

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education Operational Delivery Committee
<b>DATE</b>	17 September 2019
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Statutory Consultation Reports: Proposed New School at Countesswells and Proposed Relocation of Milltimber School and St Peter's RC School
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	RES/19/339
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Steve Whyte
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Stephen Booth
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Andrew Jones
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	Purpose 1 Remit 2, 5, 6

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To report to Committee on the outcomes of recent statutory consultations on the proposals to establish a new primary school at Countesswells, and to relocate Milltimber School and St Peter's Roman Catholic (RC) School.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee agrees to:-

#### Countesswells School

- 2.1 establish a new primary school on the identified site N7 within the Countesswells development, Aberdeen; and:
- 2.2 relocate pupils zoned to Countesswells School from their current temporary accommodation to the newly constructed school building at Countesswells following its completion; and:
- 2.3 these proposals taking effect from August 2021 or as soon as possible thereafter.

### Milltimber School

- 2.4 relocate the existing Milltimber Primary School to a new building on an identified site within the Oldfold Farm development, Aberdeen, with effect from August 2021 or as soon as possible thereafter.

### St Peter's RC School

- 2.5 relocate St. Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School to the existing Riverbank School building, after the new replacement Riverbank School has opened, with effect from August 2022 or as soon as possible thereafter, subject to the condition of the Riverbank building first being improved to a category A status; and:
- 2.6 refer the proposal for investment works to improve the condition of the Riverbank building to a category A status to the Council Budget meeting in March 2020.

## **3. BACKGROUND**

### **Countesswells School Proposals**

- 3.1 At its meeting of 24 March 2016, the Education and Children's Services Committee agreed to create new primary and secondary school zones to serve the Countesswells housing development, to take effect from August 2016, and to put in place temporary arrangements for interim education provision for pupils living in the Countesswells development, until new primary and secondary schools are constructed there.
- 3.2 The Countesswells community continues to develop and grow, and there is now a requirement for the construction of the first primary school at Countesswells to commence. A statutory consultation was therefore launched on 22 April 2019, on proposals to establish a new primary school within the Countesswells development, and to relocate pupils zoned to Countesswells School from their current temporary accommodation to the newly constructed school building following its completion.
- 3.3 The Consultation Report, detailing the outcomes of the statutory consultation, can be found at Appendix 1 of this report. When carrying out the consultation, all requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended were met in full.
- 3.4 The majority of respondents to the consultation were in support of the proposal, noting the positive opportunities the new school would provide for children in Countesswells, and that the school would relieve capacity pressures on other schools in the area. Some respondents were concerned that there might be insufficient teaching staff available to be recruited for the new school, and questions were raised about the arrangements for interim education provision at Hazlewood School for Countesswells pupils, and particularly the fact that early learning and childcare will not be available at the Hazlewood building.

- 3.5 In its report on the proposals, Education Scotland noted that the proposed new school building will provide additional outdoor learning space that should contribute to the wellbeing of the children, and that the new school will also have early learning and childcare facilities on site which should help with the smooth transition from nursery to primary. The Education Scotland report recommended that the Council should keep parents fully informed as the development of the new school progresses.
- 3.6 A full summary of the responses received during the consultation, and officers' responses to the issues raised, are contained within the Consultation Report at Appendix 1.
- 3.7 Having considered the responses received during the consultation period, officers are satisfied that the original proposals put forward in respect of establishing a new primary school at Countesswells do not require to be reviewed, and consequently it is recommended that Committee approves the original proposals, which are set out in the consultation documents.

### **Milltimber School Proposals**

- 3.8 At its meeting of 12 September 2018, the Capital Programme Committee approved a project proposal to construct a new replacement building for Milltimber School, to address condition and suitability issues with the current school building and to provide additional capacity at the school, which is required to accommodate forecast rises in pupils numbers. Subsequently at its meeting of 13 September 2018, the Strategic Commissioning Committee instructed the Chief Officer – Capital to procure resources for the development of detailed designs for the new school building.
- 3.9 In accordance with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended, a statutory consultation was launched on 22 April 2019, on the proposal to relocate Milltimber School to the new building, on an identified site within the Oldfold Farm housing development, following its completion.
- 3.10 The Consultation Report, detailing the outcomes of the statutory consultation, can be found at Appendix 2 of this report. When carrying out the consultation, all requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended were met in full.
- 3.11 The majority of respondents to the consultation were in support of the proposal, acknowledging that the existing Milltimber School building is no longer fit for purpose, and in need of replacement, and that it does not have sufficient capacity to accommodate the number of pupils expected to be attending the school in the future. Some concerns were raised by respondents regarding the possibility of increased traffic congestion in the vicinity of the new school site, should the proposal go ahead, and there were some questions about the arrangements for ensuring safe travel routes to school for pupils.

- 3.12 In its report on the proposals, Education Scotland noted that the existing Milltimber School building does not have the capacity required to accommodate the expected increase in pupil numbers, and that the location and layout of the school are not suitable and create challenges for pupils and staff. It noted that the Council has a strong case for relocating the school to a new site within the Oldfold Farm development. The Education Scotland report also acknowledged requests from staff to be involved in the design of the new school.
- 3.13 A full summary of the responses received during the consultation, and officers' responses to the issues raised, are contained within the Consultation Report at Appendix 2.
- 3.14 Having considered the responses received during the consultation period, officers are satisfied that the original proposals put forward in respect of relocating Milltimber School to a new building within the Oldfold Farm development do not require to be reviewed, and consequently it is recommended that Committee approves the original proposals, which are set out in the consultation documents.

### **St Peter's RC School Proposals**

- 3.15 At its meeting of 16 November 2017, the Education and Children's Services Committee considered a report on the options for improving the learning and teaching environment at St Peter's RC School, and agreed that the current Riverbank School site, which is due to be vacated following the construction of a new replacement building for Riverbank School, would be the most suitable new location for St Peter's School. The Committee also instructed officers to report back on proposed improvements to the condition of the Riverbank School building, which could be carried out prior to St Peter's School relocating to it.
- 3.16 At its meeting of 6 November 2018, the Education Operational Delivery Committee agreed to refer investment proposals for improving the condition of the Riverbank School building to the budget process, and instructed officers to formally consult on the proposal to relocate St Peter's RC School to the current Riverbank School, after the planned new replacement Riverbank school is operational. A statutory consultation on this proposal was therefore launched on 4 February 2019.
- 3.17 The Consultation Report, detailing the outcomes of the statutory consultation, can be found at Appendix 3 of this report. When carrying out the consultation, all requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended were met in full.
- 3.18 A range of comments were received from stakeholders regarding this proposal. Those respondents indicating support for the proposal recognised the constraints of the current St Peter's School site, and the fact that a relocation to the Riverbank School site would improve the physical environment for pupils and staff. Other respondents noted that they were not in support of the proposal, as the Riverbank School site was seen to be inferior to the environment at the current St Peter's School site. Others were concerned about

the change in location for the school, and the increased travel distances this would create for some pupils.

- 3.19 A large proportion of comments received during the consultation related to the investment proposals for improving the condition of the existing Riverbank School building to Category A (Good) status. Whilst the investment proposals did not form part of the statutory consultation, because these proposals are subject to further approvals as part of the budget process, consultees were concerned about the possibility of the relocation of St Peter's School being agreed, before any decision is made on improving the condition of the Riverbank School building. It was felt by some consultees that this could result in St Peter's School being obliged to relocate to the Riverbank School site, with no investment being made in the building to improve its condition.
- 3.20 Many respondents to the consultation, including the St Peter's School Parent Council and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Aberdeen City, therefore made it clear that their support for the proposal to relocate St Peter's School to the Riverbank School site was conditional on the necessary investment being made in the Riverbank School building, to improve its condition to Category A status, prior to the relocation taking place.
- 3.21 In its report on the proposals, Education Scotland noted that a number of educational benefits would result from proceeding with the proposal to relocate St Peter's RC Primary School to the existing Riverbank School building. It acknowledged how the Riverbank accommodation will provide a significantly improved education environment for children from St Peter's, with the potential for flexible use of space which is not possible in their current establishment.
- 3.22 The report stated that St Peter's School staff who spoke to HM Inspectors highlighted many advantages to the proposed relocation, but strongly believed that the renovation work to improve the Riverbank building to category A needs to be undertaken before a move takes place. The Education Scotland report also recommended that the Council should address the issues raised by children, parents and staff relating to changes in travelling distances and safe routes to school.
- 3.23 A full summary of the responses received during the consultation, and officers' responses to the issues raised, are contained within the Consultation Report at Appendix 3.
- 3.24 Officers have considered carefully the responses received during the consultation period. The strength of feeling regarding the need for a commitment to investing in the Riverbank School building to improve its condition was clear. This has led officers to consider that the proposal set out in the consultation document should be reviewed, and to recommend that any decision to relocate St Peter's School to the Riverbank School site should be conditional on the required work first being carried out to improve the condition of the Riverbank School building.
- 3.25 It is therefore recommended that Committee agrees to relocate St. Peter's School to the existing Riverbank School building, after the new replacement

Riverbank School has opened, subject to the condition of the Riverbank building first being improved to a category A status, and that the Committee refers the proposal for investment works to improve the condition of the Riverbank building to the Council Budget meeting in March 2020 for approval.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Budget lines have been identified and approved within the Non-Housing Capital Plan for the planned new school buildings at Countesswells and Milltimber, and approval of the final budgets for these projects will be sought following completion of fully costed business cases. If the recommendation within this report relating to the St Peter's RC School proposals are accepted, then separate approval for the establishment of a budget for improvements to the condition of Riverbank School will be sought at the Council budget meeting in March 2020.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The public consultations have complied with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. As these proposals do not refer to the proposed closure of any school, any decision to implement them by this Committee cannot be called in by Scottish Ministers.

#### 6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	N/A		
Legal	Risk that the Council is seen to make significant changes to schools without considering the views of stakeholders	L	All aspects of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 have been complied with.
Employee	N/A		
Customer	Risk of negative impact on pupils and on learning and teaching if the recommendations are not implemented and schools become	H	Implementing the recommendations will ensure that sufficient school capacity is provided to accommodate forecast pupil numbers

	overcrowded, or building condition deteriorates further		
<b>Environment</b>	N/A		
<b>Technology</b>	N/A		
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of damage to Council reputation if the relocation of St Peter's RC School goes ahead without improvements being carried out to the Riverbank School building	H	The amended recommendation to approve the relocation subject to the required improvements being carried out helps to reduce this risk.

## 7. OUTCOMES

<b>Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes</b>	
	<b>Impact of Report</b>
<b>Prosperous People</b>	The proposals within this report supports the delivery of all Children & Young People Stretch Outcomes 6 to 8 in the LOIP. The paper seeks approval for creating new and improved school buildings which are designed to support modern curriculum delivery, which in turn will support high quality learning and teaching, leading to improved outcomes for young people.

The proposals in this report have no impact on the Target Operating Model.

## 8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<b>Equality &amp; Human Rights Impact Assessment</b>	A full EHRIA has been completed.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required

<b>Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty</b>	Not applicable
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## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

### Countesswells School Proposals

Aberdeen City Council Consultation Proposal Document on the proposal to establish a new school at Countesswells:

<https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education-and-childrens-services/countesswells/>

Education and Children's Services Committee, 24 March 2016: *Statutory Consultation - Consultation Reports on the proposals to create new primary and secondary school zones in the area of the planned new housing development at Countesswells, and to create a new primary school zone in the area of the planned new housing development in Loirston and Cove*

### Milltimber School Proposals

Aberdeen City Council Consultation Proposal Document on the proposal to relocate Milltimber School to a new building:

<https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education-and-childrens-services/milltimber/>

Capital Programme Committee, 12 September 2018 and Strategic Commissioning Committee, 13 September 2018: *Education New Build Programme 2018*

### St Peter's RC School Proposals

Aberdeen City Council Consultation Proposal Document on the proposal to relocate St Peter's RC School to the existing Riverbank School building:

[https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education-and-childrens-services/st\\_peters-school-consultation/](https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/education-and-childrens-services/st_peters-school-consultation/)

Education and Children's Services Committee, 16 November 2017: *St Peter's School – Long Term Educational Provision*

Education Operational Delivery Committee, 6 November 2018: *St Peter's School – Long Term Educational Provision – Proposed Investment in Riverbank School Building*

## 10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Consultation Report : Countesswells School

Appendix 2 - Consultation Report: Milltimber School



**11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS**

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