

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

BULLETIN REPORT

Name of Committee: **Planning Development Management**

Date of Meeting: **24 April 2014**

Title of Report: **Kingswells School – Information for Committee**

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1. SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides detail to Planning Development Management Committee on the accommodation available within Kingswells School in light of planning applications made to the Council by housing developers.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note:
- (a) The fact that the increase in pupil numbers at Kingswells School is forecasted to increase before taking account of the Dandara development;
 - (b) That this increase and the impact on the school's capacity are temporary as the pupil roll is projected to return to 2013/14 levels by 2021/22;
 - (c) That accommodation within Kingswells School could be restructured to accommodate the required number of classes when the pupil roll reaches its peak in 2018/19;
 - (d) That should the school ever become unable to accommodate new children, the authority would require to provide education provision at the next nearest school;

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Capital costs may be incurred to restructure the internal school accommodation when the pupil roll increases to its maximum point. The aim of restructuring accommodation will be to create additional teaching spaces. Under the draft Developer Contribution guidance, the Council would receive a contribution of £23,000 for each additional child over the capacity of the school, which is generated as a result of a new housing development.

- 3.2 For Kingswells School it was previously estimated that 2.31 pupils, over the capacity of the school, will arrive at the school from the Dandara development and that the total developer contribution would be £53,130 (2.31 pupils x £23,000).
- 3.3 Additional revenue costs will be incurred if the school pupil roll increases as a result of new housing developments. This is due to the formulae used to allocate budgets to schools being based on the number of pupils attending the school.
- 3.4 The authority may also be required to transport pupils to school should they qualify for this provision on grounds of distance or safe walking routes. Further, if the school capacity is exceeded and the Council is unable to accommodate pupils in Kingswells School, then it would be obliged to provide education at an out of zone school and would be responsible for providing pupil transport.

4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980, as amended, places an obligation on education authorities to secure adequate and efficient school education within the Council area.
- 4.2 The Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2014, which recently received Royal Assent, also places a duty on education authorities to provide 600 hours of early learning and childcare for children aged 3 and 4 years of age and children aged 2 years of age where they are or have been looked after by the authority since their second birthday. This will have a commensurate impact on the accommodation within the school.

5 BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

5.1 Kingswells Primary School – Current Position and the Impact of Housing Developments

This planning capacity of a school is calculated by dividing the area of each classroom by the Council's space allocation per pupil (2m²). Using this methodology, Kingswells School therefore has a planning capacity of 450 pupils. The working capacity of a school takes into account the maximum class sizes of any stage in the school. Therefore for Primary 1 classes and any composite class the maximum class size and therefore the working capacity would be 25 pupils. For Primary 2 and 3 classes the working capacity is 30 pupils and for Primary 4 to 7 the working capacity is 33 pupils.

Within Aberdeen City Council, the optimum class and teacher configuration is calculated each year to deliver the most efficient and effective provision. Education, Culture and Sport Committee agreed at its meeting of 27 March 2014, that Kingswells School be capped to ensure that no more than 17 classes are accommodated within the school. In addition, it was agreed that

the school would keep 3 reserved spaces for P1 children who move into the school's zone during the academic session.

The school currently provides flexibility to accommodate 16 classrooms for primary aged pupils, 2 classrooms for the nursery class, 2 spaces for pupils with Additional Support Needs, a library and 2 General Purpose (GP) areas which are used to deliver areas of the curriculum such as ICT, drama and art.

Based on the annual pupil census data from September 2013, there are 441 primary aged pupils attending the school. Included within the total roll are 17 pupils who live out-with the school zone. There are 80 children who attend the nursery.

Draft roll projections, which require to be finalised, indicate that the roll for academic session 2014/15 will be 456 pupils, rising to 483 pupils in 2015/16 and peaking at 490 pupils in 2017/18, before reducing over the next 4-5 years.

In the current academic session the school operates a 16 class structure, as the pupil roll rises to 490 pupils in 2017/18, the school will require to operate 18 classes. To accommodate the additional pupils the school would be required to reduce the number of GP areas.

It is Council policy to locate nursery classes within primary school buildings as this ensures a better transition from nursery to primary school, as children will have knowledge of the school layout during their nursery education.

5.2 **Education's Statutory Obligations**

Committee will note from Section 4 of this report that the 1980 Act places an obligation on authorities to educate school aged children, while the Children and Young People's Act place an obligation to provide 600 hours of early learning and childcare for all 3 and 4 year olds and those 2 year olds who are or have been looked after since their second birthday.

The duty imposed by legislation does not mean that a child would be enrolled within their zoned school. For example, if a school was at maximum capacity there are options available to the authority such as:

- Accommodating pupils in additional classes through reducing the number of supplementary spaces. This option adversely impacts on all pupils attending the school as there would be reduced educational facilities available to deliver the full range of curricular activities; or
- Transporting the additional pupils to the next nearest school which has sufficient capacity. Such a decision would incur on-going revenue costs.

6 IMPACT OF THE CLOSURE OF HAMILTON SCHOOL AND WALDORF SCHOOL

There are 4 pupils from the Hamilton School who have received offers to attend Kingswells School in April and a further 3 who will attend from August 2014. All pupils live within the school zone.

The parents of one pupil who formerly attended Aberdeen Waldorf School have applied for a place at Kingswells School.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The number of pupils attending Kingswells School is projected to increase even before taking account of the Dandara development. This will present temporary capacity issues as following academic session 2017/18 the pupil roll is forecasted to steadily decline to the current levels.
- 7.2 Having reviewed the school accommodation, it is possible to accommodate additional children within Kingswells School as a result of housing developments; however further work is required to ensure that doing so would not result in the loss of General Purpose areas which would prove detrimental to the overall educational experience of all pupils at the school. A report to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee to increase the number of classes to 18 would also be required.
- 7.3 The alternative would be to zone children to the next nearest school, which not only increases the Council's transport costs but would result in the children affected being educated out-with their own community.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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