

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance and Resources
DATE	8 May 2024
EXEMPT	The content of the report is public, but it contains an exempt appendix. (Paragraph 8 – Estimated Expenditure on Contracts: ‘This report refers to the acquisition or supply of goods/services where disclosure to the public of the amount to be spent would be likely to give an advantage to a person or organisation seeking to enter a contract with the Council.’)
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Ferryhill School Suitability Improvements: Outline Business Case
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/135
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Stephen Booth
REPORT AUTHOR	Claire Cowan
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report presents a completed Outline Business Case, setting out the findings of a recent feasibility study, to identify options for improving the suitability of Ferryhill School.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Approves in principle the recommended option within the outline business case at Appendix A, to refurbish and extend Ferryhill School and to provide a standalone nursery building, in line with the allocation of funding for this project within the Non-Housing Capital Programme, which was approved by Council on 6 March 2024;
- 2.2 Approves the use of resources to take forwards detailed design development for the recommended option; and
- 2.3 Instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to report back to the Committee with a full business case, within the next 12 months.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 At its meeting on 8 September 2022, the former Education Operational Delivery Committee approved the Council's School Estate Plan, and instructed officers to take forwards a detailed action plan to develop and improve the school estate. This included an instruction for officers to carry out a feasibility study, to identify options for improving the dining capacity, layout and ELC facilities at Ferryhill School.
- 3.2 The outline business case, included at Appendix 1 of this report, sets out the findings of the feasibility study, and provides an analysis of the options available for improving the suitability of the school building.
- 3.3 This project aims to address critical suitability issues which are negatively impacting the school's operations and which have reached a point of necessitating immediate action.
- 3.4 For example, the current dining facilities are unable to accommodate the growing pupil roll at the school, and pressure on this space is likely to increase as universal free school meals entitlement continues to be rolled out. The nursery facilities at the school also require improvement, including direct access to external play areas to promote child development, whilst outdoor play areas for older pupils require improved access, and easier supervision to ensure safety. Furthermore, the PE facilities require to be extended and improved.
- 3.5 To address these issues, the preferred option identified within the outline business case is **Option 2A, to refurbish and extend the school building and to provide a standalone nursery.**
- 3.6 This option will deliver:
- A building with improved flexibility and better use of space across the whole site;
 - A modern dining facility providing a much improved experience for the pupils and staff, and facilitate any future free school meals expansion;
 - A double court PE hall, which conforms with Sport Scotland guidance;
 - Improved nursery provision, including direct access to the outdoors;
 - The suitability of the building changing from grade D (not fit for purpose) to grade A (fully fit for purpose); and
 - An asset which contributes positively to Net Zero targets.
- 3.7 Should this option be approved, detailed design work would be undertaken over the next year, with a view to construction work commencing in Summer 2025. The construction period would then be in the region of 12-15 months.

Relocation to Walker Road School

- 3.8 Due to the extent of the work required, it will be necessary for pupils and staff to be relocated to an alternative school building, for the duration of the works. This will ensure that the work can be progressed safely and efficiently, whilst minimising the level of disruption to learning and teaching.

- 3.9 Officers are therefore drawing up plans for the former Walker Road School building, which is currently vacant following that school's relocation to the new Greyhope School and Community Hub, to be used by the pupils and staff at Ferryhill School, whilst refurbishment work is carried out. It is anticipated that the relocation would take place prior to the start of the school session in August 2025, with works on site commencing shortly thereafter.
- 3.10 Initial discussions on these plans have already taken place with the staff and Parent Council at the school, and this dialogue will continue over the next year, as the detailed plans take shape. Full details of the relocation plan will be included within the full business case.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 At its budget setting meeting on 6 March 2024, Council approved an overall budget of £17.1m within the Non-Housing Capital Programme, for suitability improvements at Ferryhill School. The stage 1 estimated capital costs for the preferred option as detailed in the outline business case are within the available budget for the project. The cost of developing the full business case will be met from this budget.
- 4.2 Additional revenue costs associated with the project include an estimated one-off revenue requirement of £713k, to cover the cost of relocation to Walker Road School, and an estimated increase in on-going annual running costs of £226k. These costs will be added to the annual budget setting process for 2025/26 onwards. There are no expected increased revenue costs for 2024/25.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 1 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that there is made for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education.
- 5.2 Section 17 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides that it shall be the duty of an education authority in the performance of their functions under sections 1 to 6 of the Act, to provide for their area, sufficient accommodation in public schools and other educational establishments under their management to enable them to perform their said functions. In addition, an education authority shall maintain and keep efficient every public school, and other educational establishment under their management, and shall from time to time provide such additional accommodation as may be necessary to enable them to perform their functions under the Act and may, provide, alter, improve, enlarge, equip and maintain schools and other educational establishments within their area.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

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 the school leading to the Council being unable to fulfil its duty to make adequate and efficient education provision	The recommended option as set out with the business case will help to ensure that adequate and efficient provision will be available at the school for the foreseeable future	L	Yes
Operational	The preferred option doesn't meet the needs of building users	Building users will be consulted and engaged with throughout the design development to ensure their views and requirements are highlighted	L	Yes
Financial	Inability to deliver the Council's desired outcomes within the approved budget	This will be mitigated through working with cost consultants and designers during design development stage.	L	Yes

Reputational	Failure to engage with stakeholders on the planned changes to the school could lead to reputational damage for the Council.	Ongoing dialogue and engagement with staff, parents and pupils will continue throughout the project	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024</u>	
	Impact of Report
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>The recommendations within this report support 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 design development for significant improvements to be made to the suitability of Ferryhill School.</p>
<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26</u>	
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p>	<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>. Ongoing stakeholder engagement will help ensure that the views of children and young people will be taken into account.</p>
<p>Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The updated School Estate Plan supports the delivery of Stretch Outcome 13 in the LOIP – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by at least 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate. The proposed improvements to the school site will assist in reducing carbon emissions from the school estate.</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.
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9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Stephen Booth, Chief Officer Corporate Landlord on 15/04/2024.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	No other assessments required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Education Operational Delivery Committee, 8 September 2022: [Agenda Item 14: School Estate Plan 2022](#).

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Exempt Appendix 1: Outline Business Case – Ferryhill School Improvements

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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