



**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES COMMITTEE ON
25 MARCH 2015**

SUBJECT: ELGIN PRIMARY SCHOOL ZONING CONSULTATION

BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE)

1. REASON FOR REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's approval to consult on primary school zoning in Elgin under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.
- 1.2 This report is submitted to Committee in terms of Section III C (25) of the Council's Scheme of Administration to consider and monitor problems relating to school capacities and available accommodation and to review school zoning.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- i) agrees proposals for Elgin Primary School zones as attached in Appendix A;**
- ii) authorises the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) to progress to statutory consultation, with statutory consultees and other interested parties, on those proposals; and**
- iii) delegates authority to the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) to review the agreed proposals following consultation and receipt of Education Scotland's report on the proposals and thereafter to prepare and publish a consultation report.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The issue of revising school zoning comes under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. In order to make changes to school zones (catchment areas) the Education Authority must publish proposals and undertake a consultation with various prescribed groups as well as hold public meetings.

- 3.2 At its meeting on 4 February 2015, the Children and Young People's Services Committee agreed key principles for rezoning, considered draft proposals for zones and instructed the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) to undertake the next steps in the process and to report back to Committee in order that Committee may agree the proposals for consultation (paragraph 9 of the minute refers).
- 3.3 The proposal document, attached to this report at **Appendix A**, will be consulted on between Monday 13 April 2015 and Friday 29 May 2015, two days more than the statutory 30 days of term time required for consultation. It is expected that, allowing for Education Scotland to report on the proposals and an analysis of the consultation responses by Moray Council officers, a consultation report will be published in the autumn of 2015. This should allow the Committee to take a final decision on the proposals on 9 December 2015.
- 3.4 Notice of the proposals will be sent to all statutory consultees: parents/carers of pupils at all affected Elgin primary schools and to parents of children likely to become pupils at these schools in the next two years; Parent Councils; Community Councils; staff at affected schools and trade unions; and pupils. The full consultation document will be available to all consultees. Copies will also be available on the Moray Council website and at Elgin schools, Elgin Library and the Moray Council Headquarters.
- 3.5 An announcement of the publication of proposals will be placed in the local press, inviting any person to make written representation to the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care). An online survey, with copies of the school zone maps, will also be made available to gather responses. Meetings will be arranged with the parent councils of all affected Elgin primary schools and with the staff of the establishments. Meetings will be held with representatives of the teacher and support staff trade unions and meetings can be arranged with other interested bodies if requested. Opportunities will also be made for pupils to participate in the consultation including individual school pupil councils being asked to seek the views of fellow pupils and to report back.
- 3.6 Notice will be given of and public meetings held to discuss the proposals as follows:
- Monday 13 April 2015, Bishopmill Primary School, 7pm
 - Thursday 16 April 2015, New Elgin & Ashgrove Hall, 7pm
 - Monday 27 April 2015, Elgin Town Hall, 2pm
 - Monday 27 April 2015, Elgin Town Hall, 7pm

4 SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

(a) Moray 2023: A Plan for the Future/Service Plan

The contents of this report relate to Moray 2023 Priority 2 – 'Ambitious and confident children and young people'.

(b) Policy and Legal

This report relates to the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended and the Moray Council Policy and Procedures for Admission to Schools.

(c) Financial implications

1. Establishing revised school zones will not create, in isolation, any financial implications. The creation of additional school zones, however, would lead to formal consultation to establish new schools to serve those zones and there would be both capital and revenue costs associated with this which would require to be progressed through the capital plan process.
2. It is anticipated that the cost of the consultation exercise will be under £1,000, allowing for postage, printing, the cost of placing a public notice in the local press and the hire of meeting venues. This will be met from existing budgets.

(d) Risk implications

Failure to address primary school capacity and zoning issues will increase the risk of children, resident within certain school zones, being unable to attend their zoned school. It may also necessitate children being transported from Elgin to schools in neighbouring towns and villages in the future.

(e) Staffing implications

1. There will be a substantial amount of staff time required in the statutory consultation process including preparing consultation documents, presenting to, and recording, public and other meetings and preparing a consultation report.
2. There will be staffing implications with regard to the actual consultation exercise. Officers will be required to attend public consultation meetings, staff meetings, parent council meetings and pupil council meetings as part of the process and this will have to be undertaken alongside current duties.
3. The provision of additional schools in Elgin will result in a need for additional staffing. Recruitment will be carried out in line with human resources policies and procedures at the appropriate time, prior to any new schools opening.

(f) Property

As detailed within this report proposals will lead to establishing new schools and this will be the subject of future reports to this Committee.

(g) Equalities

An equality impact assessment has been carried out on this proposal and consultation process. This concludes that introducing this proposal will not have an adverse impact on any of the groups considered. In addition, there were no equalities issues identified around the consultation process. From the impact assessment, it is concluded that this proposal would have potential positive benefits for young people. Any impacts identified through the consultation process will be investigated prior to the final consultation report being issued and a decision being made. The equality impact assessment is attached as part of **Appendix A**.

(h) Consultations

1. Laurence Findlay, Corporate Director (Education and Social Care); Graham Jarvis, Head of Lifelong Learning Culture and Sport; Lindsey Stanley, Business Support Team Manager; Vivienne Cross, Acting Head of Schools and Curriculum Development; Deborah Brands, Principal Accountant; Margaret Forrest, Legal Services Manager (Litigation and Licensing); Katrina McGillivray, Senior Human Resources Adviser; Don Toonen, Equal Opportunities Officer; Donald Macrae, Public Transport Manager; and Caroline Howie Committee Services Officer have been consulted on this report and proposal paper and agree with the sections relating to their areas of responsibility.
2. Informal discussions have been held with officers in the Planning and Development section regarding future house building developments in Elgin and potential locations for schools in the proposed new zones.

5. CONCLUSION**5.1 Undertaking a formal consultation on varying the catchment areas of the primary schools in Elgin will be next step in the Council addressing school capacity issues.**

Author of Report:

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