

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
16 SEPTEMBER 2025

DRAFT MINUTE EXTRACT

1. SCHOOL ESTATE PLAN ANNUAL UPDATE 2025 – F&C/25/213

With reference to article 12 of the minute of its meeting of 17 September 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Families and Communities which presented the 2025 annual update to the School Estate Plan, providing information on progress with implementation of the Plan, and highlighting new priorities which had emerged over the last year.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the updates to the Action Plan which were provided at Appendix A of the report;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to continue to implement the School Estate Action Plan in accordance with the updated Long Term Programme, presented within Appendix B of the report;
- (c) refer the capital and revenue cost implications of the updated Action Plan and Programme, as shown at Appendix C of the report, to the budget setting process for 2026/27;
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out an options appraisal to determine any required interim arrangements for establishing the proposed new school at Bucksburn/Newhills, and to include the cost implications of any such arrangements in the budget setting process for 2026/27, with a view to the arrangements being included within the proposals for the forthcoming statutory public consultation on the new school;
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to undertake a feasibility study to investigate options for the establishment of a new primary school to serve Grandhome, including any required interim arrangements, and to report the findings of the feasibility study in an Outline Business Case, in line with the timescales outlined in the Long Term Programme at Appendix B of this report; and
- (f) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to further develop proposals and timescales for future ASG based asset reviews, and to build these in to future updates of the School Estate Plan.

An amendment by Dr Murray had been prepared and previously circulated to Members, and prior to moving of the motion and amendment, both the Convener and Councillor Blake accepted Dr Murray's amendment into their own proposals.

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

That Committee:-

- (a) approve the recommendations as set out in the report;

- (b) note that Victorian schools had been assessed for wheelchair accessibility; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to ensure that any future reviews of school buildings, including the planned ASG based asset reviews, include an assessment of accessibility, which gives consideration to all disabilities, in line with the Scottish Government’s guidance on “Planning improvements for disabled pupils’ access to education: guidance for education authorities, independent and grant-aided schools”.

Councillor Blake, seconded by Councillor Grant, moved as an amendment:-

That Committee:-

- (a) note that Victorian schools had been assessed for wheelchair accessibility;
- (b) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to ensure that any future reviews of school buildings, including the planned ASG based asset reviews, include an assessment of accessibility, which gives consideration to all disabilities, in line with the Scottish Government’s guidance on “Planning improvements for disabled pupils’ access to education: guidance for education authorities, independent and grant-aided schools”;
- (c) note the updates to the Action Plan which were provided at Appendix A of the report;
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to carry out an options appraisal to determine any required interim arrangements for establishing the proposed new school at Bucksburn/Newhills, and to include the cost implications of any such arrangements in the budget setting process for 2026/27, with a view to the arrangements being included within the proposals for the forthcoming statutory public consultation on the new school;
- (e) instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to undertake a feasibility study to investigate options for the establishment of a new primary school to serve Grandhome, including any required interim arrangements, and to report the findings of the feasibility study in an Outline Business Case, in line with the timescales outlined in the Long Term Programme at Appendix B of the report;
- (f) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to further develop proposals and timescales for future ASG based asset reviews, and to build these in to future updates of the School Estate Plan;
- (g) instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to engage with the people of Aberdeen on the possibility of establishing a Catholic secondary school in the city; and
- (h) as per 4.2 of the report to Committee on 21 November 2023, the S75 agreement for Countesswells did not allow for the Council to use the Secondary School Contribution for a school on a different site, and to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to bring forward a report to the next Committee on the losses from developers’ contributions collected, uncollected and no longer applicable by the decision not to proceed with a secondary school at Countesswells.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (8) - the Convener; the Vice Convener; and Councillors Allard, Buchanan, Clark, Fairfull, Hutchison and MacGregor; for the amendment (9) – Councillors Blake, Brooks, Crockett, Grant and McLeod; and Ms Barclay, Mr Haywood, Dr Murray and Mr Murray; absent from the division (1) – Ms Munro.

The Committee resolved:-
to adopt the amendment.

In terms of Standing Order 34.1, the Convener referred the matter to Full Council for a decision, stating that he wished to do so in order to give other Members an opportunity to take part in the discussion and to ensure there was a strong school estate plan for the budget process 2026/2027. The Convener was supported in this regard by the Vice Convener; and Councillors Allard, Buchanan, Clark, Fairfull, Hutchison and MacGregor.