

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	12 September 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	St Peter's RC School – Long Term Education Provision
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	RES/23/283
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Steve Whyte
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Stephen Booth
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Maria Thies
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	1.1.2

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work to date regarding the refurbishment of the Riverbank school building, and to seek instruction from members to conduct a feasibility study to assess the potential of refurbishing Old Aberdeen House, as an alternative option for providing improved facilities for St. Peter's RC school.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note the identified alternative option and instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to carry out a feasibility study to assess the feasibility of refurbishing and repurposing Old Aberdeen House to provide a two stream building for St. Peter's School;
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to commence engagement with the RC diocese and the school community regarding this new additional option; and
- 2.3 instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee in November with an updated Outline Business Case for the relocation of St Peters RC Primary, to include the outcome of this feasibility study as an additional option, and the associated stakeholder feedback.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### Background

- 3.1.1 St Peter's RC Primary School provides denominational primary education for the north area of Aberdeen and parts of Aberdeenshire and is the only primary school building within the estate which has a condition rating of 'C – Poor'. The school occupies a site within Old Aberdeen and due to limited

space within the main building, some of the classrooms are located on the first floor of the separate Old Aberdeen House, which shares the site with the school (See appendix A).

- 3.1.2 To address issues with the condition of the building and its suitability for learning and teaching, and following a public consultation on the matter, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee agreed in September 2019 to “relocate St Peter’s RC 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”.
- 3.1.3 A capital budget allocation was approved by Council in March 2022 to support the extensive refurbishment of the Riverbank School site prior to St Peter’s School relocating to it, in order to bring the building to an A standard for condition and suitability.
- 3.1.4 Ongoing feasibility work has been carried out, to explore the options for developing the existing Riverbank School building into a 21st century learning environment for St Peter’s, which also contributes to the Council’s net zero carbon ambitions. The project provides an opportunity to explore how an existing building can be refurbished and improved to meet the ambitious energy targets set out within the Learning Estates Investment Programme (LEIP) criteria, whilst also aligning with the Scottish Government’s Investment Hierarchy which prioritises maintaining and enhancing existing assets over new build options where possible. Appendix B provides an overview of design plan proposals developed in line with LEIP criteria.
- 3.1.5 The updated School Estate Plan was approved at the former Education Operational Delivery Committee on 8 September 2022, when Members instructed the Chief Officer – Capital to put forward to the Scottish Government details of the planned refurbishment of the existing Riverbank School building ahead of the relocation of St Peter’s School, for this to be considered as a priority project for funding in Phase 3 of the Learning Estate Investment Programme, and to report back to the Education and Children’s Services Committee with an update on the outcomes of the funding bid and recommendations on next steps”. [Decisions 08th-Sep-2022 10.00 Education Operational Delivery Committee.pdf](#)
- 3.1.6 A successful bid would provide up to 50% funding from Scottish Government received through annual revenue payments during the first 25 years following successful completion, subject to ongoing compliance with LEIP funding criteria for the first 25 years of the completed building operations. To date there has been no announcement of Phase 3 LEIP funding awards.
- 3.1.7 The timescale since the original committee decision in 2019 coupled with the recent relocation of the Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratories from Old Aberdeen House has highlighted an opportunity to test and review the original project drivers for an alternative option, whilst also allowing stakeholders to re-engage with ACC regarding their current needs and experiences for optimum learning environments.

- 3.1.8 Early discussions with the project team indicate the potential to deliver a two stream school using the Old Aberdeen House with a new build extension. The Old Aberdeen House is situated adjacent to the existing school building and would therefore allow the school to remain on its current site. Appendix C provides a conceptual layout for information, however further feasibility work is required to develop and review this option in more detail.
- 3.1.9 The Archives Service is currently located at Old Aberdeen House and occupies space on both the ground and first floor of the building. If the Old Aberdeen House option is taken forward, the project scope will need to include the relocation of this service to a new premises. Early site capacity work has also determined that no early years provision could be delivered and incorporated as part of the Old Aberdeen option.
- 3.1.10 The proposed feasibility study will provide further details on cost, delivery programme, constraints, risks and benefits/disbenefits of this option.

## **3.2. Stakeholder Engagement**

- 3.2.1 In line with the approved School Estate Plan, ACC has committed that “All stakeholders within a community, including the learners themselves, will be given the opportunity to share their views and contribute to the decision making process on future plans for the estate”. Taking this collaborative approach should lead to better outcomes for all.
- 3.2.2 All stakeholders within the St Peter’s community including the learners themselves, will be given the opportunity to share their views, during the feasibility study process. It is recognised that a lot has changed in our world since 2019 and this new option provides an opportunity to re-engage with stakeholders so that we can deliver optimum learning environments to improve educational experiences and outcomes. Methods of engagement with our stakeholders will be proportionate and appropriate to the timescales in which priorities need to be addressed.
- 3.2.3 Building on the original engagement work back in 2017 it is proposed to continue to work with the established St. Peter’s stakeholder group during this feasibility stage. The group includes the St. Peter’s Head Teacher, representatives from the St. Peter’s parent council, and The Roman Catholic (RC) Diocese. This allows officers to continue to work collaboratively with St. Peter’s Community and the RC Diocese. This group has previously proved successful in ensuring a two-way communication process. It is also proposed to use our online consultation hub to update and seek feedback from the St. Peter’s school community. The feedback received will be reported back as part of the OBC to November’s committee meeting.

## **3.3 Delivery Programme**

- 3.3.1 Dependencies regarding the delivery of the replacement Riverbank School have been aligned to the project delivery programme, a further programme update will be provided within the outline business case in November detailing delivery timescales for each option.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Costs arising from the recommendations of this report will be met from the existing project budget within the Capital programme. Updated option costings will be detailed within the proposed outline business case.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report, in terms of undertaking a feasibility study.

5.2 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) requires education authorities to follow statutory consultation processes in regard to “relevant proposals” as outlined in schedule 1 to the 2010 Act (which includes relocation (in whole or part) of a school). It is not considered that refurbishing and repurposing Old Aberdeen House to provide a building for St. Peter’s School would amount to a “relevant proposal” under the 2010 Act as the building occupies the same site and it is not being proposed that the St Peter’s address and management will change.

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations within this report. The recommended design option will feature reduced operational energy and whole life carbon emissions which will contribute to ACC’s Net Zero target for 2035.

6.2 The refurbished school design will feature zero emissions heating/cooling and will maximise the opportunities in good passive design principals, primarily targeted around minimising heating demand and heat losses through thermal performance characteristics, efficient window fenestration detailing and reducing losses associated with thermal bridging and air infiltration rates.

6.3 Embodied carbon targets will feature in the design brief and shall be referenced against the performance targets within Scottish Futures Trust’s LEIP criteria.

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H)  *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified			
Compliance	Failure to plan effectively for St Peter’s leading to	The School Estate Plan sets out priorities for the	L	Yes

	the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient provision	school estate and proposals for continually monitoring and updating plans to ensure adequate and efficient provision is maintained		
<b>Operational</b>	The new option doesn't meet the aspirations of the Community/ stakeholders	An inclusive communications plan will form part of this next stage. Both internal and external stakeholder engagement will take place and be reported as part of the OBC	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>				
<b>Reputational</b>	Risk of damage to Council reputation if the Old Aberdeen House option not assessed for further consideration and feasibility	Implementing the recommendations in this report will ensure that both options can be tested against the project objective of providing a two stream school for St. Peters	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>				

## 8. OUTCOMES

<b><u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u></b>	
<b>Impact of Report</b>	
<p><b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b></p> <p><b><u><a href="#">Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</a></u></b></p>	<p><i>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:-</i></p> <p>This report supports the delivery of the following policy statements:</p> <p><u>A City of Opportunity</u></p> <p>Policy Statement 2 - Review and invest in our school estate, ensuring all of Aberdeen's schools are fit for the educational needs and the challenges</p>

	<p>of the 21st century. The report seeks Committee's approval to assess the feasibility of using the existing Old Aberdeen House to provide a two stream school for St Peter's.</p> <p><u>A Prosperous City</u> Policy Statement 8 - Seek to buy goods, services and food locally whenever possible, subject to complying with the law and public tendering requirements. Opportunities to do this will be considered for all Capital Projects.</p>
<p><a href="#">Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</a></p>	
<p>Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The proposals in this report support the delivery of <b>Stretch Outcome 3</b> – 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026. The investment in our estate is interlinked with the investment in our workforce and will contribute to the diversification of the local economy</p>
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>Prosperous People: The project will support <b>Stretch Outcome 8 in the LOIP</b> - <i>Child friendly city where all decisions which impact children and young people will be informed by them by 2026</i>. The feasibility study will seek feedback from pupils and be reported within the outline business case.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p><b>Prosperous Place: The project will support Stretch Outcome 14 - Increase sustainable travel: 38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as a main mode of travel by 2026.</b></p> <p>Sustainable routes to school, safety, fitness and the well being of our communities will be assessed as part of the outline business case</p> <p>This project will also support the delivery of <b>LOIP Stretch Outcome 13 – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of changing climate</b>. The project will be exemplar in terms of net zero and green credentials.</p>
<p><b>Regional and City Strategies</b></p>	<p>This project forms part of the School Estate Plan which will support the delivery of the Council's Property and Estates Strategy and the Net Zero Routemap for Aberdeen City.</p>

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	A Stage 1 Assessment has been completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	No other assessments required

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Education Operational Delivery Committee, 8 September 2022:

[Decisions 08th-Sep-2022 10.00 Education Operational Delivery Committee.pdf](#)

10.2 Staff Governance Committee, 26 June 2023

[Decisions 26th-Jun-2023 10.00 Staff Governance Committee.pdf \(acc.gov.uk\)](#)

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A – St Peter’s Site Location  
Appendix B – Riverbank Design Work  
Appendix C – Old Aberdeen House Concept Design

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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