

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Finance and Resources
DATE	21 November 2023 22 November 2023
EXEMPT	The content of the report is public, but it contains an exempt appendix (Paragraph 8 of Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 Schedule 7A Access to Information)
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	St Peter's RC School – Long Term Education Provision
REPORT NUMBER	RES/23/365
DIRECTOR	Steve Whyte/Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Maria Thies
TERMS OF REFERENCE	Education and Children's Services Committee: 1.1.1, 1.1.2 Finance and Resources Committee: 1.1.4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents an updated Outline Business Case (OBC) for the long term education provision for St Peter's RC school which includes the outcome of the Old Aberdeen House feasibility study as an alternative option to provide a two stream school.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Education and Children's Services Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the recommended option and associated costs to refurbish Old Aberdeen House with the addition of new build provision to deliver a 21st century learning environment for St Peter' RC school and recommends approval of this option at the meeting of Finance and Resources Committee on 22 November 2023.
- 2.2 Subject to approval of recommendation 2.4 to note that a progress report will be presented to a future meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee in 2024 .

That the Finance and Resources Committee:-

- 2.3 Notes and approves the recommended option to refurbish Old Aberdeen House with the addition of new build provision to deliver a 21st century learning environment for St Peter's RC school.

- 2.4 Approves the use of resources for the implementation of the proposed improvement works to Old Aberdeen House with new build provision.
- 2.5 Instructs the Chief Officer – Capital to refer the proposals for the project to the Budget process in 2024.
- 2.6 Instructs the Chief Officer – Capital to report back to a future meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in 2024 with a progress update report.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting of 12 September 2023, the Education and Children Services Committee instructed the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to assess the feasibility of refurbishing and repurposing Old Aberdeen House to provide a two stream building for St. Peter's school and to report back with an updated Outline Business Case on the outcome of this feasibility study as an additional option. [Decisions 12th-Sep-2023 10.00 Education and Childrens Services Committee.pdf](#)
- 3.2 At this meeting, officers were also instructed to report on interim arrangements and costs that would be required to facilitate the upgrade of Old Aberdeen House and any site costs for the current Riverbank school site post completion of the Old Aberdeen House upgrade.
- 3.3 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 (LEIP). The LEIP Phase 3 funding announcement on 30 October confirmed that this project has not been included as part of the Phase 3 LEIP.
- 3.4 The updated outline business case, included at appendix A of this report, sets out the findings of the feasibility study and the interim arrangements and costs associated with the recommended option.
- 3.5 The findings from the feasibility study has indicated that option C (Old Aberdeen House with a new build provision) has been evidenced as the most viable, least risk and smarter long term capital investment to meet the vision and project drivers to provide long term school provision for St Peter's RC pupils and staff. The architectural form, ability to reach net zero targets and the historic importance of Old Aberdeen House have been important factors in assessing this option. The Old Aberdeen House location is well positioned to continue to serve this community and provide a learning environment for the 21st century which will provide a range of benefits to staff, pupils and the wider community. The upgraded school provision will also enhance the wider place agenda for the city and enable integrated service delivery to support the needs of this school community long term. The new building will be an exemplar green building and will contribute to ACC's Net Zero Carbon route map at a cheaper cost and shorter delivery programme compared with option B (Riverbank).
- 3.6 The outline business case has identified the requirement for the Archives Service to be relocated from Old Aberdeen House before the refurbishment works can commence. The assumption is to have the move carried out by the

end of 2024. Indicative costs to facilitate this move have been identified based on the temporary storage and retrieval of archives off site for a period of 3 years from 2025. If a permanent solution is not delivered by 2028, this cost will extend beyond the assumption of 2028.

- 3.7 To allow the refurbishment and provision of the Old Aberdeen House and associated new build, pupils will require to be decanted to the existing Riverbank School building from early 2025 until completion at St Peter's in Summer 2026. Associated decant costs have been included within the project budget at this stage. The pupils from Riverbank School are expected to relocate to the new school building in Tillydrone in 2024. Costs associated with any measures (if required) to secure the Riverbank building during school decants have been costed within the project budget.
- 3.8 The full business case will review options for future use and/or disposal of the Riverbank building and site once St. Peter's has moved back into the refurbished building in 2026. An indicative cost has been allowed for within the project budget to facilitate the process.
- 3.9 In tandem with the feasibility study, a stakeholder engagement exercise was undertaken, in which parents, pupils, staff and the wider community associated with the school were invited to share which option they supported for St Peter's long term strategy and why.
- 3.10 A total of 68 responses were received of which, 60 supported the Old Aberdeen House option and a total of 8 supported the Riverbank option. Responses were received from a range of key stakeholders including parents, residents and school pupils.

Key messages in support of the Old Aberdeen House option included:

- Good sustainable transport links to access current location
- Maintains existing long standing partnerships within the local area which are valuable for wider learning opportunities (e.g. University, St. Machar Cathedral, Sports Village)
- Good investment and retains a heritage building for Old Aberdeen and the City
- Current location and sense of place is important to the St Peter's school community.
- Maintains localised outdoor learning opportunities in close proximity (Seaton Park, Botanical Gardens)

Key messages in support of the Riverbank option included:

- Opportunity to relocate services located in the Seaton Learning Centre (freeing up space for the community)
- Larger playground at Riverbank

- 3.11 The feedback from the engagement survey has demonstrated support to progress with the recommended option which will allow St Peter's to remain at its current location long term.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Costs arising from the recommendations of this report (design development cost) will be met from the existing project budget within the Capital programme. The recommended option within the OBC is currently reporting stage one costs above the current indicative budget approved at the budget meeting in March 2020. The project will therefore need to be referred to the Budget Cycle in 2024 for approval.
- 4.2 If the project could not proceed to construction stage, any capital costs incurred to that point may have to be considered for decapitalisation, with the resulting impact to the Council's General Revenue Account.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.
- 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 Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient provision	The School Estate Plan sets out priorities for the school estate and proposals for continually monitoring and updating plans to ensure adequate and efficient provision is maintained	L	Yes
Operational	The recommended option doesn't meet the aspirations of the Community/ stakeholders	An inclusive communications plan will form part of this next stage. Stakeholders will be kept up to date with progress. The engagement survey reflects support for the recommended option.	L	Yes
Financial	Insufficient Capital funding available with the Capital Plan to deliver the final designed project	Refinement of stage 1 costs following design development stage will allow more accurate costings to be reported within the Full Business Case	M	Yes
Reputational	Risk of damage to Council reputation if the Old Aberdeen House option is not delivered.	Implementing the recommendations in this report will ensure that the project can proceed to the next stage and allow a Full	L	Yes

		Business Case to be developed .		
Environment / Climate	None identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></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 of the 21st century. The report seeks Committee's approval to proceed with the refurbishment of Old Aberdeen House and new build provision to provide a two stream school for St Peter's.</p> <p><u>A Prosperous City</u></p> <p>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>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	<p>The proposals in this report support the delivery of Stretch Outcome 3 – 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>
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Prosperous People: The project will support Stretch Outcome 8 in the LOIP - <i>Childfriendly city where all decisions which impact children and young people will be informed by them by 2026</i>. The engagement survey at feasibility stage provided an opportunity for children and young people to have their say on which option they supported.</p>

Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	<p>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.</p> <p>Sustainable routes to school, safety, fitness and the wellbeing of our communities will form part of the design development stage.</p> <p>This project will also support the delivery of 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. The project will be exemplar in terms of net zero and green credentials.</p>
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	Updated previous Integrated Impact Assessment Stage 1 Assessment
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	No other assessments required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Education and Children’s Services, 12 September 2023:

[Decisions 12th-Sep-2023 10.00 Education and Childrens Services Committee.pdf](#)

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A – Outline Business Case and concept designs

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Maria Thies
Title	Estates Programme Manager
Email Address	Mthies@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	07793365907