

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance and Resources
DATE	8 May 2024
EXEMPT	The content of the report is public, but it contains an exempt appendix. (Paragraph 8 – Estimated Expenditure on Contracts: ‘This report refers to the acquisition or supply of goods/services where disclosure to the public of the amount to be spent would be likely to give an advantage to a person or organisation seeking to enter a contract with the Council.’)
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Harlaw Academy Suitability Improvements: Outline Business Case
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/136
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Claire Cowan
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents a completed Outline Business Case, setting out the findings of a recent feasibility study, to identify options for improving the suitability of Harlaw Academy.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Approves in principle the preferred option within the outline business case at Appendix A, to improve the suitability of the Harlaw Academy building, in line with the allocation of funding for this project within the Non-Housing Capital Programme, which was approved by Council on 6 March 2024;
- 2.2 Approves the use of resources to take forwards detailed design development for the preferred option;
- 2.3 Gives delegated powers to the Chief Officer - Capital, to award a contract for the refurbishment and extension of the pavilion at Harlaw Road Playing Fields, provided the cost of the works does not exceed the approved overall budget for this aspect of the project; and
- 2.4 Instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee with a full business case within the next 12 months.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 8 September 2022, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee approved the Council's School Estate Plan, and instructed officers to take forwards a detailed action plan to develop and improve the school estate. This included an instruction for officers to carry out a feasibility study, to identify options for improving the suitability and addressing current issues at Harlaw Academy.
- 3.2 The outline business case, included at Appendix 1 of this report, sets out the findings of the feasibility study, and provides an analysis of the options available for improving the suitability of the school building.
- 3.3 This project aims to address critical suitability issues which have reached a point of necessitating immediate action. In particular these include insufficient dining facilities, which are unable to accommodate the number of pupils attending the school, and which require to be extended.
- 3.4 There is also a lack of appropriate facilities at the school for delivery of the PE curriculum. Currently, pupils require to be transported by bus to playing fields at Groats Road, Hazlehead for their outdoor PE provision, and the time spent travelling to and from the site reduced the amount of time available for learning and teaching.
- 3.5 The preferred option identified within the outline business case is **Option 1A – First Floor Extension, Outdoor Covered Area and MUGA at Harlaw Academy, and the Extension and Refurbishment of Harlaw Road Pavilion.**
- 3.6 This option would deliver:
- The formation of a first floor extension on the Harlaw Academy site, creating a fit for purpose dining hall and catering facility
 - An outdoor covered area (sitting on ground level, below the new extension) to ensure that pupils do not lose valuable outdoor space and provide additional space for recreation and eating
 - Additional outdoor space on the roof, as a PE and general teaching space
 - Security improvements to the school site
 - Alterations to current spaces within the school to provide new teaching classrooms, to assist with the predicted increase in roll.
 - Refurbishment and extension of the existing pavilion building at Harlaw Road Playing Fields
 - Relocation of outdoor PE provision to Harlaw Road Playing Fields

Links with the Replacement Hazlehead Academy Project

- 3.7 The proposed refurbishment and extension of the Harlaw Road Playing Fields pavilion is closely related to the separate approved project to replace the Hazlehead Academy building. During the construction phase of that project, pupils at Hazlehead Academy will require to use the playing fields at Groats

Road for their outdoor PE provision, as the playing fields at Hazlehead Academy will become the site for the new school building.

- 3.8 This means that the relocation of Harlaw Academy's outdoor PE provision from Groats Road to Harlaw Road requires to be completed as soon as possible, to avoid any delays to the Hazlehead Academy project.
- 3.9 It is therefore recommended that the Committee gives delegates powers to the Chief Officer, Capital to award a contract for the refurbishment and extension of the pavilion at Harlaw Road Playing Fields (as detailed within the outline business case), so that this element of the project can be prioritised and taken forwards as soon as possible.

Anticipated Timescales

- 3.10 Should the recommendations in this report be approved, detailed design work would be undertaken over the next year, with a view to the refurbishment and extension of the Harlaw Road Playing Fields Pavilion commencing prior to summer 2025, with an estimated construction period of 12 months. This would allow the outdoor PE provision for Harlaw Academy to be relocated to the Harlaw Road Playing Fields site, and subsequently for Hazlehead Academy's PE provision to be relocated to the Groats Road site.
- 3.11 Detailed design work for the Harlaw Academy site would also continue over the next year, and a Full Business Case detailing the overall cost of the project would be presented to the Committee for approval. Following approval of the full business case, construction work on the school site would likely commence in Summer 2025, and the construction period would then be in the region of 9-12 months.
- 3.12 The works at the Harlaw Academy and Harlaw Road Playing Fields sites would take place during term time, as well as within holiday periods. There would be no requirement for pupils and staff to be relocated from Harlaw Academy whilst the works take place, although careful consideration of the sequencing of works will be required to ensure the safety of the site is maintained and any disruption to learning and teaching is minimised.
- 3.13 Initial discussions on these plans have already taken place with the staff and Parent Council at the school, and this dialogue will continue over the next year, as the detailed plans take shape. Full details of the H&S plan will be included within the full business case.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 At its budget setting meeting on 6 March 2024, Council approved an overall budget of £8.6m within the Non-Housing Capital Programme, for suitability improvements at Harlaw Academy and improvements to the Harlaw Road Pavilion. An allocation of funding has also been made available from the Council's Condition and Suitability programme, to support the planned improvements to the Harlaw Road Pavilion.

The stage 1 estimated capital costs for the preferred option as detailed in the outline business case are within the overall funding which has been allocated for the project. The cost of developing the full business case will be met from this funding.

- 4.2 As referenced in the OBC at page 5, if the Harlaw Academy project is approved through a Full Business Case there would be additional ongoing annual costs of approximately £189k for heating and cleaning for the school building added to the budget from 2025/26 onwards.
- 4.3 If Recommendation 2.3 (to delegate powers to the Chief Officer, Capital, to award a contract for the refurbishment and extension of the pavilion at Harlaw Road Playing Fields) is approved, there would be additional ongoing annual costs of approximately £93k for heating and cleaning for the pavilion building added to the budget from 2025/26 onwards.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education.
- 5.2 Section 17 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of an education authority in the performance of their functions under sections 1 to 6 of the Act, to provide for their area, sufficient accommodation in public schools and other educational establishments under their management to enable them to perform their said functions. In addition, an education authority shall maintain and keep efficient every public school, and other educational establishment under their management, and shall from time to time provide such additional accommodation as may be necessary to enable them to perform their functions under the Act and may, provide, alter, improve, enlarge, equip and maintain schools and other educational establishments within their area.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

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 the school leading to the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient education provision	The recommended option as set out with the business case will help to ensure that adequate and efficient provision will be available at the school for the foreseeable future	L	Yes
Operational	The preferred option doesn't meet the needs of building users	Building users will be consulted and engaged with throughout the design development to ensure their views and requirements are highlighted	L	Yes
Financial	Inability to deliver the Council's desired outcomes within the approved budget	This will be mitigated through working with cost consultants and designers during design development stage.	L	Yes
Reputational	Failure to engage with stakeholders on the planned changes to the school could lead to reputational damage for the Council.	Ongoing dialogue and engagement with staff, parents and pupils will continue throughout the project	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>The recommendations within this report support 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 of the 21st century. The report seeks Committee's approval to proceed with design development for significant improvements to be made to the suitability of Harlaw Academy.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Prosperous People: The project will support Stretch Outcome 8 in the LOIP - <i>Child friendly city where all decisions which impact children and young people will be informed by them by 2026</i> . Ongoing stakeholder engagement will help ensure that the views of children and young people will be taken into account.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The updated School Estate Plan supports the delivery of Stretch Outcome 13 in the LOIP – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate. The proposed improvements to the school site will assist in reducing carbon emissions from the school estate.
Regional and City Strategies	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.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	A new Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

Other	No other assessments required
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10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Education Operational Delivery Committee, 8 September 2022: [Agenda Item 14: School Estate Plan 2022](#).

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Exempt Appendix 1: Outline Business Case – Harlaw Academy Improvements

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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