

COMMITTEE	Education & Children's Services
DATE	1 June 2017
REPORT TITLE	St Peter's School – plans to address short term capacity pressures
REPORT NUMBER	ECS/17/029
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-

- 1.1 This report provides details of the planned work to alleviate short term capacity pressures at St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School in Aberdeen, as requested by Committee at its meeting on 1 March 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the content of this report.

3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 In response to a report submitted to the Education and Children's Services Committee on 1 March 2017, which summarised the outcomes of a public consultation on proposals to construct a new primary school in Tillydrone, elected members instructed officers to prepare an options appraisal to help determine the long term future of education provision at the existing St Peter's School. Officers are due to report to the Committee on this work in November 2017.

- 3.1.2 Officers were also instructed by the Committee to consider the actions required to address the short term capacity issues at the existing St Peter's School site, and this report outlines the work which has been undertaken so far, and the work which is planned for the coming weeks and months, in order to bring about improvements to the existing school site.

3.2 The existing St Peter's School site

- 3.2.1 The main school building on the existing St Peter's School site includes four classrooms, a gym / dining hall, library, general purpose room and offices. Due to continued increases in the pupil roll at the school over a number of years, the library and general purpose room in the main building are currently also used as classrooms.
- 3.2.2 A further three rooms on the first floor of Old Aberdeen House (which shares the same site) have also been converted for use as classrooms, and a double modular classroom unit has been installed in the playground of the school, to provide an additional two classrooms. There is therefore a total of eleven rooms currently in use as classrooms at the school.
- 3.2.3 Given that the general purpose room and library are in use as classrooms, this leaves very limited ancillary space for staff and pupils to use for general purpose activities, such as musical instrument tuition for example, or for small group work or extra teaching support to be provided to individual pupils. In addition, the former library room does not benefit from natural light, and is therefore not ideally suited for use as a classroom, and the former general purpose space due to its small size has limited capacity for use as a classroom.

3.3 Planned building alterations

- 3.3.1 In order to address the concerns regarding the lack of natural light in the former library room, and the limited available general purpose space in the school, plans for building alterations and improvements were drawn up in November 2015. The aim of this work was to provide a roof light and improved ventilation into the former library room, and to provide partitioned storage space within the gym / dining hall for dining tables, so that the existing dining table store room could be used as a general purpose room and staff work area.
- 3.3.2 It was intended that this work would be carried out during the school summer holidays in 2016, and completed in time for the start of the current school session, which commenced in August 2016. Unfortunately, no tender submissions were received from contractors to undertake this work, and it was therefore not possible to proceed with the project over the summer as planned.
- 3.3.3 Officers are currently working with the Council's Design Team to repeat the tendering process, to allow for the previously planned work to be carried out over the coming school summer holidays, so that the required alterations are in place for the start of the new school session in August 2017. The Design Team has also been asked to investigate whether the work could be carried out by the Council's Building Services, should there again be no tenders forthcoming from external contractors.

3.4 Janitor's Lodge

- 3.4.1 After receiving notification from Land and Property Assets colleagues that the janitor's lodge, which is located within the St Peter's School site, had become vacant, officers have made arrangements for the building to be transferred to

Education and Children's Services. This will allow the school to make use of the lodge for further ancillary space for general purpose use, as well as additional storage space and a potential staff work area. The property was formally transferred in March 2017, and the school is currently considering the ways in which the building can be used to best effect.

3.5 Old Aberdeen House

3.5.1 Old Aberdeen House, which shares the same site as St Peter's School, is occupied primarily by the Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Archives Team, and the Scientific Services Team. Three of the rooms on the first floor of the building are used as classrooms for the school.

3.5.2 Officers have identified a potential opportunity to convert a fourth room on the first floor of Old Aberdeen House into a classroom, which would help to relieve the capacity pressures in the main school building. This room is currently used to store archive materials under controlled conditions. Discussions are ongoing with colleagues from the Archives Team to assess how this can be arranged to deliver a mutually beneficial solution.

3.6 Action Plan

3.6.1 In order to address the issues outlined in this report, a detailed action plan has been developed in order to identify and prioritise work which can be undertaken to help relieve the capacity pressures and generally improve the condition of the building in the short term. This plan has been developed in consultation with the school's head teacher and Parent Council, who have assisted in identifying the priorities for improvements.

3.6.2 Officers have committed to providing the Parent Council with regular updates on progress with the action plan, in order to keep parents informed about the planned work and target completion dates.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The costs associated with the work described in this report will be covered by existing Education and Children's Services revenue budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Financial

- 6.1 The costs of the work described in paragraph 3.3.1 above are included within the confidential Appendix 1 of this report. These costs have been accounted for within existing ECS revenue budgets.
- 6.2 Costs associated with the other proposed improvements contained within the action plan are currently being obtained. The work will then be prioritised and a work programme will be implemented based on available funding within existing ECS revenue budgets. Should there be insufficient budget available to undertake all of the work this financial year, any lower priority work will be carried forward to next financial year.

Employee

- 6.3 The proposed improvements are likely to benefit staff at the school in providing more space to support effective learning and teaching. If the improvements are not carried out, there is a medium level risk of staff feeling that they do not have access to a positive working environment.

Customer / citizen

- 6.4 If the proposed improvements are not carried out, there is a high level risk of a negative impact on pupils, as a result of the capacity pressures the school is facing.

Environmental

- 6.5 Carrying out the proposed improvements at the school will improve the learning and teaching environment and reduce any risk of this impacting negatively on learning and teaching at the school.

Technological

- 6.6 There are no technological risks or implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Legal

- 6.7 There are no legal risks or implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Reputational

- 6.8 If the work described within this report is not carried out, there is a high likelihood of reputational risk to the Council, as the capacity issues at the school would continue to impact negatively on staff, pupils and parents, prior to the longer term future of the school being determined.

7. IMPACT SECTION

People

- 7.1 Carrying out the work described in this report will impact positively on the pupils and staff at St Peter's School in the short term. Providing more comfortable classroom spaces and additional general purpose spaces will assist the school in continuing to deliver high quality learning and teaching.
- 7.2 An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been carried out for this report and no specific impacts on any individuals or groups with protected characteristics were identified.

Place

- 7.3 Carrying out the work described in this report will help to improve the physical environment in the short term at St Peter's School.

Economy

- 7.4 There are no significant impacts on the economy associated with these proposals.

Technology

- 7.5 There are no significant impacts on technology associated with these proposals.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1 Education and Children's Services Committee, 1 March 2017 - Consultation Report on the Proposals to Develop New Primary School Provision with Early Education and Childcare Facilities in Tillydrone.

9. APPENDICES

- 9.1 Appendix 1 (confidential) – Estimated costs

10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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