space to meet Riverbank's overall needs. It was felt given that as the St. Peter's School was currently over capacity and the roll was predicted to grow year on year, respondents felt there was a greater need to prioritise St. Peter's School to resolve this issue. Comparisons were made to the fabric of St. Peter's School which was deemed as not fit for purpose; references were made to poor condition of the current building and the constraints to the playground space. Comments on the lack of major capital investment over the years were felt to

have added to this problem. There was a request to be reassured that the current Option B was not decided as a “lower preference” because of St. Peter’s School being a RC school.

One respondent made reference to the history of anti-Catholicism in the United Kingdom, expressing a belief that the Council was unsupportive of St. Peter’s School requests and some respondents stated that this could suggest that “anti-Catholic” prejudice was operating in the Council’s decision-making process.

Some comments were made regarding the validity of the projected roll forecasts and reference was made to the erroneous predictions made in 2012 which forecasted St. Peter’s School roll to be at 108% but was in fact 130%. Respondents also questioned whether further research had been conducted to ascertain how many people wanted to attend either school in the future and how many were likely to be Catholic. Information was also sought on the number of applicants turned down year on year for P1 entry.

Concerns were expressed that parents may withdraw their children from St. Peter’s School in the future if the Council opted to recommend the relocation of St. Peter’s School to Riverbank School. It was felt this proposal would be detrimental to the St. Peter’s School community.

Several responses also commented on the point that a 3 stream school was required for St. Peter’s School in order to allow enrolment of not just Catholic children but children of all faiths and none. The importance of integration was expressed and that having a larger school with wider intake will ensure there is a more diverse school roll intake in the future which will provide a platform for successful integration long term.

There was a general opinion that although the Council should acknowledge and respond to the view of both communities equally, it must put first the needs of those who have been overlooked and overcrowded for too long. It was felt that the options presented to the two communities would create divisions and be unsupportive of growing inclusive neighbouring communities.

2.4.6 Comments Supportive of Option B:

There was a general feeling that Option B would keep the Tillydrone community together and ensure there was enough capacity to allow the school to expand and attract more families into the area. The option of having a large enough nursery that would feed into the new school was welcomed and ensure the children remain with friends throughout their early years and primary education.

Comments were made about Riverbank being the larger school and the fact it would make more sense to provide a 3 stream non-denominational school to cater for its future capacity needs whilst St. Peter’s School would have adequate capacity to grow if they relocated to Riverbank School.

A range of reflective comments were received about the merger of Donbank School and St. Machar Schools and the upset and divide it caused in the

Tillydrone community. People felt that Option B would ensure that this would be a step in the right direction.

One stakeholder asked whether St. Joseph's School had sufficient capacity to accommodate St. Peter's School as a whole.

Opinions expressed a view that it was better to separate both denominational and non-denominational schools to avoid future faith, religious and policy clashes between parents and pupils.

It was noted by stakeholders that the catchment zones for both schools would remain unchanged under Option B.

A comment was also received which stated that the a new school site would not pose a travel distance issue for the pupils of Riverbank School and for the 78 children who currently attend St. Peter's School and live in the Tillydrone area.

2.4.7 Comments from the children attending Riverbank and St. Peter's School:

The children's views were varied and most children expressed a desire for a new school near their current school. Some comments received from the St. Peter's Pupil Voice supporting the Shared Campus option included:

- Meeting new friends;
- Doing project work together;
- More learning opportunities;
- Two communities working together; and
- Shared clubs together

The majority of pupils from Riverbank expressed a wish to have a new school i.e. option B.

2.4.8 Response from the Riverbank Parent Council:

The response to the consultation from the Riverbank Parent Council (PC) noted a strong preference for Option B. The PC had taken pro-active steps to engage with the parents of the school to ensure their submission accurately reflected the broad views of the school community. The PC felt that Option B would ensure that the Riverbank School community continued as a whole. It was felt that this option would be the only option to provide a long term solution to the capacity issues forecasted for Riverbank.

The PC response also felt that the existing Riverbank building would be a suitable replacement school for St. Peter's School and would adequately cater for their current capacity issues and future roll projections.

Option A was deemed inappropriate due to the impact it could have on the community and it was felt that it wouldn't fully address the growing capacity issues facing Riverbank alongside the educational requirements to meet the needs of the children within Tillydrone.

The PC concluded that the Option C proposed by St. Peter's School Parent Council (to build a new 3 stream denominational school on the former St. Machar primary school site) be disregarded as it would not resolve the initial aim of the consultation which was to address the capacity issue of both schools. It was also felt that it would not give the majority of local parents the freedom to choose the type of education that they would wish for their child.

2.4.9 Response from the St. Peter's School Parent Council

The PC presented information on a survey they carried out with the parents of St. Peters to reflect the views of the parents that Option A and B were too limited and did not meet the needs of the community. A 58.2% survey return indicated that 85% of the respondents felt that both Option A & B were not sufficient options for St. Peters.

The survey determined that the proposed Option C by the PC (3 stream denominational school on St. Machar school site with early education and childcare facilities) was the preferred choice of the parents (93.7% - 134 replies). Both Option A & B were ranked as a close second and third choice (69.5% and 66%) respectively should the Council decide to propose either of these options to be progressed.

The PC suggested that a 2 stream standalone St. Peter's School would also be a viable option if it was designed to allow future expansion.

In conclusion, the PC recognises that Option A would mean a new school for St. Peter's School which would resolve the capacity issues and allow for expansion over the next few years and would be closest to their current site. Should Option C be proven unviable, the PC would see Option A as the preferred choice over option B.

Following a meeting with Council officers on 9 December 2016, St. Peter's School Parent Council reaffirmed that they were not satisfied with either option A or B and required a purpose built premises for St. Peter's School in close proximity to their current location.

The PC agreed and understood that this could mean a delay in getting a new school and that the pupils and staff would be therefore required to remain in their present premises in the interim period. The PC were prepared to accept this in return for an interim solution to the current overcrowding and identifying the acceptable alternative options in the future.

2.4.10 Response from St Peter's Staff

The staff of St Peter's School stated that Option A (Shared Campus) would be their preferred option and would be supported for a variety of reasons including:

- Resolving the current and future accommodation issues;
- Maintaining the identity of St. Peter's School;
- Closer proximity to its current location and therefore less disruption for families

- Current links with Old Aberdeen community and Aberdeen University would be more easily maintained
- Opportunities for more collegial working, sharing best practice and learning through joint continuing professional development.
- Opportunities for the planning and design of the new school to meet the needs of current and future pupils.

It was expressed that Option B would cause greater disruption to two school communities. Issues of travel distance, daily routine for St. Peter's School children and families would be avoided if Option A was progressed. As Riverbank School has flourished and become a flagship Rights Respecting School with a fantastic ethos, it was felt that they should be allowed to continue to flourish on their current site with the new Tillydrone school on the Shared Campus to address the future capacity issues.

Staff stated that they would support the Option C proposed by the St. Peter's School Parent Council, but felt that this option could greatly change the dynamics of the school and may not address the capacity issues of Riverbank in the future. There was also a concern that the size of the 3 stream school roll with the addition of early education and childcare facilities may be too large for one school.

The staff reaffirmed their commitment in supporting the chosen option and making it work by bringing St. Peter's School values, faith and nurturing ethos to the new school. They welcomed the opportunity to further develop as a community of faith and learning in better premises.

2.4.11 Response from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Aberdeen

The Diocese noted that all participants had a shared goal and; to achieve the best possible educational future for the children, but noted that there was not a shared unified vision of how to get there. The Diocese commented on how both Riverbank School and St. Peter's School were both happy and excellent schools proudly serving their communities and each making legitimate demands for their children's future.

Option A: (Shared Campus)

The Church stated that they had been wary of the idea of a Shared Campus model since its inception, however feels that it may need to take a more positive eye to this idea and how it could be developed in Aberdeen. Having a strong presence of skilled teachers and visionary Heads Teachers coupled with loving and supportive families in both Catholic and non-denominational schools, it was felt that this would present a viable and positive option to deliver a school of manageable size and deliver the required increase in capacity.

Option B: (Relocation to Riverbank School)

It was felt that this option would present travel difficulties for current St. Peter's School parents, particularly those from Seaton who would need to cross several busy and congested roads to get to the Riverbank School building. The Church response suggested that Option B lacked sensitivity to the needs of the community surrounding the present Riverbank School. It was highlighted that

by placing a Catholic school in the place of a non-denominational school may not make sense to the local population.

The correspondence from the Bishop of Aberdeen also commented on 2 further options for possible consideration. These are set out in the following paragraphs.

Option C: (3 stream new build school on St. Machar site – proposed by St. Peter’s School Parent Council)

The Diocese had serious concerns around the staffing of such a large school and the long term implications for the continued provision of the three Catholic schools in Aberdeen. Comments were made on the importance and value of integration and diversity within the wider community and the need to ensure we avoid any parallel educational provision for a specific “new” group of incoming families.

Option D: (Extend Riverbank School to a 3 stream school and build a new 2 stream school for St. Peter’s School on the St. Machar school site - proposed by a Diocesan Education Adviser)

It was noted that this option would be the acceptable to the Diocese should it prove feasible to include this in any revised proposal. The Diocese concluded that Option A (Shared Campus) would be the preference of the RC Diocese of Aberdeen.

2.4.12 Response from Old Aberdeen Community Council

The Old Aberdeen Community Council expressed a wish to see St. Peter’s School remain at the heart of the Old Aberdeen community and believed that the two options were very much a “forced fit” which suit neither St. Peter’s School or Riverbank School and therefore the Community Council could not support either option. They had concerns about how the pre-consultation meetings were handled and stated a belief that the options presented were ill-conceived.

2.4.13 Response from the Tillydrone Community Council

The response received from the Tillydrone Community Council broadly mirrors the response from the Riverbank Parent Council, in that the Community Council members voted unanimously to choose Option B.

Reference was made to the delivery of education in Tillydrone over the last 8 years and the issues the community has been faced with i.e. shortage of nursery and primary places for local children, disruption during ongoing works at Riverbank School and the relocation of children’s lessons due to increased capacity at the school.

They felt that Option A would not be a suitable option as it would see siblings separated into two different buildings. Riverbank’s current capacity levels at

420 was felt to be a suitable building to accommodate the present and future school roll of St. Peter's School Primary school.

2.4.14 Education Scotland Report

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is the involvement of Education Scotland, whose report is provided as Annex B of this Consultation Report.

In its report, Education Scotland noted that the two options provided by the Council within the proposal were of equal merit, and that they had strong educational benefits. The report suggested that either of the options should lead to important improvements in the quality of learning environments for children, and improved transitions for children from early learning and childcare settings to their Primary 1 year at school. The report also stated that revised school rolls would alleviate current pressures in both schools.

The report included a summary of the discussions held between stakeholders and HM Inspectors with regards to the proposals, and it was noted that whilst the staff and representative pupils of St Peter's School who spoke to HM Inspectors were positive about Option A (the shared campus option), parents of pupils at the school were strongly opposed to this option. The report noted that parents of St Peter's School pupils were also opposed to Option B, and that they had proposed an alternative Option C, to build a new 3 stream denominational school.

Stakeholders from Riverbank School who met with HM Inspectors, it was noted, were however supportive of Option B. The report highlighted the fact that these stakeholders had strong concerns about the splitting of the Tillydrone community, if Option A was to be accepted.

The report noted that the preference of the RC Diocese of Aberdeen was Option A, although the Diocese had also put forward an additional proposal to extend the existing Riverbank School and to build a new 2 stream denominational school on the St Machar site.

Finally the Education Scotland report recommended that the council should contemplate taking more time to consider the additional proposals which were put forward during the consultation, and provide stakeholders with a preferred option for consideration. It also noted that all responses to the consultation would need to be considered in the council's final consultation report, and that the council should work with the school communities to clarify its reasons for believing the current options in the proposal are the most reasonable and viable options available.

The report also noted that the council would need to set out the actions taken to address any in the inaccuracies from earlier versions of the consultation proposal document.

The Council's response to points raised by Education Scotland is set out in Section 3 of this document, below.

3. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED DURING THE CONSULTATION PERIOD AND CONTAINED WITHIN THE EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

3.1 The following paragraphs provide responses to the significant points raised at consultation meetings and in written submissions received during the consultation period.

3.2 Issues Raised

School Forecasts:

There were a number of comments received both via the comments cards and during the public meetings as to how the school roll forecasts were devised and to how accurate they were in projecting future school rolls for both Riverbank and St. Peter's School.

The school roll projections are primarily used to assess the approximate impact of new housing and pupil population increases on the school estate. It is important to gauge whether a school is likely to go significantly over or under capacity, by how much, how quickly and for how long.

Officers have always been clear that pupil roll projections are best estimates which take on board all of the possible available data. There are numerous factors that can influence the long term accuracy of a school roll forecast and as such they are revised every year. Each new forecast updating and replacing all previous forecasts.

The methodology for calculating pupil forecasts for the three Roman Catholic schools in Aberdeen is complicated by the fact that their zones are large and extend into the Aberdeenshire Council area. It is difficult to estimate how many pre-school children that live in, for example, the St Peter's School zone are:

- Roman Catholic children who will enroll in P1 at that school, or
- Roman Catholic children who will not enroll in P1 at that school, or
- non-Roman Catholic children who will enroll in P1 at that school, or
- Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic children who do not live in the St Peter's zone but will enroll in P1 at that school.

Because of these difficulties, the P1 intakes at the three Roman Catholic schools are generally based on an average of the intakes in the previous three years rounded to the nearest 5 – where available updated pupil estimates for schools based on school placement applications, this figure can be revised to provide a more accurate P1 intake.

For city wide calculations, the year on year accuracy is generally within 98% - 99.5%, this has been true since at least as far back as 1997

3.3 Adequate space for St. Peter's School and Riverbank in a Shared Campus

Several comments raised the question if the proposed Shared Campus school would provide sufficient space for the two schools long terms. Using the school forecast figures over the next 5-8 years, officers have calculated that a 2 stream denominational primary and a 1 stream non-denominational (Shared Campus proposal) would provide sufficient capacity to meet the projected roll forecasts and also ensure the learning needs of both current and future pupils are sufficiently catered for.

There were some concerns raised that class sizes would become larger if a Shared Campus school was built. The Council needs to adhere to the statute pupil numbers for each year group and a larger school roll does not necessarily result in larger classes as there is a greater resource allocation based on the number of pupils which increases the flexibility of Head Teachers when considering resource deployment.

3.4 Lack of Options for St. Peter's School

Reference was made on several occasions (both at the public meetings and via email) regarding the lack of suitable options for St. Peter's School and how the Council derived these options following the pre-consultation meetings held in May 2016.

Pre consultation meetings were held with both the Riverbank and St. Peter's School communities in May 2016. The purpose of meetings was to engage and discuss options to create additional school capacity for denominational and non-denomination education. At these meetings, a number of potential sites in the area were displayed to promote discussion and gauge the views of the communities at the early stage of the process. It was clearly explained by officers that all of the sites were caveated by the fact that due diligence had still to be carried and therefore would require further investigations and consultation with the relevant statutory bodies.

Following consultation with the Council's Planning, Roads and Design Team, a robust options appraisal was carried out and sites were discounted on the basis that they would not be a viable for the development of a new 3 stream school.

This work therefore ruled out the preferred site of the St Peter's School Parent Council, the former Dunbar Halls site, as not being a suitable site. Officers carefully reviewed the feedback from these meetings and whilst the feedback indicated that St. Peter's School community was not in favour of a Shared Campus, an additional option (Option B) was proposed for consultation in order to provide an alternative option for St. Peter's School to remain in a separate building whilst providing additional capacity long term.

3.5 Future Staffing Issues

It is the accepted that there are currently some significant challenges regarding teacher recruitment in Aberdeen. Other local authorities in the north east of Scotland are experiencing similar difficulties. The Council is working hard to

recruit teachers to work in our schools, and a number of innovative initiatives have recently been introduced to help increase the numbers of teachers applying for jobs within the city. This work will continue as the new schools are planned and built, to ensure that they will be sufficiently staffed at the time of opening. The Council will continue to explore all avenues to attract high quality teachers to the City and will strive for the excellent education its children deserve.

3.6 Priority Communities

The Council remains accountable and responsible to ensure it can deliver a high quality schools estate which supports the best quality of education and learning for its pupils. All proposed options and changes are carefully considered and evaluated taking cognisance of available resources and budgets to ensure the ongoing successful operation of all our schools.

The Council has a zero tolerance policy on any form of racism and strongly refutes any allegations to this effect when proposing and deciding on options for development. The Council strives to achieve the best solutions and outcomes for its communities and is committed to achieving the best options going forward.

3.7 Disruption to current Children's school arrangements

It was noted that should Option A be adopted by the Education and Children's Services Committee that any changes to the Riverbank school zone would apply only to families applying for places at the school for the first time; children already attending the school would not be expected to move to a different school as a result of these proposals.

Similarly, any children living in the area to be rezoned to the new school who have not yet reached school age when any changes are implemented, and who have older siblings who are already attending Riverbank School at that time, would have the option to also attend Riverbank School, in order to keep family groups together.

3.8 Suitability of Riverbank for St. Peter's School

With regards to the suitability of Riverbank School to accommodate pupils from St. Peter's School, the suggestion by some respondents that the school is inadequate for this purpose is not accepted. The building includes a recent modular extension comprising modern classrooms, general purpose space, and toilet and cloakroom facilities. Its current capacity of 420 would cater for St. Peter's School expanding roll.

It is however accepted that the distance issue for pupils living in Seaton would need to be addressed and this could in time, it was felt, result in a fall in the school roll at St. Peter's School, which could adversely affect its long term viability and increase the roll levels at Seaton Primary School which also has high occupancy levels.

It is recognised that St Peter's School has established close links with the University of Aberdeen and is an attractive factor for academic staff and students. The proposed relocation to the existing Riverbank School building could have associated consequences in maintaining these links. The representation of views from the Old Aberdeen Community Council also made reference to the negative effect of losing a local school which is held in such high regard if this option was pursued.

3.9 **Online Comments Survey**

An issue was raised regarding the presentation of the questions contained in the online comments form. It was suggested that respondents could only indicate support for either option A or B. It was also suggested that respondents couldn't indicate if they were not in favour of either option nor propose an alternative option.

After consultation with Aberdeen City Council's Research Team, the survey was revisited and additional information was added to ensure complete **clarity on the issues raised**.

3.10 **Correction of inaccurate data**

In the early stages of the public consultation it became apparent that some of the data within the proposal document, which related to the current roll and capacity of St Peter's School, was inaccurate. The original version of the proposal document stated that the school roll was 296, and that the school was at 150% of its capacity. The actual roll at the school was 256, and this represented 130% of the school's capacity.

The figures were corrected and an amended version of the document was published on the Council's website. Officers determined that this correction was not a material change, in that both sets of figures showed that the school was significantly over-capacity, and that a replacement building for St Peter's School was therefore necessary. For these reasons no further action was deemed necessary as a result of this incorrect data being discovered.

3.11 **Alternative proposals**

A number of additional proposals which were submitted to the Council during the consultation process and these have been fully considered by officers during the composition of this report.

Officers will continue to work closely with staff, pupils and the parent communities of the two affected schools, to explain any decisions resulting from this consultation, and to share the rationales behind them.

The Council's Response to Option C: build a new 3 stream denominational school

The proposal to build a new 3 stream denominational school (Option C), as an alternative to building a shared campus school or a non-denominational school, was investigated by officers, who concluded that such an option would not help to sufficiently address the lack of pupil capacity at Riverbank School.

Whilst it was suggested that this option might lead to some pupils from the existing Riverbank School catchment zone choosing to attend the new denominational school instead, which would then result in a reduction in the numbers of pupils at Riverbank School, officers felt it unlikely that the level of this reduction would be sufficient to fully address the capacity issues at Riverbank School. Moreover, if the new denominational school was to reach its own capacity in future, children from the Riverbank school zone who do not hold a baptism certificate would not be guaranteed a place at the school, due to the way in which places at denominational schools are allocated.

Finally, officers concluded that whilst it is accepted that more capacity is required for the existing St Peter's School (the school's current capacity is 198 places), the pupil roll forecasts for the school (and also the other denominational schools in the city) are not sufficiently high enough to warrant building a new 3 stream (651 places) school for denominational pupils only; it is unlikely that there would be sufficient demand in the city for such an increase in denominational places.

For the reasons described above, officers determined that the alternative Option C could not be taken forwards as a viable option.

The Council's Response to Option D: extend Riverbank school on its existing site

The proposal to extend Riverbank school on its existing site and to build a new 2 stream denominational school on the St Machar School / Tillydrone School site (Option D) was also considered by officers, who determined that building a suitable extension to Riverbank School would be a relatively complex project, which could not be done whilst pupils and staff were occupying the building.

Given that the time required to complete such a project would be considerably longer than a school holiday, this would therefore require a full decant of the school, with pupils and staff being moved elsewhere for the duration of the project. Officers determined that there is no suitable alternative building available within the Tillydrone area to and to use alternative facilities would likely result in a multi-site decant across the city at significant cost.

In addition, the funding which has been set aside for the construction of a new school in Tillydrone / Old Aberdeen is limited, and is unlikely to be sufficient to adequately extend Riverbank School as well as constructing a new 2 stream denominational school.

For the reasons outlined above, officers concluded that the alternative Option D could not be taken forwards as a viable option.

The Council's Response to Option E: build a new St. Peter's School on the Dunbar Halls

The proposal to build a new St. Peter's School on the Dunbar Halls site in Old Aberdeen was duly considered by officers and was also discussed at the public meetings as this site was the preferred of the school community following the pre-consultation meetings held in May 2016.

Following a robust option appraisal process, this site was not deemed suitable as issues were raised around the poor roads infrastructure in the vicinity of the site and planning officers commented on the likely build difficulties as the site is within the Old Aberdeen Conservation Area. This option wouldn't address the capacity issues at Riverbank School and the site is also not in Aberdeen City Council's possession.

For the reasons outlined above, officers concluded that the alternative Option E could not be taken forwards as a viable option.

The Council's Response to Option F: build/expand on the existing site of St. Peter's School

This alternative option was investigated by officers, who concluded that due to the size and constraints of the site would not be a viable option to be progressed. This option would also not help to sufficiently address the lack of pupil capacity at Riverbank School.

For the reasons outlined above, officers concluded that the alternative Option F could not be taken forwards as a viable option.

Option G: building the new school in the Seaton area

The proposal to explore building the new school in the Seaton area was considered by Officers who concluded that this option would not be feasible for the following reasons.

The available land in the Seaton area is classed as "Green Belt" which would mean if we got consent from Planning to approve a new build we would be required to replace this green space elsewhere within the local area.

Building in the Seaton area would not help address the capacity issues at Riverbank as this area would be out of the Riverbank School Zone.

For the reasons outlined above, officers concluded that the alternative Option G could not be taken forwards as a viable option.

3.12 Revised Proposal

Having considered the comments received during the consultation process, officers have concluded that the following revisions to the original proposals are appropriate:

- That a new 3 stream non-denominational school building with early education and childcare facilities is constructed on the site of the former St. Machar School and former Tillydrone School, and to relocate Riverbank School to this new building;
- That the new school building will become operational with effect from January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- That St Peter's School remains at its present site and officers to assess how best to alleviate short term capacity pressures at St. Peter's School;
- That officers carry out an options appraisal to determine the long term future of education provision at the existing St Peter's School site and the possibility of building a new St. Peter's School on a new location, subject to a suitable site being identified in the school zone and sufficient capital funding becoming available.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSALS

4.1 Following the conclusion of the consultation period, Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, requires the Council to review the relevant proposal, having had regard to: the written representations that have been received by it during the consultation period; oral representations made to it at the public meetings in November and December 2016; and Education Scotland's report.

4.2 In terms of Section 10(2) (e) of the said Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Consultation Report requires to contain a statement explaining how the Council complied with its duty under the above Section 9(1) of the Act. With relation to Section 9(1) of the 2010 Act and having considered all of the information received during the consultation process, officers have revised the original proposal which was issued for public consultation with the revised proposal set out in the Recommendation Section (below).

5. RECOMMENDATION

5.1 It is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Committee agree to implement the proposals to:

- **That a new 3 stream non-denominational school building with early education and childcare facilities is constructed on the site of the**

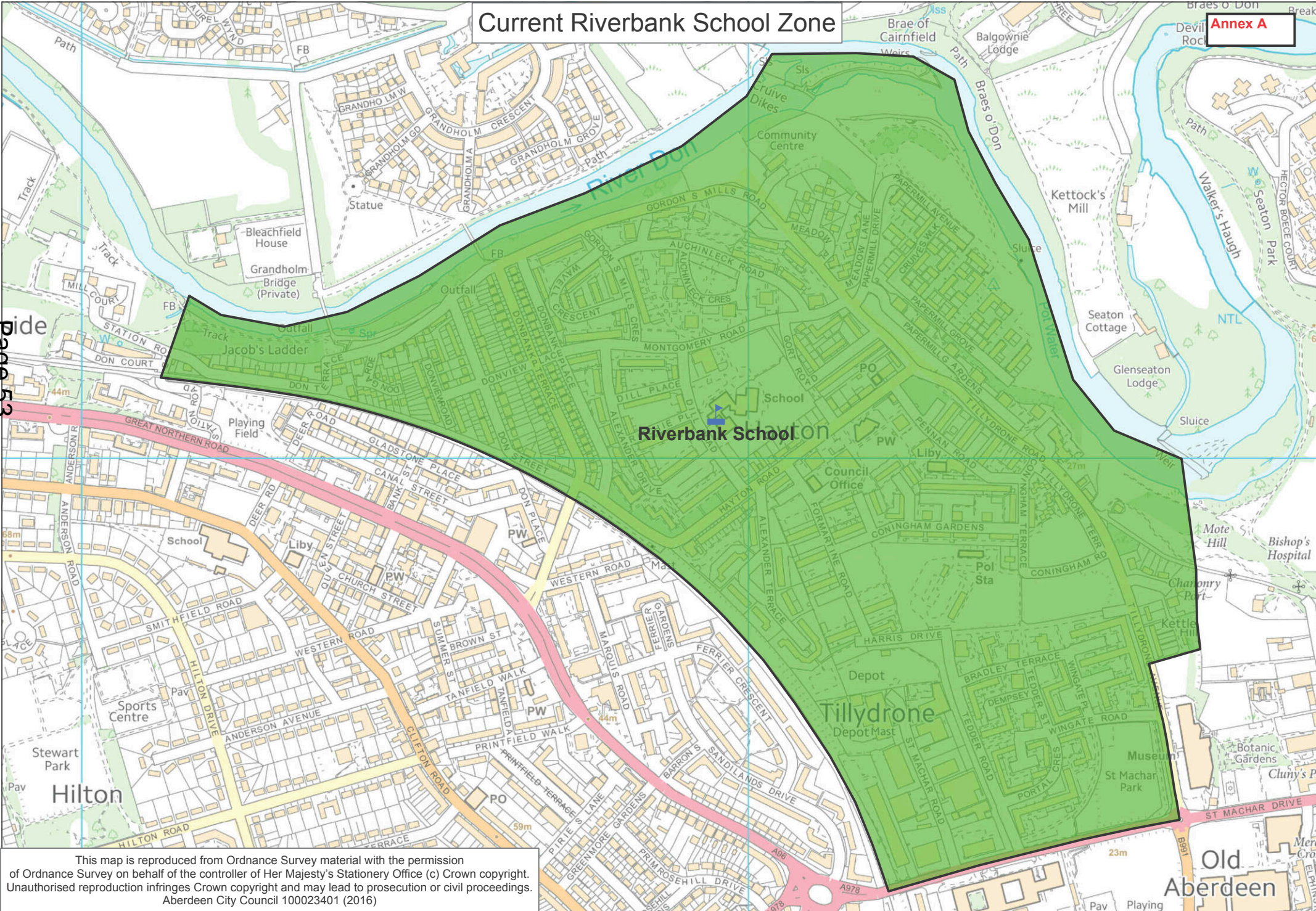
former St. Machar School and former Tillydrone School, and to relocate Riverbank School to this new building;

- That the new school building will become operational with effect from January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- That St Peter's School remains at its present site and officers to assess how best to alleviate short term capacity pressures at St. Peter's School;
- That officers carry out an options appraisal to determine the long term future of education provision at the existing St Peter's School site and the possibility of building a new St. Peter's School on a new location, subject to a suitable site being identified in the school zone and sufficient capital funding becoming available. Further, that officers to present the findings of this options appraisal exercise to a future meeting of this Committee in 2017.

Current Riverbank School Zone

Annex A

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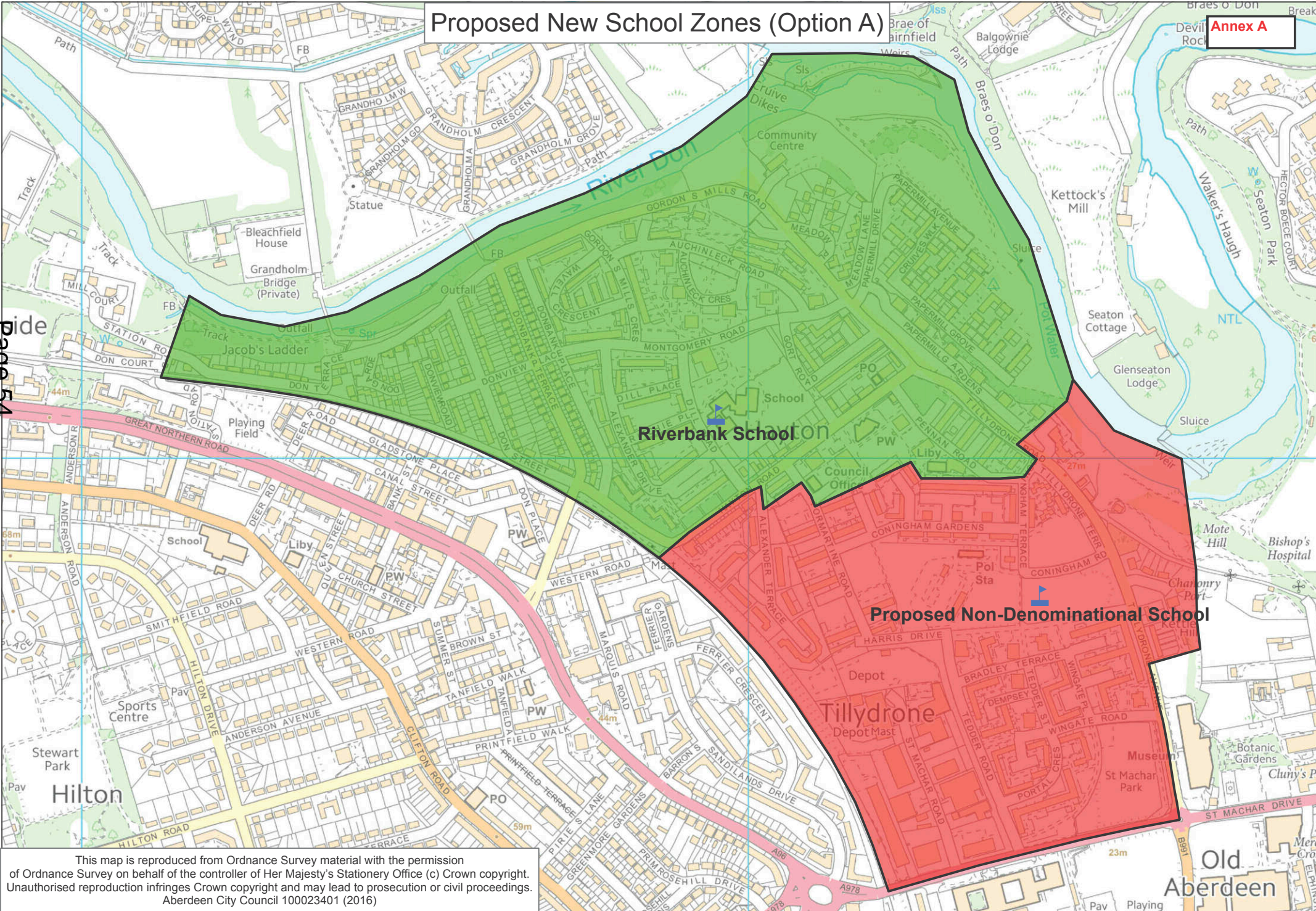
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Aberdeen

Proposed New School Zones (Option A)

Annex A

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Aberdeen

REPORT FROM EDUCATION SCOTLAND

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Aberdeen City Council in relation to St Peter's RC School and Riverbank School.

The council's proposal document contains two options:

Option A - *to construct a new school building on the site of the former St Machar School and former Tillydrone School, to relocate St Peter's RC School to this new building and to create a new shared campus on this site, incorporating St Peter's RC School, a new one-stream non-denominational school, and early education and childcare facilities; to create a new catchment area for this school, and amend the current catchment area for Riverbank School.*

Option B - *to construct a new three stream non-denominational school building with early education and childcare facilities on the site of the former St Machar School and former Tillydrone School, and to relocate Riverbank School to this new building; whilst relocating St Peter's RC School to the current Riverbank School building.*

Both options are proposed to be operational from January 2020, or as soon as possible thereafter.

1. Introduction

This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by HM Inspectors in the Council in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Aberdeen City Council's proposal to offer two options in relation to St Peter's RC School and Riverbank School.

1.1 Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 8 December 2016 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the site of Riverbank School, St Peter's RC School, and discussion with relevant consultees including representatives of the Diocese.

2. Consultation Process

2.1 Aberdeen City Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 Aberdeen City Council's proposal relates to the need to address pressure on school rolls at St Peter's RC School and Riverbank School, both of which are either over capacity or nearing capacity.

2.3 The Statutory Consultation Period took place from 24 October 2016 until 9 December 2016. Five public meetings took place on 29, 30 November and 1, 7, 8 December at St Peter's RC School or Riverbank School. Copies of the consultation document were made available to stakeholders and in the affected schools, public libraries in the vicinity of the schools affected, the council offices and posted on the council's website. The council offered an online survey to which 114 responses were received. Twenty respondees (17.54%) supported the proposal Option A (the shared campus, new school and re-zoning of Riverbank); 94 responses (82.46%) did not support this option. Thirty respondees included comments in their response to this question.

2.4 Seventy-nine respondees (69.30%) supported the proposal Option B (relocation of St Peter's RC School to Riverbank and relocate Riverbank School to a new build on the former St Machar School / Tillydrone site), with 35 respondees (30.7%) not supporting this option. Sixty-five respondees included comments in their response to this question.

2.5 Twenty-eight additional responses were submitted by email. Of these 28 additional responses three respondees supported Option A, two respondees

supported Option B and 23 respondees either did not indicate a preference to support either Option A or B, or supported a different proposal. Many comments which were submitted with the survey or separately by email stated that respondees did not agree with either option and that neither option served the needs of both schools satisfactorily.

2.6 A selection of posters and paper submissions from school children were collated and summarised, where children shared mixed views, with overall 24 supporting Option A and 62 supporting Option B.

2.7 During the consultation period parents of St Peter's RC School identified an additional proposed option to the consultation, 'Option C' and undertook a survey of the St Peter's RC parent community. This proposed 'Option C' is for the council to consider building a three stream denominational school on the site of the former St Machar School and Tillydrone School, to include early education and childcare facilities. The responses to their own parental consultation indicate that this additional proposed option has strong support from the parent community of St Peter's RC School. This 'Option C' has not been part of the council's formal proposals and has therefore not been consulted with all stakeholders.

2.8 The submission from the Diocese contains an additional proposal of an 'Option D', to extend the current Riverbank School to become a three stream school and build a new two stream denominational school on the St Machar site.

2.9 The council and stakeholders alerted HM Inspectors that St Peter's RC School and Riverbank School's Parent Councils were planning to convene a joint meeting to consider joint responses to the proposals. These responses were not available at the time of HM Inspectors writing this report.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 Overall, each option within the proposal has equal merit and a number of potential educational benefits for current and future learners. Either should lead to important improvements in the quality of learning environments for children, along with improved transitions for children from early learning and childcare settings to P1 at school. Revised school rolls will alleviate current pressures in both schools, particularly St Peter's RC School which is already operating at 130% of capacity, with a current roll of 256 and a working capacity of 198. Additionally, the council have classified this building as category 'C', poor quality. One class in St Peter's RC School is currently operating in a classroom with no natural lighting and no running water. If no changes were made at St Peter's RC School the roll could rise to 322 by 2020. The school's current working capacity is set at 198 pupil places. Option A and B would increase the school's capacity to 420. Riverbank school has a working capacity of 420 pupil places, with the current roll being 386 (92% capacity). If no changes were made at Riverbank School the roll could rise to 593 by 2020. Option A would offer a school capacity of 420 (with part of the catchment being removed to the shared campus) and Option B would offer a school capacity of 651.

3.2 Senior Managers, staff and representative pupils who met with HM Inspectors at St Peter's RC School were positive about Option A of the proposal (shared campus). Parents were strongly opposed to Option A and Option B, citing their preferred proposed alternative 'Option C' of a new three stream denominational school, about which they had undertaken

their own consultation and had received strong support from their school community. Parents shared that, at pre-consultation meetings, council officers had proposed four different options for possible locations for a new St Peter's RC School; however they were disappointed that none of these options were contained within this proposal. Stakeholders at St Peter's RC School shared concerns that Option B would discourage children and families from attending St Peter's RC School if it were to move to the current Riverbank School location, as it is too far away from their current site, particularly for families in the Seaton area.

3.3 Riverbank School is a merger of the former Donbank and Tillydrone Schools from eight years ago. Senior managers and representative parents from Riverbank School who met with HM Inspectors were positive about Option B of the proposal. Staff and pupils shared mixed views about Option A or B. Stakeholders shared strong concerns regarding the splitting of the Tillydrone community if Option A were to go ahead and their catchment area was split. Stakeholders shared experience of the challenges of their merger of two former schools and the amount of work undertaken with the school community over the last eight years, to now become one school community and are proudly one of the very few schools in Scotland to have achieved Level 2 Rights, Respecting School status for the second time.

3.4 Considering the two options in the consultation document, the preference of the RC Diocese of Aberdeen is 'Option A', the shared campus. However, the submission from the Diocese contains an additional proposal of an 'Option D', to extend the current Riverbank School to become a three stream school and build a new two stream denominational school on the St Machar site, which they feel would be equally the acceptable. With this proposal, the Diocese outline that Riverbank School could remain on its original site as one increased capacity school, whilst providing a new St Peter's RC School.

3.5 The council identified that in an early version of the consultation report there was an error in the table for the school roll and capacity of St Peter's RC School (Table 2). In the original document the roll was stated as 296 instead of 256 and the capacity as 150% instead of 130%. In its final consultation report, the council will need to set out the actions it has taken to address this inaccuracy.

4. Summary

- Overall, the options provided by the council within the proposal are of equal merit and have strong educational benefits. Either option should lead to important improvements in the quality of learning environments for children, along with improved transitions for children from early learning and childcare settings to P1 at school. Revised school rolls will alleviate current pressures in both schools, particularly for St Peter's RC School. However, the alternative options put forward by stakeholders during the consultation have added further complexity and stakeholders have not had time to provide HM Inspectors with full evidence.

- In the best interests of stakeholders, the council needs to contemplate taking more time to consider other proposals put forward during the consultation and provide stakeholders with a preferred option for consideration. For example, during the consultation period parents of St Peter's RC School identified an additional proposed option to the consultation, 'Option C' for the council to consider building a three stream denominational school on the site of the former St Machar School and Tillydrone School, to include early education and childcare facilities. The submission from the Diocese contains an additional proposal of an 'Option D', to extend the current Riverbank School to become a three stream school and build a new two stream denominational school on the St Machar site. In addition to this, the council and stakeholders alerted HM Inspectors that St Peter's RC School and Riverbank School's Parent Councils were planning to convene a joint meeting to consider joint responses to the proposals. These responses were not available at the time of HM Inspectors writing this report. In taking forward its proposal, the council will need to consider all of the responses in its final report and work with individual school communities to clarify its reasons for believing the current options in the proposal are the most reasonable and viable options open to it.
- In its final consultation report, the council will need to set out the actions it has taken to address any inaccuracies from earlier versions of the consultation proposal.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
December 2016**

7- EHRIA Summary and Action Planning				
Report Title	Statutory Consultation – Consultation Report on the proposals to develop new primary school provision with early education and childcare facilities in Tillydrone.			
Assessment not required	Evidence			
Assessment completed	As a result of completing this assessment, what actions are proposed to remove or reduce any risks of adverse outcomes which were identified.			
Identified Risk and to whom:	Recommended Actions:	Responsible Lead:	Completion Date:	Review Date:
As noted above, there was a perception amongst some stakeholders that Catholic families were to be adversely affected by the proposals	Alternative recommendations are to be put forward to the Committee, to help address the concerns raised.	Andrew Jones	01/03/17	N/A

8: Sign off	
Completed by (Names and Services) :	Andrew Jones
Signed off by (Head of Service) :	Euan Couperwhite
<p>Only sections 7 and 8 will be attached to the committee report</p> <p>The full EHRIA will be published on Aberdeen City Council's website under http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/xeq_EHRIA_Search.asp</p> <p>Please send an electronic format of the full EHRIA without signature to sandrab@aberdeencity.gov.uk</p>	

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	1st March 2017
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT	Naming of the new special school within the Centre of Excellence
REPORT NUMBER	ECS/17/014
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for the name of the new special school housed within the Centre of Excellence. The new school will replace Woodlands Special School, Hazlewood Special School and the Pre-School ASN Provision currently located within Seaton School.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 It is recommended that Committee agree:

- (i) To note the engagement with pupils, parents, staff and wider community to find a name for the new school and the scores registered for each shortlisted name; and
- (ii) Agree that, following the result of the consultation the school be called Orchard Brae.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising from the naming process.

4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Officially naming the school will aid effective transition arrangements as preparations are made for the school opening in August 2017.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Generating potential school names

In late January the children and young people in Woodlands Special School, Hazlewood Special School and the Pre-School ASN Service were supported to suggest potential names for the new Special School. The process involved a high level of individualisation to ensure that the children and young people could actively participate in the process.

The new school will be located in Northfield and is located beside Heathryburn School. The Pupil Council at Heathryburn Primary School and a focus group of young people from Northfield Academy were also given the opportunity to suggest a name for the new school.

The new school will support children and young people from across Aberdeen City and the opportunity to suggest names was highlighted on the Aberdeen City website and through social media targeted at the current school communities and the Northfield Community.

The City wide Parent Forum and city wide Pupil Forum were given the opportunity to make suggestions. This city wide reach ensured that families who who may enjoy links in the future were engaged in the process.

In addition to suggestions from children and young people all staff, parents/carers and partners and were invited to suggest suitable names for the new school. The closing date for suggestions was the 8th February.

5.2 The shortlisted names for the new school

Of the names submitted by pupils, parents, partners and wider community, there were 5 entries that were felt to encompass Aberdeen City Council's aspirations for the school and Centre. These were as follows:

- Orchard Brae
- Northern Lights
- The Howes School
- Ar Daichaigh
- The Bruce School

5.3 Choosing the Name

Pupils, staff, parents, partners, Community Councils and the wider community were invited to vote for their choice of name between February 8th and 20th February. A mix of electronic voting, face to face engagement and paper voting slips were used to encourage wide participation and inclusion of all stakeholders.

Invitations to help choose a name for the school were sent to all staff, parents, Elected Members, the Parent Councils of each school, partners linked to the school, current Community Councils as well as the Community Council serving the new school. Staff in each setting individualised approaches for children and young people to ensure that they could all could effectively engage with the process. Pupils at Heathryburn Primary and Northfield Academy were encouraged to participate given their earlier involvement in generating potential names.

An invitation was sent to all Parent Councils and Pupil Councils linked to the new provision to ensure city wide engagement. Details were advertised on social medial and on respective school websites.

4 drop in sessions were organised to ensure that stakeholders could register their vote in person as well as online.

- 5.4 A total of 419 votes were cast. The number of votes for each of the 5 names are shown in the table (below).

Proposed Name	No. of Votes
Orchard Brae	152
Northern Lights	100
The Howes School	69
Ar Dachaigh	85
The Bruce School	13

- 5.5 It is therefore proposed that the new school is called Orchard Brae.

6. IMPACT

6.1 Improving Customer Experience / Improving Staff Experience

The Centre of Excellence will provide pupils and staff with the opportunity to undertake learning and teaching in a modern, flexible environment which has been built to support learners with severe and complex needs.

The school building will be fully utilised to maximise opportunities to support children, young people and families affected by disability through close partnership working in keeping with feedback from families.

6.2 Improving our use of Resources

The new school will improve the energy efficiency of the exiting two school buildings, reducing the Council's carbon footprint. The school has the potential to support a more efficient delivery of services to this vulnerable group and will also house the Children with Disabilities Team and health colleagues.

6.3 Corporate

The delivery of the Centre of Excellence supports the Local Outcome Improvement Plan priorities of:

‘Children are our future’

‘People are resilient, included and supported when needed’

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

- 7.1 Not naming the school would constitute a high risk and would impact negatively on children and young people due to transition to the new school in August. Agreeing a school name now would allow for effective and timely transition arrangements for all children and young people and minimise any distress associated with this significant change.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Nil

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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