



Public Consultation Meeting
Review of Stonehaven Town Primary School Zones
06 September 2017
7-9pm Arduthie School

Aberdeenshire Council Officers/Elected Members present:

Cllr Gillian Owen (Chair); Cllr Sarah Dickinson (Stonehaven & Lower Deeside); Maxine Booth (QIM); Gemma Dacre (Research & Analysis Officer-Learning Estates); Pamela McLeod (Learning Estates Officer - Learning Estates – Minute Taker); Julie Bartlet (Learning Estates Officer- Learning Estates)

1	<p>Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Councillor Owen introduced herself and outlined her role as chair of the ECS Committee at Aberdeenshire Council. Councillor Owen welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced the Aberdeenshire Council officers and elected members present, and laid out the format of the meeting.</p>
2	<p>Consultation Overview</p> <p>Maxine Booth welcomed colleagues, and explained that this Rezoning Consultation was prompted by an imbalance of rolls across the Stonehaven Network and the impact of current housing developments in and around Stonehaven. Maxine underlined the importance of undertaking this exercise in a flexible way to accommodate public views. Maxine explained that the purpose of this meeting is to review the Stonehaven primary school zones for Arduthie, Mill O'Forest and Dunnottar School.</p> <p>Housing developments within Dunnottar catchment will continue to put pressure upon Dunnottar school roll for the coming years. Currently within the network there are sufficient pupil places across all schools for the next few years, as houses in the new developments are sold and families move into them.</p> <p>Whilst there is currently capacity across the whole network, it is no longer in the right place. The purpose of the rezoning exercise is to change the catchment areas of the three primary schools in the town of Stonehaven so that current and future pupils can be educated in school buildings with sufficient space.</p> <p>There are three proposals for each school including retaining the status quo. The proposed changes to each school catchment area are shown on the maps around the room, with a before and after scenario.</p> <p>Maxine confirmed that this consultation is being held in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, and that the period of consultation runs until 29 September 2017, allowing time for comment. Acknowledgement was made of the legal process which must be followed to inform a decision on implementation, which it is hoped would take effect in time for the start of the school year in August 2018.</p> <p>If proposed changes are approved they would be implemented from August 2018. However we want to be very clear about the following: firstly, current pupils will not be expected to move school, all existing arrangements will continue including school transport provision. Secondly any children who already have a brother or sister in a school can choose to go to the same school as their siblings. Pupils would still be entitled to free school transport if they live out with 2 miles of the zoned school.</p>

This follows on from a helpful informal consultation which has shaped the proposals. This is the right time to review primary school provision in the area. We will be happy to take questions later in this session or after the meeting one to one.

Maxine reiterated that there will be no requirement for any existing pupils to move schools when the new zones are in place.

3 Questions from the Floor

Councillor Owen welcomed questions from the floor and asked that participants state their name to aid the minute taking process and confirmed that copies of the consultation document were available throughout the room.

- **Lisa Williams HT Dunnottar School**

Would children attending a school Nursery be entitled to continue in to P1 at that school?

Maxine Booth – No because nurseries are not currently zoned. So a nursery child attending Dunnottar would not necessarily continue at Dunnottar. If they lived out with the zone it would require an out of zone application.

- **Cllr Sarah Dickinson**

How would the school transport provision affect siblings who have requested to go to a now out of zone school in order to be placed in the same school as an older sibling?

Maxine Booth – School transport will continue for all existing pupils. If a younger sibling wishes to attend the same school as an older sibling which is now not their zoned school this will be through an out of zone placing request that clearly states that parents must make and meet the cost of any transport arrangements. If there is availability on school transport then children would be able to apply for a privilege pass.

- **Cllr Dickinson**

For clarity a privilege pass is approximately £100 a year which is not prohibitive but a cost families should be aware of.

- **Mandy Senior Parent Council Dunnottar School**

Noted concern about the loss of rural area zoned to Dunnottar School and so is very happy to see Proposal 2.

Maxine Booth – Thanks for your comments.

- **Lisa Williams HT Dunnottar School**

Parents feel very strongly about the rural area being zoned to Dunnottar and the family ties they have to the school.

Maxine Booth – That is why we carry out informal engagements prior to consultation as this community suggestion informed the proposals we are presenting today. Please encourage parents to document their response whatever it may be so it is included in the process. Group responses can also be made.

- **Daniel Veltman Community Council**

I am new to this process can someone provide an overview of the proposals?

Gemma Dacre – Option 1 is to realign the catchment areas of Dunnottar, Arduthie and Mill O'Forest Schools and redistribute the rural elements of Dunnottar School to Arduthie and Mill O'Forest Schools. Option 2 is to retain the rural element of Dunnottar School and realign the catchment areas of Dunnottar, Arduthie and Mill O'Forest School. Option 3 is to retain the status quo.

- **Jacqui Hutchison Parent Mill O'Forest**

When proposals are put together, are placing requests looked at?

Gemma Dacre – Yes placing request information has been taken into consideration.

- **Jacqui Hutchison Parent Mill O'Forest**

Can you confirm that the Council's preferred option is Proposal 2?

Gemma Dacre – The Council do not have a preferred option, the report will be informed by community feedback.

- **Jacqui Hutchison Parent Mill O'Forest**

There has been a lot of change in Stonehaven, what is the underlying reason for reducing capacity at Dunnottar School?

Maxine Booth – New housing developments have prompted this consultation, as developments mature the demographics change and we assess pupil numbers and capacity on an ongoing basis.

- **Jacqui Hutchison Parent Mill O'Forest**

A school which is deemed as full or at capacity is it different to a school which doesn't use every available space as a class? Losing these spaces takes away from the learning experience.

Maxine Booth – I was part of the team that determined capacities, the guidance from the Scottish Government is 1.7m² but Aberdeenshire allowed 1.8m² per child. What you are referring to is GP spaces, when looking at capacities we are mindful of what we would expect from a new build. The Scottish Government specifies the number of GP rooms that should be available in relation to the number of classrooms and throughout Aberdeenshire we have a wide range of different shared spaces used for different activities and each school building has to be looked at individually. We would not take away any of these rooms unless it was to ease a short term peak in pupil numbers. We would also aim to avoid using temporary accommodation in the future.

- **Jacqui Hutchison Parent Mill O'Forest**

I realise there is ongoing work with capacities for example with Mackie and there is concern about giving up these valuable classrooms.

Maxine Booth – We would not proceed with any course of action that had a negative effect on educational benefit.

- **Cllr Dickinson**

Noted that Dunnottar will remain under pressure capacity wise and all arguments remain for a new build school for Dunnottar.

- **Teacher Arduthie**

Will this request do away with Out of Zone Placing Requests?

Maxine Booth – No, parents will always have the right to submit placing requests. We received approximately 900 in the last academic year and approximately 700 of those were accepted. We will be reviewing our reserved spaces policy. The Out of Zone request reasons are monitored and inform potential changes. For example in Peterhead a lot of requests were received due to families passing schools in order to get to their zoned school and this prompted a rezoning to work better geographically.

- **Jacqui Hutchison Parent Mill O'Forest**

If the preferred option is for rural children to attend Mill O'Forest would they get transport?

Gemma Dacre – So far the community preferred option has been to keep the rural children zoned to Dunnottar, we are aware that Mill O'Forest is constrained with their drop off/pick up areas. Children living out with 2 miles from their zoned Primary School would be provided transport.

- **Jacqui Hutchison Parent Mill O'Forest**

How are the kids being engaged with and what are they being asked?

Lisa Williams Head Teacher – We received the relevant information yesterday but I have not had time to look at the suggested questions.

- **Jacqui Hutchison Parent Mill O'Forest**

Would the panel be able to provide what questions have been provided for the kids?

Gemma Dacre – We have tried to simplify the options and a lot of it we leave up to the schools as they know their kids best and normally we get good feedback such as the pupils have enjoyed looking at the maps as an activity.

Questions provided by Arduthie member of staff:

- Do you think your catchment should change?
- Does your school have too many or too few pupils?
- Do you think change is a good idea?
- Is there anything about this that worries you?
- Is there anything about this that excites you?

- **Daniel Veltman Community Council**

Which Area Committee will this come under?

Cllr Dickinson – Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee will review this paper next week and the report will be presented in November. The K & M Committee will then make a recommendation to the Education Committee.

Next Steps

Councillor Owen highlighted that the consultation documents are available on the Aberdeenshire Council website, and that these proposals will be open for comment until 29 September 2017. The public can comment on these proposals either in writing or by email at the Learning Estates email address: learningestates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. The online survey is also still available, for stakeholders to participate in the rezoning exercise and provide their feedback. The address for the online questionnaire is displayed on posters around this room.



	<p>We are also involving pupils in our discussions and each of the Head Teachers in the network have been asked to work with pupils to gain their views on the proposals. At the end of this consultation process, after 29 September 2017, all documents from the consultation will be provided to Education Scotland. A report will then be taken back to the Kincardine & Mearns area committee shortly before a decision is made at ELL Committee. Then published after that.</p>
5	Close
	<p>Councillor Owen thanked all present for attending the meeting and suggested that the maps would stay up for a while longer if those present would like to review these and provide their feedback.</p>