

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education, Culture and Sport</b>
DATE	<b>27 March 2014</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Gayle Gorman</b>
TITLE OF REPORT	<b>Statutory Consultation Reports – Proposals to</b> <b>(i) rezone the Foresterhill Hospital Complex area from Mile End School to Cornhill School and consequently from Aberdeen Grammar School to St Machar Academy and</b> <b>(ii) rezone the northwest part of Scotstown School Catchment Area to Greenbrae School and consequently from Bridge of Don Academy to Oldmachar Academy.</b>
REPORT NUMBER:	<b>ECS/14/015</b>
CHECKLIST RECEIVED:	<b>Yes</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report to Committee on the outcome of the statutory consultation on the proposals to

- (i) rezone the Foresterhill Hospital Complex area from Mile End School to Cornhill School and consequently from Aberdeen Grammar School to St Machar Academy and
- (ii) rezone the northwest part of Scotstown School Catchment Area to Greenbrae School and consequently from Bridge of Don Academy to Oldmachar Academy.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

To implement the proposals (i) and (ii) above, with implementation at the start of school session 2015-16, i.e. August 2015.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no significant financial implications as a result of implementing proposal (i) above. Implementation of proposal (ii) will require funding of reconfiguration and extension to the facilities at Greenbrae School. This cost has been indicatively valued at £2m and an application will be made to include the project in the Non Housing Capital Programme (2015/16 to 2019/20).

#### **4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

Legal – There are no legal implications related to implementation of these proposals, as all statutory requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 have been met.

Resources – Officer time and expenditure within established budgets will meet all requirements under all recommendations.

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

Property - Implementation of the recommendations will not result in any significant property implications.

Equipment – There are no equipment implications or risks associated with this report in itself.

Sustainability and environmental – Implementation of these proposals will have minimal impact upon sustainability and environmental issues related to the school estate.

Health and safety – There are no implications or risks related to this report in itself other than the requirement to carry out a School Travel Assessment Report for pupils travelling from new housing within the Grandhome development to Danestone School.

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

#### **5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

##### **5.1 School Reorganisation Proposals**

These proposals contribute to a widespread programme to manage the school estate across the city.

Statutory consultation on these proposals was carried out as result of an instruction from Education, Culture and Sport Committee on 11 February, 2013.

##### **5.2 Educational Implications**

Aberdeen City Council is required to ensure the provision of an suitable and efficient education provision for all its pupils. This proposal will better enable the council to fulfil this statutory requirement.

##### **5.3 Statutory Consultation Feedback**

Appendices 1 and 2 provide detailed reports on the consultations on the two proposals. The follow sections provide a synopsis of the submissions made by

stakeholders and Education, Culture and Sport Directorate's responses to those submissions and the reports from Education Scotland.

### **5.3.1 Mile End School to Cornhill School**

#### **(a) Methodology**

Appendix 1 provides a full report on consultation on the above proposal. All requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act, 2010* were met or exceeded.

#### **(b) Feedback from Stakeholders**

There was general support for the proposal. However, some staff from NHS (Grampian) felt that there would be no educational benefit for those future pupils arriving in the Foresterhill complex. It is obviously not possible to consult with future parents or pupils as they are not yet here.

Concerns included that those families spending a relatively short period of time in Foresterhill Court would be no longer able to attend the school of their choice.

The council's responses to these issues are included in the Consultation Report (Appendix 1).

#### **(c) Report of Education Scotland**

Education Scotland's report indicated that there was broad support for the proposal but identified one significant concern that the council would require to address in taking this proposal forward.

This was that:

- The council needs to provide more details of the educational benefits for all young people that the proposal will bring.

The council's response to this issue is also included in the Consultation Report.

#### **(d) Overall View of the Proposal**

There was overall support for implementation of the proposal.

### **5.3.2 Scotstown School to Greenbrae School**

#### **(a) Methodology**

Appendix 2 provides a full report on consultation on the above proposal. All requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act, 2010* were met or exceeded.

#### **(b) Feedback from Stakeholders**

There was general support to progress with the proposal. However, there were some concerns expressed about implementation of the proposal.

Concerns included:

- the extent and nature of the additional accommodation required at Greenbrae School;
- the timing of carrying out the work required within the building and its potential to disrupt learning and teaching;
- the potential impact upon existing entitlement to school transport;
- the exiting and future problems of traffic movements around the school.

The council's responses to these issues are included in the Consultation Report (Appendix 2).

### **(c) Report of Education Scotland**

This report recognised the stakeholder concerns above and identified issues that the council would need to address in taking this proposal forward.

These were:

- provide reassurance to parents regarding the scheduling of works and adequacy of the additional accommodation at Greenbrae School;
- address road safety and transport issues;
- confirm the entitlements of pupils and their siblings to continue with existing schooling arrangements should they wish;
- to ensure that its long term strategy for education in the wider Bridge of Don area is clearly communicated and understood.

The council's responses to these issues raised in the report are included in the Consultation Report (Appendix 2).

### **(d) Overall View of the Proposal**

There was widespread support for the proposal.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

It is recommended that Committee accepts the proposals to

- (i) proceed with implementation of proposal (i) above
- and
- (ii) proceed with implementation of proposal (ii) above.

## **6. IMPACT**

### **6.1 Corporate**

The implementation of the programme to manage the schools estate across the city articulates with the initiative, *Aberdeen the smarter City*. This identifies the main objectives of the Council.

1. 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
2. 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.

3. 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.
4. We will aim to have a workforce across the city which has the skills and knowledge to sustain, grow and diversify the city economy.

## **6.2 Equality and Human Rights implications**

A full equality and human rights impact assessment is appended to this report.

## **6.3 Management of the School Estate**

There is an on-going requirement to continue to proactively manage the school estate. In this case, new zoning arrangements will be required within the Grandhome Estate development to create revised catchment areas for the new primary schools which will be built within the development. This will require the existing Middleton Park zone and that of Brimmond School (and their associated secondary schools) to be amended.

The council will bring forward new consultation proposals to create these new zones, prior to the delivery of the new first new school.

## **7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

The council has evidenced its commitment to proactively managing its school estate and fulfilled its obligations under statute. The council will continue to manage its school estate to provide a suitable and efficient provision for all its pupils.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1: Consultation Report on Proposal to rezone the Foresterhill Hospital Complex area from Mile End School to Cornhill School and consequently from Aberdeen Grammar School to St Machar Academy, including Education Scotland Report (Appendix 1 (a)).

Appendix 2: Consultation Report on Proposal to rezone the northwest part of Scotstown School Catchment Area to Greenbrae School and consequently from Bridge of Don Academy to Oldmachar Academy including Education Scotland Report (Appendix 2(a)).

## **9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

Derek Samson  
Service Manager, Schools (12-18) and Curriculum  
[dsamson@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:dsamson@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
(52)3817

**Consultation Report on the proposal by Aberdeen City Council to rezone the Foresterhill Hospital Complex area from Mile End School to Cornhill School and consequently from Aberdeen Grammar School to St Machar Academy from August 2014.**

### **1. Methodology**

All requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act, 2010* were met or exceeded.

### **2. Involvement of Stakeholders**

#### **(a) Public Events**

A public consultation event was held to discuss the re-zoning proposal for Mile End and Cornhill Schools.

The number of attendees who signed in at the public meeting was:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Number of Recorded Attendees</i>
19 November 2013	7-8.30pm	Mile End School	7 parents/public plus elected members

#### **(b) Further Engagement**

Officers from Education, Culture and Sport also provided opportunities to meet separately with staff of both schools and representatives of the schools' Parent Councils.

#### **(c) Comments Received**

The following written submissions were received:

<i>Format</i>	<i>Number of submissions</i>
Email	4
Written	0
Comment Cards	4

Paper copies of all submissions were made available in the Members Library and have been circulated to external members of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee. Submissions, anonymised as necessary, were also made available on the council website.

#### **(d) Issues Raised**

There is general support for the proposal from parents living outwith the affected area but whose children attend Mile End School.

Concerns were expressed by some NHS (Grampian) staff that those families spending a relatively short period of time in Foresterhill Court would be no longer able to attend the school of their choice. Historically, families arrive in Foresterhill Court and their children are enrolled in Mile End School and Aberdeen Grammar School. As the maximum tenancy period is six months, these families then move on to more permanent accommodation but their children remain enrolled in these schools even though, in the vast majority of cases, these would no longer be the zoned schools of their residence.

The forecast roll at Mile End indicates that it will be close to capacity if no action is taken by 2015. The likelihood of the roll of Mile End School reaching its capacity will be reduced if the proposal is implemented. Otherwise, it is likely that there may be a negative impact on the space available for pupils to undertake as wide a range of learning experiences as we would expect.

If the proposal is implemented, pupils of primary school age would attend Cornhill School and secondary age pupils would attend St Machar Academy, both of which currently have ample excess places. On moving to more permanent accommodation, pupils can either remain at Cornhill and St Machar Academy or enrol in their zoned school, if space is available.

Parents would retain, throughout, the opportunity to make a placing request to any school of their choice.

The proposal would support the council's obligations to secure best value for the whole school estate, within the context of addressing over-capacity and suitability. The council would be able to make more efficient and equitable use of its resources to the benefit of all children and young people in schools across the city.

The educational benefits for pupils attending all schools include a reduction in the likelihood that school rolls will reach or exceed capacity. This will increase the availability of spaces within all schools allowing as wide a range of learning activities to be accommodated. Implementation of the proposal will also place the council in a better position to plan a more efficient and effective school estate in terms of sufficiency and location of pupil spaces and, in turn, this will allow more appropriate allocation of resources to areas of demand.

### **(e) Education Scotland Report**

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is involvement of Education Scotland whose report is provided as Appendix 1(a).

The report identifies some positive aspects of the proposal in the following paragraphs.

Paragraph 2.2:

*'Most people who expressed a view were in favour of the proposal.'*

Paragraph 2.3:

*'Parents, children and staff from Mile End School ..... felt the proposal was a sensible solution to help the school deal with an increasing roll.'*

Paragraph 2.4:

*'Parents, children and staff in Cornhill School, St Machar Academy and Aberdeen Grammar School welcomed the proposal.'*

Whilst the Education Scotland Report states that the proposal is strongly supported by parents, pupils and staff across all schools involved, it requires the council to provide more details on the educational benefits for all young people that the proposal will bring.

Section 3 provides the Council's response to the issue raised by stakeholders and Education Scotland in their report.

### 3. Addressing Issues Raised in Education Scotland Report

The following table indicates areas identified within the Education Scotland Report and the Council's responses.

Issue	Response/Proposed Action	Timescale
<p>The children of those NHS staff temporarily accommodated within the Foresterhill Complex will no longer be able to attend the school of their parents' choice.</p> <p>The council has not set out what educational benefits will accrue for children and young people who may move into the short-term accommodation as from August 2014.</p>	<p>Parents will always retain the right to make a placing request at any time to any school, including Mile End School and Aberdeen Grammar School. This will be granted unless the school has no available spaces or if additional staff would require to be employed as a result of granting a place.</p> <p>Pupils who attend Mile End School and Aberdeen Grammar School then move to a permanent address in another school's zone would have reduced capacity to attend school with their peers from their local neighbourhood. This may have a negative impact on relationships and the composition of friendship groups.</p> <p>Pupils may have to travel a significant distance from their subsequent permanent address to Mile End School or Aberdeen Grammar School and this may result in their having to leave home earlier. This may increase tiredness and have a detrimental impact on attention.</p> <p>Pupils who attend Cornhill School and St Machar Academy would have the opportunity to experience the same broad range of educational experiences available, particularly at St Machar Academy. This school's curriculum provides a broad range of both academic and vocational courses. Pupils attending this school also have access to courses at Oldmachar and Bridge of Don Academies through consortium arrangements and to Advanced Higher courses through the city campus programme.</p> <p>Performance at St Machar Academy has increased over recent years and this is likely to continue under the broader range of courses and educational opportunities now being made available to all its pupils.</p>	

	<p>The quality of learning experiences for all pupils potentially affected by the proposal is likely to be enhanced as they will attend schools where there is less pressure on spaces. The proposal will result in a reduction in the likelihood that the roll of all schools will reach or exceed capacity. If schools have more available space, they are better placed to provide a broader range of learning activities, including more active learning opportunities. The capacity of schools, particularly in primary, to provide two hours quality physical activity in appropriate accommodation is also enhanced if there is less pressure on space.</p> <p>For families who are initially resident in the Foresterhill complex, there will be greater potential for pupils to experience continuity of learning and fewer points of transition if there is less of a requirement to change schools during their primary school career. There is also greater potential for pupils to attend the school within their local community which will increase the occurrence of pupils attending school with their neighbouring peers as well as making the transition to secondary school accompanied by other pupils in their friendship group.</p>	
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## Consultation proposal by Aberdeen City Council

### Report by Education Scotland, addressing educational aspects of the proposal to rezone the Foresterhill Hospital Complex area from Mile End School to Cornhill School and consequently from Aberdeen Grammar School to St Machar Academy.

#### Context

This report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act. The purpose of this report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of the council's consultation proposal. Section 2 of this report sets out the views expressed by consultees during the initial consultation process. Section 3 sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal and the 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 it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.

#### 1. Introduction

Aberdeen City Council proposes to rezone the Foresterhill Hospital Complex area from Mile End School to Cornhill School and consequently from Aberdeen Grammar School to St Machar Academy.

1.1 The report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act.

1.2 HM Inspectors undertook the following activities in considering the educational aspects of the proposal:

- 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 Mile End School, Cornhill School, Aberdeen Grammar School and St Machar Academy, including discussion with relevant consultees.

### 1.3 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
- benefits which the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

## 2. Consultation process

- 2.1 Aberdeen City Council undertook the initial consultation on its proposals with reference to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 2.2 Parents, children, young people and staff in all schools affected by the proposal were content with the consultation process. Seven people attended the public meeting organised by Aberdeen City Council and eight people provided written submissions. Most people who expressed a view were in favour of the proposal. Three of the written submissions were not in favour of the proposal as the current arrangements were helpful to doctors and their families moving into Aberdeen. In subsequent meetings with parents, pupils and staff in all schools involved, those who expressed a view supported the proposal.
- 2.3 Parents, children and staff from Mile End School held the view that the school is already almost at capacity and that there are some children who move into the catchment area with their families who cannot get a place. They felt the proposal was a sensible solution to help the school deal with an increasing roll. Parents had been fully consulted on a range of options and saw the proposal as a way of controlling the roll without affecting any children currently in any of the schools involved.
- 2.4 Parents, children and staff in Cornhill School, St Machar Academy and Aberdeen Grammar School welcomed the proposal. They saw the benefits brought to all schools involved. Those in Cornhill School and St Machar Academy did not see a slight rise in roll as an issue and welcomed the increased diversity children and young people coming from across the globe would continue to bring. Parents, young people and staff in Aberdeen Grammar School thought a very slight decline in the school's roll was not an issue.
- 2.5 The council has considered the impact of the proposal on travel to school. They have provided parents and pupils with appropriate information on safe routes to school.

### **3. Educational aspects of the proposal**

- 3.1 The area for rezoning comprises short-term accommodation provided by NHS Scotland for families of medics moving to Aberdeen and working in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. There are currently no known families with children or young people planning to live in this zone and attend Mile End School or Aberdeen Grammar School after August 2014. Therefore, there are currently no known children who will be directly affected by the proposal. Pupils currently attending all four schools involved in the proposal will not be required to change their schooling arrangements.
- 3.2 The educational benefits statement rightly recognises that the proposal may lead to more in-zone children attending Mile End School, increasing their community identity. Both Cornhill School and St Machar Academy have active committees promoting diversity and equality. They are very well equipped to provide effective support for children and young people for whom English is not their first language and to help them settle in to life in Scotland.
- 3.3 While outlining the impact of the proposal, Aberdeen City Council has not set out what educational benefits will accrue for children and young people who may move into the short-term accommodation as from August 2014. Young people of secondary school age moving into this accommodation will no longer attend Aberdeen Grammar School but will attend St. Machar Academy. Attainment in St. Machar Academy, while improving, is significantly lower than that of Aberdeen Grammar School and continues to be lower than in schools serving young people with similar needs and backgrounds. However, there are many features of the school which benefit young people attending. The educational benefits statement does not outline these features or demonstrate how the authority intends to ensure that attainment in St. Machar Academy continues to improve and support young people to attain as well as they can.

### **4. Summary**

The proposal is strongly supported by parents, pupils and staff across all schools involved. It offers best value for Aberdeen City Council as the education authority seeks to rationalise its school estate and endeavors to provide the most effective education for children and young people across the city. The council has outlined suitable safe routes to school for children attending Cornhill School from the proposed new zone. The council needs to provide more details of the educational benefits for all young people that the proposal will bring. This will help to reassure the very few people who have concerns about the proposal.

**Consultation Report on proposal to rezone the northwest part of Scotstown School Catchment Area to Greenbrae School and consequently from Bridge of Don Academy to Oldmachar Academy from August 2014.**

**1. Methodology**

All requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act, 2010* were met or exceeded.

**2. Involvement of Stakeholders**

**(a) Public Events**

A public consultation event was held to discuss the re-zoning proposal for Scotstown and Greenbrae Schools.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Number of Recorded Attendees</i>
Monday 18 November	7-8.30pm	Braehead School	6 members of the public plus elected members

**(b) Other Engagement**

Officers from Education, Culture and Sport also provided opportunities to meet separately with staff, representatives of the schools' Parent Councils.

**(c) Requests for Significant Additional Information**

Officers also responded to a small number of requests for additional information relating to the proposal.

**3. Feedback from Stakeholders**

The number of responses received in different formats were:

<i>Format</i>	<i>Number of submissions</i>
Email	8
Written	0
Comment Forms	7

One email submission was received from the Greenbrae School Parent Council.

There was general support for the proposal. However, some concerns were expressed regarding the nature of the additional accommodation required as a result of the additional pupils who would attend Greenbrae School as a result of the proposal.

In particular,

- the extent and nature of the additional accommodation required at Greenbrae School;

- the timing of carrying out the work required within the building and its potential to disrupt learning and teaching;
- the potential impact upon existing entitlement to school transport;
- the exiting and future problems of traffic movements around the school.

The Council's responses to these comments are included in Section 3.

Paper copies of all submissions were made available in the Members Library and have been circulated to external members of the Education, Culture and Sport Committee. Submissions, anonymised as necessary, were also made available on the council website.

#### **4. Education Scotland Report**

An essential element of the statutory consultation process is involvement of Education Scotland whose report is provided at the end of Appendix 2(a).

The report identifies some positive aspects of the proposal.

Paragraph 3.1:

*'... (the) proposal provides a clear rationale for responding to the impact of new housing developments on school rolls in the area'.*

Paragraph 3.1:

*'If implemented, the proposal will more evenly distribute pupils across schools involved and reduce the potential for overcrowding. More children will be enabled to attend school within their own neighbourhood'.*

Paragraph 4:

*'The proposal..... has clear educational benefits'.*

However, the report identifies the requirement for the Council to address various concerns raised during the consultation period.

These include a requirement for the council to:

- provide reassurance to parents regarding the scheduling of works and adequacy of the additional accommodation at Greenbrae School;
- address road safety and transport issues;
- confirm the entitlements of pupils and their siblings to continue with existing schooling arrangements should they wish;
- to ensure that its long term strategy for education in the wider Bridge of Don area is clearly communicated and understood.

These concerns are addressed in Section 5.

## 5. Addressing Issues Raised in Education Scotland Report

The following table indicates areas identified within the Education Scotland Report and the Councils responses.

Issue	Proposed Action	Timescale
<p><b>3.2 Additional accommodation</b> Timing of work</p>	<p>On completion of a Feasibility Study, a fully costed business case will be submitted to the Corporate Asset Group with the intention of including the project in the Non Housing Capital Programme 2014-15.</p> <p>The additional accommodation is forecast to be required by beginning of school session 2015-16, i.e. August 2015.</p> <p>Indicative plans for the additional accommodation are provided as Diagram 1 below.</p> <p>Consultation with parents and school staff on the timing of works.</p> <p>Full plans to be drawn up and statutory consents applied for.</p>	<p>Within this report.</p> <p>April – June 2014.</p> <p>April – June 2014.</p>
<p>The nature of additional accommodation.</p>	<p>Detailed plans to provide sufficient additional class teaching areas will be determined.</p> <p>Extent of other requirements (e.g. dining and PE/PA)</p>	<p>April – May 2014.</p>
<p>Building work, if undertaken during term time, could prove disruptive to children's learning.</p>	<p>A full programme of works will be provided and necessary working arrangements, evening, weekend and holidays will mitigate any potential disruption to learning and teaching.</p>	
<p>Some concerns that substantially increasing the size of the school could have a negative impact on the school ethos.</p>	<p>Head Teacher and centrally deployed staff to run engagement events with parents/carers and pupils to develop understanding of the school ethos and to publicise the whole school ethos that will apply to all pupils.</p>	<p>School session 2014-15.</p>

<p>The council will need to consider ways to involve all stakeholders in shaping and managing changes at the school.</p>	<p>The school, supported by the local authority, will provide opportunities to meet to discuss changes at the school, including how the extent and nature of the additional accommodation that will be required. This will involve the Parent Council as well as the broader parent forum.</p>	<p>School session 2014-15.</p>
<p>Existing traffic congestion at Greenbrae Crescent and how increased numbers of pupils might exacerbate the current situation.</p>	<p>The council will arrange for a full traffic impact assessment to be carried out. This will include taking account of the views of parents and local residents.</p> <p>This will include evaluation of safe crossing routes at Dubford Road and Greenbrae Drive.</p>	<p>Before end of June 2014.</p>
<p>A number of parents from the rural northern part of the catchment area currently have entitlement to school transport to Scotstown School and are concerned that this might not be the case if the rezoning proposal is implemented. There are related concerns that there is no alternative safe walking route.</p>	<p>The council confirms that the transport entitlement of all pupils will be maintained, whether or not currently they currently receive school transport. The implementation of this proposal will have no impact upon these city-wide arrangements.</p>	<p>Now</p>
<p>The council will need to consider providing assurances to parents and children in Scotstown School that pupils affected by the proposals will be fully entitled to move onto Bridge of Don Academy should they wish at the end of P7.</p> <p>Similar assurances may need to be</p>	<p>The council confirms that pupils currently attending P7 at Scotstown School will transfer to Bridge of Don Academy in session 2014-15.</p> <p>Those pupils in earlier years and siblings will require to make a placing request if they wish their children to attend Bridge of Don Academy in subsequent years.</p> <p>The forecast capacity of Bridge of Don Academy suggest that all</p>	

<p>provided in the case of siblings who wish to attend the same school.</p>	<p>such requests are likely to be granted.</p>	
<p>Some staff have expressed the concern that Scotstown School currently has a pupil support base whist Greenbrae School does not.</p>	<p>Each Associated Schools Group (ASG) has an identified school with base provision for pupils with Additional Support Needs (ASN).</p> <p>In the case of the Oldmachar ASG, that is Glashieburn School.</p> <p>Pupils who have identified additional needs which can be support by an ASN base attend that school. If this proposal is implemented, that would be Glashieburn School for all pupils within the Oldmachar ASG.</p> <p>As with all mainstream pupils, there will be no requirement for pupils attending either their zoned or ASN base school to change the school that they attend.</p>	
<p>The council gives appropriate consideration to concerns regarding the longer term management of secondary school provision in the greater Bridge of Don area.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council will carry out briefing sessions and workshops for staff and parents on its strategy for the longer term management of secondary school provision in the area.</p> <p>The first of these, a briefing for Bridge of Don Academy Senior Management Team, took place in February 2014. Briefing sessions for Oldmachar Academy SMT and parent councils of both schools will be organised.</p>	<p>February to June 2014 and beyond.</p>



**Consultation proposal by Aberdeen City Council**

**Report by Education Scotland, addressing educational aspects of the proposal to rezone the northwest part of the Scotstown School Area to Greenbrae School and consequently from Bridge of Don Academy to Oldmachar Academy.**

**Context**

This report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act. The purpose of this report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of the council's consultation proposal. Section 2 of this report sets out the views expressed by consultees during the initial consultation process. Section 3 sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal and the 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 it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.

**1. Introduction**

1.4 Aberdeen City Council proposes to rezone the northwest part of Scotstown School to Greenbrae School and from Bridge of Don Academy to Oldmachar Academy.

1.5 The report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act.

1.6 HM Inspectors undertook the following activities in considering the educational aspects of the proposal:

- 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;
- consideration of further information on all schools affected; and
- visits to the sites of Oldmachar Academy, Greenbrae School, Bridge of Don Academy and Scotstown School including discussion with relevant consultees.

## 1.7 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
- benefits which the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

## 2. Consultation process

2.1 Aberdeen City Council undertook the initial consultation on its proposals with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

2.1 Parents, staff, children and young people in all four schools affected were broadly supportive of the proposal with some reservations. All could see a clear rationale for rezoning due to a housing development in the Dubford area. Rezoning would result in children being able to attend the school closest to their homes. The main concerns raised related to the need for an extension to school accommodation at Greenbrae School resulting from the proposal, the need for assurances over the timing and adequacy of the extension, questions over existing entitlement to school transport and neighbourhood road traffic issues. Those at Scotstown School expressed the view that failure to implement the proposals could be detrimental to children's education as a result of capacity issues at Scotstown School related to additional new housing developments. Broader issues were raised by the two secondary schools concerning the number of potential new housing developments in the Bridge of Don area and the need for a more strategic overview for the future of secondary schools serving the area.

## 3. Educational aspects of the proposal

3.1 Aberdeen City Council's proposal provides a clear rationale for responding to the impact of new housing developments on school rolls in the area. The housing development at Dubford will result in a forecast of an additional 165 primary and 55 secondary pupils. Other housing developments in the Bridge of Don area are contributing to a forecast rise in Scotstown School's roll. If no action is taken to alter zoning arrangements, Scotstown School will exceed capacity to accommodate pupils. If implemented, the proposal will more evenly distribute pupils across schools involved and reduce the potential for overcrowding. More children will be enabled to attend school within their own neighbourhood. The impact on

the two secondary schools in the area is minor since pupil numbers can be accommodated within existing provision. All four schools have been allocated the same accommodation rating of satisfactory by Aberdeen City Council.

3.2 Greenbrae School will require additional accommodation at a future date to accommodate the additional pupils from the new housing development at Dubford. However, the council has not specified the date of the building work in its proposal. The council states that Greenbrae School is currently able to accommodate an additional 50 pupils but estimates that an additional 160-170 pupils will result from the development. The council's proposal states that fully costed plans will be drawn up prior to a final decision. However, parents, staff and children at Greenbrae School have expressed the need for assurances over the timing of work and the nature of additional accommodation. Parents are also concerned that building work, if undertaken during term time, could prove disruptive to their children's learning. In taking forward the proposal, the council will need to ensure it works with stakeholders at Greenbrae School on their accommodation plans to ensure that the work takes place in advance of potential overcrowding and that the educational benefits resulting from additional classrooms and enhancement to dining and physical education areas are achieved timeously.

3.3 Staff, children and parents at Greenbrae School value the ethos of the school and have some concerns that substantially increasing the size of the school could have a negative impact. The council will need to consider ways to involve all stakeholders in shaping and managing changes at the school.

3.4 Parents at Greenbrae School expressed concerns over existing traffic congestion at Greenbrae Crescent and how increased numbers of pupils might exacerbate the current situation. The Parent Council is of the view that a robust traffic management solution is required. There are also concerns about safe crossing routes at Dubford Road and Greenbrae Drive. In taking forward the proposal, the council will need to consider the views of parents in its transport assessment.

3.5 A number of parents from the rural northern part of the catchment area currently have entitlement to school transport to Scotstown School and are concerned that this might not be the case if the rezoning proposal is implemented. There are related concerns that there is no alternative safe walking route. In taking forward the proposal, the council will need to consider these matters fully to ensure that all pupils have a safe means of getting to and from school.

3.6 The council's proposal states that 'all children currently attending Scotstown School and Bridge of Don Academy will continue their education at their current school, unless parents/carers choose to make an application to another school or, in the case of primary aged pupils, they reach the end of primary 7'. The council will need to consider providing assurances to

parents and children in Scotstown School that pupils affected by the proposals will be fully entitled to move onto Bridge of Don Academy should they wish at the end of P7. Similar assurances may need to be provided in the case of siblings who wish to attend the same school.

3.7 The council's proposal states that 'all provision for pupils with additional support needs will continue in their present format should this proposal be implemented'. However, staff have expressed the concern that Scotstown School currently has a pupil support base whilst Greenbrae School does not. The council will need to give full consideration of this matter in its final report.

3.8 The council's consultation document states that their rezoning proposal is part of a long term, city-wide strategy. However, staff in Bridge of Don Academy and Oldmachar Academy do not feel sufficiently clear on the overall strategy for secondary education in the Bridge of Don area. They have concerns that ongoing and proposed housing developments in the area make accurate school roll forecasting difficult. They wish to avoid a piecemeal approach to individual housing developments. They have concerns that short or medium term fluctuations in school rolls could have a potentially detrimental impact on staffing and therefore on their ability to offer a sufficiently attractive range of subject choices in the senior phase. A significant proportion of Bridge of Don Academy pupils reside in the Aberdeenshire Council area. There are concerns that planned changes to provision in Aberdeenshire Council could have a strong impact on school roll levels in Bridge of Don Academy. Headteachers are of the view that parents need confidence in the long term viability of the two secondary schools. It will be important that the council gives appropriate consideration to these concerns in its wider approach to determining school zones in the area.

#### **4 Summary**

The proposal to rezone the northwest part of the Scotstown School Area to Greenbrae School and consequently from Bridge of Don Academy to Oldmachar Academy has clear educational benefits. It will achieve a more balanced approach to school rolls in the area and avoid the risk of overcapacity at Scotstown School. The additional accommodation proposed at Greenbrae School has the potential to enhance the learning experiences of children. In implementing its proposal Aberdeen City Council will need to give full consideration to issues raised by stakeholders during the consultation including the scheduling of works and adequacy of the additional accommodation at Greenbrae School, road safety and transport issues and the entitlements of pupils and their siblings to continue with existing schooling arrangements should they wish. In taking forward the proposal Aberdeen City Council will need to ensure that its long term strategy for education in the wider Bridge of Don area is clearly communicated and understood.

**HM Inspectors  
Education Scotland  
January 2014**