

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

22 NOVEMBER 2023

ST PETER'S RC SCHOOL – LONG TERM EDUCATION PROVISION – RES/23/365

With reference to article 17 of the minute of meeting of the Education and Children's Services Committee of 12 September 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Resources which presented an updated Outline Business Case (OBC) for the long term education provision for St Peter's Roman Catholic school which included the outcome of the Old Aberdeen House feasibility study as an alternative option to provide a two stream school.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note and approve 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;
- (b) approve the use of resources for the implementation of the proposed improvement works to Old Aberdeen House with new build provision;
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Capital to refer the proposals for the project to the Budget process in 2024; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – Capital to report back to a future meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee in 2024 with a progress update report.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved:-

that the Committee approve the recommendations contained within the report.

Councillor Malik, seconded by Councillor Watson, moved as an amendment:-

that the Committee –

- (1) note the decision of the Education and Children Services Committee on 21 November 2023.
- (2) acknowledge that the Aberdeen Labour proposed amendment to Education and Children Services Committee as outlined below would have supported the Community of Tillydrone and Old Aberdeen best:-
 - (i) notes the contents of the options appraisal and the officer recommendation to proceed with Option C.
 - (ii) notes the Education Scotland report, prepared in April 2019 by the HMIE, titled "Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Aberdeen City Council to relocate St Peter's RC Primary School to the existing Riverbank school building..." concluded that the proposal to relocate St Peters RC to a refurbished school at the current Riverbank school site, "has clear educational benefits for children who currently attend St Peter's RC Primary School and who would have access to a more flexible, modern and healthy living environment, with improved outdoor learning spaces and early learning and childcare facilities.

MINUTE EXTRACT

- (iii) notes that the same HMIE report stated, “There will also be improved outdoor learning spaces with opportunities for physical education. There is significantly more outdoor space available around the Riverbank building, with more than ten times the amount of hard landscaping and nearly 80 times more soft landscaping than is available at the St Peter’s site.”
 - (iv) notes that the Options Appraisal sets out the significant disparity in the “total site area” of each option where Riverbank is currently 15,816sqm compared with St Peters RC which is only 7,940sqm and agrees that the additional open space in the former presents a significant opportunity for future generations of St Peters RC pupils to benefit from significantly better outdoor space.
 - (v) notes that the Options Appraisal sets out a rationale to develop a school that will accommodate a school roll of up to 434 pupils to cope with possible increased demand and suggests the school roll could be double its current size.
 - (vi) agrees that, if St Peters RC were to double in size in the coming years, there is not nearly enough outside space on the existing St Peters RC site in order to create an outdoor learning environment that pupils and staff deserve and that therefore Option C does not offer maximum educational benefit for the school community.
 - (vii) agrees that, in light of the above, recommends to the Finance and Resources Committee that it agrees to continue to progress work on Option B with any remaining preparatory work outstanding to be programmed and progressed as much as practical prior to the decant of Riverbank Primary School into new build which is scheduled to open in summer 2024.
 - (viii) recommends to the Finance and Resources Committee that it instructs the Chief Officer – Capital to refer the proposals for the project to the Budget process in 2024.
 - (ix) 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; and
- (3) therefore, approves recommendation (d) contained within the report.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (8) – the Convener, the Vice Convener and Councillors Allard, Bouse, Cooke, Copland, Fairfull and Hutchison; for the amendment (3) – Councillors Malik, Thomson and Watson; declined to vote (2) – Councillors Farquhar and Houghton.

The Committee resolved:-
to adopt the motion.

In terms of Standing Order 34.1, Councillor Malik intimated that he would like this matter to be referred to full Council in order for a final decision to be taken. Councillor Malik was supported by Councillors Farquhar, Houghton, Thomson and Watson.