

Public Consultation Meeting
St Andrew's Proposed Relocation
Inverurie Academy
1st February 2017
7-9pm

Aberdeenshire Council Officers/Elected Members present:

Cllr. Alison Evison; Anne-Marie Davies (ASN Quality Improvement Manager) Vincent Docherty (Head of Services for Secondary and ASN) Craig Clement (Head of Resources & Performance); Maxine Booth (QIM); Rachael Goldring (Asset Project Leader- Learning Estates Team); John Macleod (Project Manager) Rhona Rafferty (Administrator – Minute Taker); Mark Jones (Head Teacher – Inverurie Academy) Dawn Lynch (Deputy Head Teacher) Craig Paterson (Deputy Head Teacher)

Also in attendance at the meeting was Stuart Maxwell (Education Scotland)

1	Welcome and Introductions
	Councillor Evison introduced herself and outlined her role as chair of the ECS Committee at Aberdeenshire Council. Councillor Evison welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced the Aberdeenshire Council officers and elected members present, and laid out the format of the meeting.
2	Consultation Overview
	All officers presented a presentation providing background to the proposal, proposed plans for Inverurie Community Campus and St Andrew's School, and the educational benefits
3	Questions from the Floor
	<p>Councillor Evison welcomed questions from the floor and asked that participants state their name to aid the minute taking process.</p> <p>Lorna Murray - She wanted clarification on the 3 clusters that St Andrew's School serves, and was concerned this involved changes to catchment area.</p> <p>AMD – There are no changes to catchment areas. Under Aberdeenshire Council's 9 area model, St Andrew's is the Community Resource Hub for the 3 clusters, although children from any area will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Happy to discuss 9 area model off table. There is a commitment to children progressing and finishing their education at St Andrew's. Children's needs are assessed on a case by case basis and provision made to meet those needs.</p> <p>Lorna Murray – Presentation relocation of St Andrew's is confusing, it needs to be clearer in terms of areas served. Does this involve closure or rezoning?</p> <p>CC – Confirmed this consultation was about a relocation with all staff and pupils being relocated.</p> <p>AMD – offered to speak to Ms Murray off-table to clarify the policy context</p>

Gayle Taylor (Staff member, Parent/career) - The building looks amazing but she has a niggling concern about security issues around outdoor space being overlooked when children playing outside. It is an open playground, they have issues about the kids being videoed and being exposed on social media.

VAD – This is a difficult question, the future aim is to have a more inclusive approach, and to ensure everyone is treated with respect. We can't develop approaches to cater for the lowest common denominator, and it was unfair to categorise all academy pupils as such. There are arguments on both sides – but it all equates to working together. VAD referred to his own experiences as a Head Teacher and described the positive attitudes he has seen in youngsters, they took care of the community of pupils in the school and demonstrated inclusive attitudes

Jane Keenan (parent) – raised same issue, her friend has a child who attends Ellon academy and her child is getting bullied.

AMD- We are sensitive to the issues and we recognise the challenges, however we also know that we do better when we are brought together in something bigger than ourselves. In consulting with the School Council, pupils argued that building walls and putting up barriers doesn't help, it just created more questions and issues. Agreed we need to keep looking at designs, and that there may be both design and policy/practice solutions.

Jane Keenan (parent) - they want to be assured that there is no risk of ridicule or bullying for their children.

AMD – we are fortunate to have the academy HT, MJ, who has first-hand experience of working in a co-located setting.

MJ –He shared info on the Marlpool and Bankhead Academy merger, about how the parents, staff and pupils were all anxious about the situation, however they took a mature and positive approach and they worked together. They saw opportunities for collaboration i.e. joint school trips and shared teaching/learning. He advised he had not experienced any of the issues raised above i.e. people taking images while children playing, either mainstream or ASN. He told of an experience of ASN and mainstream integration, where the ASN children led a workshop for a whole year group on Makaton, this in turn brought the two together with Makaton being used in the corridors between both cohorts of pupils in daily interactions

Holly Mecik (parent/carer) – said about how her daughter at Ellon Academy is being bullied and children filmed it, what is to stop them videoing the ASN children whilst taking seizures or vomiting?

VAD – this situation is not only relevant to this discussion. These are serious concerns, however there is power in the community to overcome such issues, but segregation is not a solution. Young people can be and should be trusted

Holly Mecik (parent/carer) – not all children can show this

VAD – thinks the opposite, he has seen young people be caring and respectful in that situation and he then quoted the changes in his previous school setting following integration of pupils with ASN and has witnessed personally the improvements in ethos and inclusive attitudes.

Cllr Evison talked about the possible design solutions and suggested concerned parents could speak to John after.

Josh McCrae (Youth forum and community councillor) – They went to Marketplace School and a pupil's story touched their hearts. This pupil had a sibling at St Andrew's School. Concerns were raised about impact on mainstream pupils by disturbances for example, ambulances for St Andrew's School pupils. They had spoken to a child that goes to the academy and his sister goes to St Andrew's Schools, he needs time to be himself as he gets bullied and is embarrassed that his sibling goes to St Andrew's School. They also said that this might happen to other children who have siblings in St Andrew's School and they may be bullied even more.

MJ – advised that he understands that families need space, however this wasn't an issue in Bucksburn Academy (Bankhead/Marlpool), on the contrary there are positive examples of siblings going to the same school and being part of the same community.

VAD – Bullying is not acceptable, the future goal is one strong community. We need to address bullying issues where we find them as they are not acceptable – everyone is responsible for their own actions.

Youth Forum – worried about their own education, they can't switch off to disturbing issues or incidents they see. Having children with special needs on site could interfere with their concentration and cause them distress. In particular, it may affect their exams.

Cllr Evison agreed that their concerns were recognised however this was a general issue and not just around St Andrew's School and the proposed relocation.

Isla Laing (Parent) – Largely positive about the proposal although still some real concerns. Referred to 'overlooking issue', she asked if it will be a secure site with a family feel. What came from the Parent Council meeting she had with CC, JMcL and AMD on 31.01.17 was that the design is still under development and changes can be put in place. Finer details can be worked at in the next phase of planning and design.

JMcL – ambition is to give pupils the 'best space' possible and as VAD said, the design cannot be informed by the lowest common denominator. There are design solutions for these issues which could include (for example) having more covered areas in the external space, or looking at reconfiguring the layout to make more sheltered outdoor areas.

Duncan Massie (PE teacher) – He wanted some clarification around the access to the shared facilities and opportunities that both Inverurie Academy and St Andrew's would have. Given the plan at the moment will there be/not be sufficient use of the facilities for St Andrew's School, Inverurie Academy and the community/public?

CC – yes there will be sufficient provision for both school and community use. The key issue is to make the sure that the requirements are identified and catered for. Timetabling will be important to ensure meet the needs of community groups and additional requirements; need to take a holistic approach. All floor space will be utilised, by school, clubs and support staff. The aim is for an efficient use of space for up to 1600 pupils. Through good management facilities can be used by others, for example music groups, drama clubs and after-school care.

Kay Mutch (Kellands parent) – impact of construction process on mainstream pupils, how will this impact the prelims, will there be much disruption?

JMcL – it is not unusual to construct a new school on the site of an existing facility. The process will be managed by the contractor through careful programming of potentially disruptive or noisy activities. The safety of pupils and public will always be paramount. All of the potential

contractors are experienced in managing these processes.

Gayle Taylor (staff member, parent/carer) – If the proposal is about cutting the catchment area for St Andrew's School, there would be a reduction in numbers. What number of pupils would make the school non-viable going forward?

AMD – As mentioned earlier there is no change to catchment areas but more a realignment to the 9 area model. Of the current role about 55 pupils come from the 3 relevant clusters, the others come from other parts of Aberdeenshire. It may be that numbers reduce as capacity and confidence in other areas in meeting complex needs increases, but any resulting capacity at St Andrew's School would support both in-reach and outreach services for a wider range of pupils from across the 3 clusters. There is also the scope for specialist programmes to use the spaces effectively i.e. NHS groups/clinics being delivered on-site. There will never be a shortage of demand from children and families, but it is about extending provision of services/supports to more children and families

Dorothy Grant (Staff at St Andrew's) – What will happen to the old site and who owns it.

CC – Aberdeenshire Council own the site, but there is no decision on the existing site. There are significant title burdens associated with this which means that only certain things can be done with the site, and this will be looked into in more detail if a decision is taken to relocate.

Tracy Skene (parent/carer) – community is concerned about leisure facilities being overlooked, and also the amount of traffic going down Jackson Street, taxi's to St Andrew's will be a knock on effect to everyone.

CC - This will be discussed at another meeting, a stakeholder meeting on 16.02.17, a more appropriate forum to discuss those concerns.

Gavin Henry – (parent at St Andrew's School) - More able pupils at St Andrews can access the academy now, how will that be improved by the proposal? How many do that now?

VAD – physical location with proximity arrangement has more potential to promote inclusion. Significant opportunity for all the young people.

AMD – The number of St Andrew's pupils currently doing that are limited with staff issues, historical arrangements, and operational barriers. Currently groups of St Andrew's pupils are taken by their teacher and taught at the academy, which might well be appropriate for some. However, there would also be opportunities to include St Andrew's pupils in academy classes, courses and programmes, and vice versa. Inclusion is about promoting positive attitude and behaviour for staff and pupils, and ensuring every pupil can access learning and experiences appropriate to their needs.

Youth Forum – Issues about sharing facilities. Will there be showering and changing facilities for everyone, including specialist facilities for special needs?

JMcL – Changing places – there are 5 'Changing Places Toilets', in addition to a number of accessible and independent toilet facilities within the St. Andrew's teaching accommodation, with further facilities located within the rest of the Campus

Sharon Nicol (Parent) – No-one has said anything about what next if this doesn't happen? What is the alternative option?

CC – This consultation is part of process of decision-making, which will come back to the Committee for a decision. If it does not go ahead, there is a wider decision to be made looking at the demands and priorities of the whole schools estate. This consultation is about a very specific proposal, not about wider estate issues.

EA – wanted clarification on the decision-makers and stated that parental views don't count and that only anyone 'who matters' has a say

Cllr Evison – emphasised the importance of expressing views and urged people to put ideas forward as everyone gets a say.

AMD emphasised that decision-makers are keen to hear the views of all stakeholders in informing their decisions.

Mairi Masson (teacher Inverurie Academy) – How can inclusion work, we don't have enough staff due to reductions. Inverurie Academy cannot retain staff, how will St Andrew's School pupils be supported without staff, we won't allow anyone to believe that we can provide this as we can't.

CC – To be clear, there have been no cuts to staffing budgets in any areas, difficulties in staffing are due to recruitment, and we are aware of this. Need to emphasise this is not a merger, and both schools will be resourced separately. We want St Andrew's School and the academy to work together, but have committed to maintaining separate staffing structures.

Jane Keenan (parent) – Clarification on St Andrew's School cluster – will people from Cluster schools will be able to use the facilities? Is there a provision possibly to do more programmes for example Kemnay & St Andrew's if it works?

AMD – St Andrew's School is the Community Resource Hub for the 3 clusters, and it may be that children with complex needs from across the area access St Andrew's for structured and timetabled programmes/interventions. But it would not be generally available for other schools to use through some sort of letting systems. The provision is for pupils with complex needs both through inreach and outreach.

M Euan (Parent) – requested information on dining facilities

AMD – There will be a full range of dining facilities across the campus. Two break-out spaces in St Andrew's School will provide dining areas for those pupils who would not benefit from accessing mainstream dining arrangements, there are also a number of smaller spaces for pupils who require high levels of privacy i.e. gastro-peg feeding.

The kitchen areas will also be utilised for life skills, which can be developed over lunch hour.

M Euan (parent) – how can we manage St Andrew's kids moving about the school?

AMD – it will be done by way of timetabling, this will minimise sensory impacts and this can be done in collaboration with NHS partners.

Duncan Massie (teacher Inverurie Academy) If/When relocated will St Andrew's/Inverurie Academy names be retained.

AMD – Yes absolutely, if that what parents, staff and pupils want. Everything so far suggests that both school's want to retain their identity. This was brought up by the academy School

	<p>Council</p> <p>JMcL described how other campus models have developed a shared identity i.e. through a campus badge, but still retained their school identity.</p>
	<p>Next Steps</p>
	<p>Cllr Evison advised that the proposal will be open for comment until 24th February 2017. The public can comment on these proposals either in writing or by email to LearningEstates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk and in writing to Anne-Marie Davies, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB. The online survey is also still available, for stakeholders to participate in. The address for the online questionnaire is http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ProposedRelocationOfStAndrewsSchoolStatutoryConsultation</p> <p>At the end of this consultation process, after 24th February 2017, all written submissions, minutes of this meeting and pupil discussions information will be provided to education Scotland, for their consideration. Education Scotland will produce a report and this report along with our own report on the consultation will be issued to the Garioch Area Committee for recommendation and the Education and Children's Services committee in order for a decision to be made about the proposed zones.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Close</p>
	<p>Councillor Evison thanked all present for attending the meeting and suggested that the plans would stay up for a while longer if those present would like to review these and provide their feedback, and that officers would be around to discuss the plans and answer any additional questions if required.</p>