

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE

**ELGIN PRIMARY SCHOOL REZONING
CONSULTATION REPORT**

1 October 2015



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1. INTRODUCTION

Background

As a result of various factors including demographics, new housing developments and transport issues, certain primary schools in Elgin are nearing, and will exceed, their capacities over the next few years.

At its meeting on 25 March 2015 the Children and Young Peoples Services Committee agreed to formally consult on the proposals below.

Proposals

It was proposed to make the following changes to primary school catchment areas (zones) in Elgin:

- (i) To vary the catchment areas of Bishopmill, East End, Greenwards, New Elgin, Seafield and West End primary schools in Elgin based on geographical areas which are delineated on plans.
- (ii) To establish a catchment area for a new primary school, including nursery, to serve a delineated geographical area in south east Elgin.
- (iii) To establish a catchment area for a new primary school, including nursery, to serve a delineated geographical area in north Elgin.

The details of the proposals, including maps showing current and proposed catchment areas, can be read in the Proposal Paper attached as Appendix A.

Purpose of Consultation

Varying school catchment areas requires a formal consultation to be carried out in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. This report documents the formal consultation undertaken on these proposals between 13th April and 29th May 2015

Timelines

- The Consultation was over 32 school days from 13th April and 29th May 2015
- Education Scotland reported back on the educational aspects of the proposal on 9th September 2015.
- This Consultation Report was published on 1st October 2015.

Consultees

During the consultation period, views were sought from a range of stakeholders and interested parties including:

- Parents
- Pupils
- Teaching and support staff
- Parent councils
- Elgin Community Council
- Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT)
- Trade Unions
- Elgin South Area Forum

2. ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

Summary

There were 59 responses to the online survey, 49 from individuals, 3 from groups or organisations and 7 where the respondent interest was not recorded. In addition 6 written responses were received, 1 from an individual and 5 from groups or organisations.

Total number of respondents by category

Type of Respondent	Number of online survey Responses	Number of written Responses
Individuals	49	1
Groups/Organisations	3	5
No Info	7	0
Total	59	6

Analysis of Individual Respondents		
Type of Respondent	Number of online survey Responses	Number of written Responses
Parents	40	1
Staff	8	0
Grandparent	1	0
Total	49	1

Analysis of Group/Organisation Respondents		
Type of Respondent	Number of online survey Responses	Number of written Responses
Parent Councils	2	1
School staff	0	1
Area Forum	0	1
Housing Developer	1	1
Other	0	1
Total	3	5

Response Analysis

The following table shows the breakdown of respondents by type for each Primary School zone proposal and the numbers and related percentages that agree and disagree with each proposal.



School	Type of Respondent	Agree		Disagree		Total	
		Number	% type of respondent	Number	% type of respondent	Number	% of total respondents
Bishopmill PS	Parent	16	89%	2	11%	18	58%
	Staff	5	100%	0	0%	5	16%
	Grandparent	1	100%	0	0%	1	3%
	Group/Organisation	2	67%	1	33%	3	10%
	No details	4	100%	0	0%	4	13%
	Total	28	90%	3	10%	31	100%
East End PS	Parent	18	90%	2	10%	20	61%
	Staff	5	100%	0	0%	5	15%
	Grandparent	1	100%	0	0%	1	3%
	Group/Organisation	2	67%	1	33%	3	9%
	No details	4	100%	0	0%	4	12%
	Total	30	91%	3	9%	33	100%
Greenwards PS	Parent	10	38%	16	62%	26	65%
	Staff	4	80%	1	20%	5	13%
	Grandparent	1	100%	0	0%	1	3%
	Group/Organisation	2	67%	1	33%	3	8%
	No details	3	60%	2	40%	5	13%
	Total	20	50%	20	50%	40	100%
New Elgin PS	Parent	17	74%	6	26%	23	59%
	Staff	4	67%	2	33%	6	15%
	Other Individual	1	100%	0	0%	1	3%
	Group/Organisation	2	67%	1	33%	3	8%
	No details	4	67%	2	33%	6	15%
	Total	28	72%	11	28%	39	100%
Seafield PS	Parent	18	95%	1	5%	19	56%
	Staff	7	100%	0	0%	7	21%
	Grandparent	1	100%	0	0%	1	3%
	Group/Organisation	2	67%	1	33%	3	9%
	No details	4	100%	0	0%	4	12%
	Total	32	94%	2	6%	34	100%
West End PS	Parent	8	40%	12	60%	20	59%
	Staff	5	100%	0	0%	5	15%
	Grandparent	1	100%	0	0%	1	3%
	Group/Organisation	2	67%	1	33%	3	9%
	No details	4	80%	1	20%	5	15%
	Total	20	59%	14	41%	34	100%

The following table shows the breakdown of respondents by type for each of the two proposed new Primary Schools and the numbers and related percentages that agree and disagree with each proposal.



School	Type of Respondent	Agree		Disagree		Total	
		Number	% type of respondent	Number	% type of respondent	Number	% of total respondents
New PS for south- east Elgin	Parent	19	86%	3	14%	22	61%
	Staff	5	100%	0	0%	5	14%
	Grandparent	1	100%	0	0%	1	3%
	Group/Organisation	2	67%	1	33%	3	8%
	No details	5	100%	0	0%	5	14%
	Total	32	89%	4	11%	36	100%
New PS for north Elgin	Parent	18	90%	2	10%	20	59%
	Staff	5	100%	0	0%	5	15%
	Grandparent	1	100%	0	0%	1	3%
	Group/Organisation	3	100%	0	0%	3	9%
	No details	4	80%	1	20%	5	15%
	Total	31	91%	3	9%	34	100%

Trade Unions - Support Staff

Representatives of the GMB, Unison and Unite were invited to discuss the proposals with the Head of Life Long Learning, Culture and Sport and Senior Education Adviser (Schools Consultations). The union representatives expressed their thanks but did not take up the offer of a meeting and did not respond to the consultation.

Trade Unions – Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT)

The Senior Education Adviser (Schools Consultations) gave a presentation to the LNCT. The LNCT did not submit a formal response to the consultation.

Scrutiny of Responses

A total of 65 responses were received. This represents a very small number of potential respondents considering there were 1916 pupils on the rolls of the six schools affected by the proposals (September 2014 census). Most of the respondents agree with the proposals. The main area of disagreement was around the proposed Greenwards catchment area and analysis of comments has identified that this mainly relates to the rural areas of the proposed zone. This is discussed in Section 4.

3. SUMMARY OF MAIN ORAL POINTS RAISED AND EDUCATION AUTHORITY RESPONSE

A number of concerns and questions relevant to the proposals were raised at the public meetings and meetings with school staff, parent councils and pupils. The main issues are listed below along with the Education Authority's response.

Issues

1. Provision of crossing patrols for all schools (Pupils, Public)

The location of crossing patrols will be reviewed in conjunction with the Roads department, once zones are confirmed, to ensure that crossing patrols are in place at all major road crossings for in-zone pupils.

2. Impact on school rolls if more (too many) houses continue to be built and the need to regularly review school zones (Pupils, Staff)

The Council will have to revise roll projections regularly. School zones should also be subject to regular review, potentially every 4-5 years.

3. Sufficiency of teachers for new schools (Pupils, Parents, Public Meetings)

The Council is confident that new schools in Elgin will prove attractive to many teachers. In addition, the Council believes that its recruitment processes and incentives will be successful in attracting teachers to Moray.

4. Possibilities for extending existing schools (Pupils, School Staff)

This is an option and is being kept under consideration in schools where this may be a viable solution in the future. The current proposals consulted on do not include extending existing schools.

5. Provision of drop off areas away from schools so that transport is not directly in front of school buildings (Pupils)

It will be recommended to Councillors, when they consider whether to implement the proposals, that they approve a requirement for schools to renew their travel plans once revised zones are agreed and before these changes take effect and thereafter to review those plans on an annual basis.

6. Concerns over the Council's Admissions policy, particularly the placement of siblings when an older one has enrolled as an in-zone pupil but a younger one will be out of zone due to the catchment area changes. (Parent Councils, Staff, Public, Area Forum)

The Council is revising its Admissions policy with a view to new procedures being in place as soon as possible. As part of this review, the Council will consider provision for temporary arrangements to address this and ensure no families are disadvantaged by the catchment area changes.

7. Concerns that a new school will not be available until 2018 at the earliest with the result there will be continued pressure on existing school accommodation and queries regarding contingency plans if a new school is not built within the proposed timescale (Pupils, Parent Councils, Staff, Public Meetings)

Given the level of agreement for establishing a new school for south-east Elgin and in order to address the concerns over the timescale envisaged for opening a new school, consideration will be given to bringing forward the date for opening a new school to August 2016. Clearly the new school could not occupy its permanent site at this time but it is feasible to open the new school based in temporary accommodation. The East End Primary School Annexe could provide accommodation for up to 150 children. The new school could potentially open in August 2016 for Primary 1 enrolments from the new catchment area only. The new school could operate out of the East End Primary School Annexe until a new school building is open. The new school would have its own head teacher, staff and resources. It would be necessary to offer to provide transport for all children to this temporary school accommodation from agreed pick up points in the catchment area. All of this would be subject to a separate consultation exercise. The Council could also investigate the use of temporary accommodation at school sites which have space. Greenwards, Seafield, East End and Bishopmill are possible locations; however the benefits of opening the new school in August 2016, both educational and financial, would provide the most advantageous option.

8. Concerns over the Council accepting placing requests for out of zone pupils, particularly children who do not reside in Elgin. (Parent Councils, Public)

The Council must comply with the law regarding placing requests. Pupils currently attending a school as a result of an out of zone placing request will not be required to move school unless by parental choice.

9. A concern that some pupils may not get a place in their zoned school until a new school is built. (Public Meetings)

All children can be accommodated within Elgin for the foreseeable future. It may be that the Council has to transport pupils to a temporary school building in Elgin until such time as a new school building opens as stated in 7 above.

10. Queries regarding transition arrangements when new zones become effective. (Staff, Public Meetings)

Pupils who are on the roll of a school prior to new zone changes being agreed will not be required to move school. Once zones are approved new pupils enrolling at school will be zoned to the new school.

11. If a child currently receives free school transport to their in-zone school, will this continue if as a result of the zone changes, they become out-of-zone? (Parents, Staff)

Children will continue to receive free transport if they live more than 2 miles from their zoned school, that is the school they were zoned to attend when they enrolled.

12. Will any provision be made for children dropped off early, before school opens, because parents have to drop another child at a different school? (Staff)

Situations pertaining to individual schools will be carefully monitored to see if any such measures need to be considered, however parents do have a choice as to when and where to drop pupils off for school.

13. How might existing staff be affected by the new school(s), e.g. compulsory transfer, redundancy? (Staff)

If the numbers of schools are increased it is likely more staff will be required. The Council currently operates a no compulsory redundancy policy therefore should a case arise there will be opportunities for re-deployment.

14. How will the new school(s) be funded, e.g. PPP again, and does the developer have to contribute? (Parents, Staff, Public Meetings)

While developer contributions will be sought for new schools it is likely that a school for south-east Elgin would have to be funded from the Council's revenue budget as retrospective developer contribution cannot be requested.

Issues specific to individual schools

1. What will the Council be doing about safe routes to school, specifically:

(a) Safe route to school for pupils from the Pinefield/Barlink Road areas? (Parent Council, Staff)

The Council will investigate the provision of transport to East End Primary School Annexe as a potential temporary measure until a new school building is opened. The location of crossing patrols will be reviewed in conjunction with the Roads department, once zones are confirmed, to ensure that crossing patrols are in place at all major road crossings for in-zone pupils.

(b) Could East End zone be reconfigured to prevent children from having to cross the A96? (Public Meeting, Elgin Community Council)

There will always be some areas which are likely to require children to cross busy roads. The location of crossing patrols will be reviewed as stated above. It will be recommended to Councillors, when they consider whether to implement the proposals, that schools be required to renew their travel plans once revised zones are agreed and before the changes take effect and to review those plans on an annual basis thereafter. Should the Council wish to pursue the option of zoning the South Lesmurdie area to Seafield then a new set of proposals and consultation would be required.

(c) Safety concern regarding crossing Thornhill Road to get to New Elgin Primary. (Public Meeting, Parent response)

Initial survey work by the Roads department in this location has not supported the concerns raised at the public meetings, however this does not show the concern is invalid, only that the numbers using these routes are low. Further investigation by working with the school, as part of the review of School travel plans, may identify the potential for unanticipated variations and latent demand for these routes. However, on the basis of the Council's findings at present, the current proposal will remain as very low numbers of pupils use this route. As stated above, the location of crossing patrols will be reviewed.

2. Can the Fairfield area be included in the West End rather than Greenwards zone? (Parent Council)

Officers previously considered this option, when drawing up the original rezoning proposals, and rejected it due to current uncertainty over the road layout in this area and potential pupil numbers due to prospective housing developments. Developments at Bilbohall North (20 houses), Bilbohall South (75 houses) and Knockmasting Wood (85 houses) have the potential to generate around 55 additional primary age pupils who could not currently be accommodated at West

End, therefore an extension to West End would be required if this proposal were to be implemented. Should the Council wish to pursue the option above, a new set of proposals and consultation would be required.

3. Suggestions of temporary accommodation or an extension to New Elgin Primary. (Public Meeting)

Officers previously considered this option when drawing up the original rezoning proposals and rejected it on the grounds that it is not considered a realistic option for a number of reasons including loss of recreational space for pupils, increased pressure on dining room accommodation and increased traffic problems around the school.

4. Suggestion to extend the new south-east Elgin school zone to include Hallowood Road (Lhanbryde catchment area). (Public Meeting)

This was not part of the consultation proposal. If this option is to be considered then a further public consultation would be required. Such a proposal has the potential to impact on the rolls of Lhanbryde Primary and Milne's High School.

5. Suggestion to transfer rural catchment areas (Greenwards proposal) to the Mosstowie catchment area. (Public Meeting, Mosstowie Parent Council)

Officers previously considered this option when drawing up the original rezoning proposals and rejected it on the grounds of potential increased transport costs and number of pupils. There are currently 18 pupils transported from these areas to New Elgin Primary and roll projections for Mosstowie indicate that if, theoretically, this number was to be added to the roll then the school would exceed its functional capacity and would no longer qualify for small school additional funding. In addition, any future house building in this area would most likely result in Mosstowie being over capacity if this suggestion were to be implemented. Should the Council wish to pursue the option above, a new set of proposals and consultation would be required.

4. SUMMARY OF WRITTEN POINTS RAISED AND EDUCATION AUTHORITY RESPONSE

The main issues raised in written correspondence are listed below along the Council's response.

Issues

1. Suggestion to provide only one new school in Elgin and that the new school be located within the Findrassie designation at R11 (Smiths Gore on behalf of Pitgaveney Estates)

There is no immediate pressure to establish a new school to serve the Findrassie area, and any decision not to establish a new school for the south-east of Elgin would be unacceptable to the vast majority of parents and the public in this area. Such a move would likely generate significant negative public opinion. However the need for a new school to serve north Elgin (Findrassie) should be kept under review.

2. Suggestion to increased school capacities at Seafield and East End (as proposed in the consultation document) (Smiths Gore on behalf of Pitgaveney Estates)

The Council has already committed to increasing capacity at Seafield and East End.

3. Suggestion to amend catchment areas for Greenwards, New Elgin and East End primary schools in order to address the immediate capacity pressures at New Elgin, and avoid the need for a new school in the south side (Smiths Gore on behalf of Pitgaveney Estates)

There is a sound and justifiable case for establishing a new school for south-east Elgin. Current roll projections indicate that the suggestion above would leave a deficit of approximately 270 primary school places in south Elgin by 2022, only around two thirds of whom could be accommodated through additional capacity at East End and Seafield. The only part of the East End catchment area which could feasibly move to the Seafield catchment area currently accounts for only 29 children. Future long term housing developments in south Elgin also point to the need for greater primary school capacity in this area. Should the Council wish to pursue the option proposed by Smiths Gore, a new set of proposals and consultation would be required.

4. Suggestion to realign catchment zones for Seafield and Bishopmill in anticipation of the opening of a new school at Findrassie around 2019/20 (Smiths Gore on behalf of Pitgaveney Estates)

The current proposals allow for establishing a catchment area for a new school in north Elgin (Findrassie area) which would come about through the realignment of the Bishopmill and Seafield catchment areas. Any proposal to establish a new school in the Findrassie area would be the subject of a further public consultation.

5. Suggestion that a comprehensive reassessment of placing requests be included in the rezoning calculations (Smiths Gore on behalf of Pitgaveney Estates)

The rezoning proposals already take account of the areas of Elgin which generate large numbers of placing requests. The Council must comply with the law regarding placing requests.

6. Suggestion that primary school catchment areas be reviewed on a regular seven-year cycle (Smiths Gore on behalf of Pitgaveney Estates)

This point is agreed; indeed a shorter timeframe, such as 4-5 years, may be appropriate.

7. Suggestion that school catchments, including that of the new school, be primarily determined on the basis of safe walking routes to the school (Smiths Gore on behalf of Pitgaveney Estates, Parent response)

This factor was given a high priority when considering the proposals. Unfortunately it is inevitable that there will always be some areas which are likely to require children to cross busy roads. The location of crossing patrols will be reviewed in conjunction with the Roads department once zones are confirmed, to ensure that crossing patrols are in place at all major road crossings for in-zone pupils.

8. A recommendation that the Children and Young People's Services Committee be asked to approve a requirement for schools to renew their travel plans once the zones are agreed and before these changes take effect and to review those plans on an annual basis. (Senior Engineer – Traffic)

This recommendation will be put to Committee.

9. Concerns over the Council's Admissions policy, particularly the availability of places for in-zone pupils. (Parent, Elgin South Area Forum)

The Council is revising its Admissions policy with a view to new procedures being in place as soon as possible. As part of this review, the Council will

consider provision for temporary arrangements to address this and ensure no families are disadvantaged by the catchment area changes.

Issues specific to individual schools

1. Extend West End Primary and establish a nursery at the school (West End staff and pupils)

The pupils made their point very well regarding the need to improve accommodation at West End, including the need for better accommodation for music and PE, along with nursery provision. This, along with the staff's suggestion to extend West End will be considered in more depth at a later date, once there is greater clarity on house building and road layouts in the west of Elgin.

2. (a) Continue to use Moss Street as the boundary between East End and West End catchment areas rather than post code areas. (West End staff).

This change would affect a very small number of pupils based on current rolls.

(b) Use the A941 as the boundary between East End and West End catchment areas (West End pupil).

This change would affect a relatively small number of pupils based on current rolls. Should the Council wish to pursue the option of using the A941 as the boundary, a new set of proposals and consultation would be required.

3. Disagreement with the proposed catchment area for Greenwards.

(a) Suggestion that the rural areas of Birnie, Fogwatt and Longmorn be zoned to Mosstowie. (Mosstowie Parent Council)

(b) Suggestion that Birnie, Fogwatt and Longmorn may benefit from being considered together as a rural community (Elgin South Area Forum)

(c) Suggestion that all properties south of Elgin golf course and west of the A941 become part of the Mosstowie primary zone instead of the Greenwards primary zone. (Parent response)

Officers previously considered these and similar options when drawing up the original rezoning proposals and rejected it on the grounds of potential increased transport costs and number of pupils. There are currently 18 pupils transported from these areas to New Elgin Primary and roll projections for Mosstowie indicate that if, theoretically, this number was to be added to the roll then the school would exceed its functional capacity and would no longer qualify for small school additional funding. In addition, any future house building in this area would likely result in Mosstowie being over capacity if this suggestion were to be implemented. Should the Council wish to pursue the option above, a new set of proposals and consultation would be required.

4. Use Thornhill Road as the boundary between New Elgin Primary and a new school as this would be logical and safer. (Parent response)

This is a reasonable suggestion and was considered by officers when drawing up the original rezoning proposals. The major long term problem that this proposal would likely create is that the 'new' school roll would be projected to become very large and New Elgin would decrease significantly. When the proposals were formulated there was also a desire to ensure a broad range of socio-economic groupings in all schools. Should the Council wish to pursue the option above, a new set of proposals and consultation would be required.

5. A suggestion was made to amend the Lhanbryde zone so that all children in the Lhanbryde catchment area are zoned to Milne's High School rather than be split between Milne's High School and Elgin Academy. (Two individual parent responses)

The Children and Young Peoples Services Committee agreed on 27 May 2015 to instruct the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) to review current secondary school zoning arrangements and report back to a future meeting of Committee with draft rezoning plans in order that Committee may agree consultation proposals.

6. South East Primary School proposal should have an increased roll, in order to significantly reduce the roll at New Elgin Primary School. (Parent response)

It is anticipated that a new school would be designed to cater for 400-450 pupils.

5. REPORT BY EDUCATION SCOTLAND

The main points from the Education Scotland Report were:

- Overall, the proposal has a number of educational benefits. It should lead to important improvements in the quality of learning environments for children, along with improved transitions for children from early learning and childcare settings to primary one at school.
- In taking forward its proposal, the Council will need to work with individual school communities to clarify its reasons for believing the current proposal is the most reasonable and viable option open to it.
- The Council will need to review each school's travel plan, to ensure safe routes to school are identified.
- There are reasonable concerns regarding New Elgin Primary School which is currently facing challenges in terms of overcrowded dining facilities, lack of flexible and social learning spaces and traffic management. In preparing and publishing its final report, the Council should address concerns of stakeholders at New Elgin Primary School, particularly in relation to the interim period before any new school is established.
- The Council should provide clear guidance on its approach to the placement of siblings, particularly where families may be split as a result of the proposed rezoning.
- The Council has indicated that the aspect of the proposal relating to the building of two new schools will result in a new consultation. In taking forward its proposal, the Council will need to engage with stakeholders and address their reasonable concerns about roll projections and about the timescale for the building of the schools.

All of the above points are noted and where action is required this is included within Section 6 Conclusions.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Reviewing the proposal

The written and oral responses were analysed by one of the Council's Research and Information Officers and Senior Education Adviser (Schools Consultations). Officers of the Education Authority have listened carefully to the points made at the public meetings and have considered equally carefully the written representations and the report from Education Scotland. The main issues arising have been considered by the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care), Head of Life Long Learning, Culture and Sport and Senior Education Adviser (Schools Consultations) and the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) has provided an Education Authority response to the issues in terms of powers delegated to him.

Conclusions

The Council now has four broad options for each of the proposed changes:

- (a) abandon the proposal and maintain the status quo; or
- (b) adopt each specific proposal in its entirety; or
- (c) adopt some of the specific proposals but maintain the status quo for other elements; or
- (d) amend each specific proposal in some way and undertake a further consultation exercise on each new proposal.

Summary

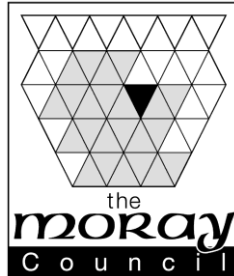
1. There is a strong case to establish catchment areas for two new schools in Elgin with the immediate priority being a new school to serve south-east Elgin.
2. In response to concerns raised, in writing and at meetings, and highlighted by Education Scotland, once a catchment area is agreed for a school in south-east Elgin immediate steps require to be taken to establish a new school potentially in time for the Primary 1 intake in August 2016. This could involve around 50 children and should help reduce the accommodation pressures on New Elgin.
3. New catchment areas should be agreed for Bishopmill, East End, Greenwards, New Elgin, Seafield and West End Primaries.
4. The Council is revising its Admissions policy with a view to new procedures being in place as soon as possible. As part of this review, the Council will consider provision for temporary arrangements to address roll pressures on



all schools, and New Elgin Primary in particular, to try to ensure no families are disadvantaged by the catchment area changes.

5. Each Elgin primary school's travel plan will need to be reviewed, to ensure safe routes to school are identified.
6. When new catchment areas are agreed the Council will need to clarify its reasons for believing these are the most reasonable and viable options open to it.

APPENDIX A: PROPOSAL PAPER



THE MORAY COUNCIL EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE DEPARTMENT

Proposal Paper

To vary the catchment areas of Bishopmill, East End, Greenwards, New Elgin, Seafeld and West End primary schools in Elgin, including establishing zones for two new primary schools.

Statutory Consultation Period:
Monday 13 April – Friday 29 May 2015 inclusive (32 school days)

All submissions expressing views on the proposals detailed in this document must be submitted by 5.00pm on 29th May 2015 for them to be taken into account as part of the consultation.

It is intended to respond to issues raised from correspondence within a consultation report that will be published before the Children and Young Peoples Services Committee on 9th December 2015.

This document has been issued by the Moray Council for consultation in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

1. THE PROPOSALS

- 1.1 It is proposed to make the following changes to primary school catchment areas (zones) in Elgin.
- (i) To vary the catchment areas of Bishopmil, East End, Greenwards, New Elgin, Seafield and West End primary schools in Elgin based on geographical areas which are delineated on plans contained within this document and described below.
 - (ii) To establish a catchment area for a new primary school, including nursery, to serve a delineated geographical area in south east Elgin.
 - (iii) To establish a catchment area for a new primary school, including nursery, to serve a delineated geographical area in north Elgin.
- 1.2 It is proposed that the implementation dates for these proposals will be:
- (i) January 2016 (revised catchment areas for existing Elgin primary schools).
 - (ii) No earlier than August 2018 for a new school to serve south east Elgin.
 - (iii) No earlier than August 2020 for a new school to serve north Elgin.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Not all of the Elgin primary schools are included in the proposals; however reference is made to all the Elgin High School and Elgin Academy Associated Schools Groups (ASGs) primary schools in this document for the sake of completeness.
- 2.2 As a result of various factors including demographics, new housing developments and transport issues, certain primary schools in Elgin are nearing, and will exceed, their capacities.
- 2.3 At its meeting on 25 March 2015 the Children and Young Peoples Services Committee agreed to formally consult on the above proposals in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 2.4 It is the legal duty of the education authority to place a child in the school of his/her parent's choice, provided that the request is for a school managed by the council. This is called a 'Placing Request'. The obligation to meet this request however does not apply in certain circumstances. These exceptions are laid out in the legislation and detailed in the Moray Council's policy and procedures for admission to schools. The number of out of zone pupils for each of the Elgin ASG schools is given in the following table:



School	Current Roll*	Number of out of zone pupils*	% out of zone pupils
Bishopmill	359	183	50.9%
East End	203	52	25.6%
Greenwards	331	236	71.3%
Mosstowie	49	21	42.9%
New Elgin	511	126	24.7%
Seafield	278	69	24.8%
St Sylvesters	205	73	35.6%
West End	234	120	51.3%

* data from September 2014 census.

- 2.5 Based on the approximately 50% of out of zone placing request applicants who stated a reason analysis of placing requests across Moray, over the last six years, has identified the following as the main reasons behind the requests:
1. Change of address (moving house and wishing to remain at current school).
 2. Siblings already attend the school.
 3. Child attended playgroup or nursery at that school.
 4. Childminder lives close by the school.

2.6 Due to increasing demand for in-zone places in certain primary schools, the Moray Council has agreed to cap the rolls of all of the Elgin primary schools to ensure that sufficient classroom space remains available. This will be achieved by limiting the intake to these schools to ensure that the optimum number of classes, within the schools, is not exceeded. The maximum number of classes, in each school, is currently:

School	Maximum number of classes
Bishopmill	14
East End	10
Greenwards	14
Mosstowie	3
New Elgin	19
Seafield	13
St Sylvesters	8
West End	9

2.7 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 empowers local authorities to reserve places, not exceeding such number or percentage of places at the school or relating to a particular stage of education, as are, in the opinion of the education authority, reasonably required to accommodate pupils likely to become resident in the catchment area of the school during the academic year. Placing requests in respect of children who live outwith the school zone can be refused in order to allow this to happen. Power to decide on reserved



places is delegated to the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care) in consultation with local Elected Members.

- 2.8 In spite of roll capping and the authority reserving places for in-zone pupils, roll projections indicate that there is soon likely to be insufficient places in Elgin to accommodate all of the primary school age children.
- 2.9 If primary zones remain unaltered the following table provides roll projections.

School	Functional Capacity**	Current Roll*	Projected Rolls (May 2014)							
			2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bishopmill	390	359	363	376	398	407	423	431	450	471
East End	233	203	196	223	263	302	340	353	382	409
Greenwards	390	331	333	323	322	315	328	315	329	341
Mosstowie	75	49	53	55	53	55	54	54	58	50
New Elgin	531	511	504	552	594	625	665	689	721	750
Seafield	353	278	263	278	306	336	364	395	439	467
St Sylvesters	232	205	207	208	202	201	206	203	202	204
West End	249	234	236	239	231	226	234	230	222	223

*Census Data September 2014 – based on current national guidelines and current Moray Council practice.

** Functional Capacity 2014/15 (Functional capacities are reviewed and revised annually)

- 2.10 A map showing the current Elgin primary school zones is shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.11 Mosstowie Primary. The roll is projected to remain stable and at approximately 67% of capacity by 2021. Mosstowie Primary could only accommodate a maximum of 25 additional pupils, based on projections. It is not proposed to make any changes to the Mosstowie Primary zone at this time.
- 2.12 St Sylvester’s Primary. The roll is projected to remain stable and at approximately 88% of capacity by 2021. It is not proposed making any changes.

THE PROPOSALS

- 2.13 A map showing the proposed revisions to school zones is shown in Appendix 2. A summary of the post code areas within each new proposed school zones is contained in Appendix 3.

Proposals for individual primary schools in the Elgin Associated Schools Groups are given below.

- 2.13.1 Bishopmill Primary. The roll is projected to rise to 120% of current capacity by 2021. It is anticipated that the impact of roll capping and a refurbished Seafield Primary will alleviate immediate pressures on the roll. Nevertheless the planned construction of approximately 1500 houses in the Findrassie area means that Bishopmill Primary will face further pressures on the roll in the longer term. It is proposed that the Bishopmill Primary zone be divided in order to identify a zone for a new school in the north of Elgin (as shown on the map in Appendix 2) to be constructed at a later date. Part of this new zone should include a section of the current Seafield catchment area.
- 2.13.2 East End Primary. The roll is forecast to rise to 175% of current capacity by 2021. The impact of new nursery provision in East End Primary has contributed to an increased roll in early years. There were initially 20 nursery places but this has increased to 40 in the first year. The Pinefield area of Elgin is zoned to East End Primary but traditionally has attracted a number of out of zone placing requests into New Elgin Primary as a result of parents' safety concerns over pupils walking along the side of the A96. It is therefore proposed that the Pinefield area to the east of Reiket Lane is zoned to a new school serving the south east of Elgin. It is further proposed that post codes IV30 1BS; IV30 1LU and IV30 1LT are included in the East End Primary zone (as shown on the map in Appendix 2). This would ensure all the houses in Moss Street are zoned to East End Primary.
- 2.13.3 Greenwards Primary. The roll is forecast to be around 87% of current capacity by 2021. There has traditionally been a high level of placing requests made for this school from the areas of New Elgin within the Edgar Road, Glen Moray Drive, Springfield Road and New Elgin Road area and the area south of Birnie Road and west of the A941. Reasons for this vary but proximity/ease of access to Greenwards Primary has been given. There is therefore scope to realign much of the current New Elgin Primary catchment area to Greenwards Primary. It is proposed that all of the area to the west of the A941 in New Elgin is zoned to Greenwards Primary except post codes IV30 6BE, IV30 6BQ, IV30 6BH and IV30 6BG which would be zoned to New Elgin Primary (as shown on the map in Appendix 2). This would ensure that all houses on New Elgin Road and Main Street are zoned to New Elgin Primary.



2.13.4 New Elgin Primary. The roll is forecast to rise to approximately 140% of current capacity by 2021 should current catchment areas remain in place. The impact of childcare provision in south Elgin, and its proximity to New Elgin Primary, has increased the number of out of zone placing requests to New Elgin Primary. Extending New Elgin Primary is not considered a realistic option for a number of reasons including loss of recreational space for pupils and increased traffic problems around the school. Realigning the Greenwards Primary catchment area (as described in 2.8.3) will not in itself resolve the problems for New Elgin Primary. It is therefore proposed that a new school will be required to serve south east Elgin. This would include the Linkwood area to the east of Reiket Lane and any new developments to the south east of the current developments in the Thornhill area, and to the east of the A941. Proposed catchment area for New Elgin Primary and a new school are shown on the map in Appendix 2.

2.13.5 Seafield Primary. Seafield Primary is projected to have an increased roll as a result of the planned construction of approximately 1500 houses in the Findrassie area. The roll is forecast to rise to 132% of current capacity by 2021. The planned refurbishment and extension to Seafield Primary means that more pupils should be able to be accommodated within the school and, in addition, it is anticipated that the refurbished building is likely to be more attractive to in-zone families. Proposed catchment areas for Seafield Primary and a new school are shown on the map in Appendix 2. Currently the Kingsmills area is zoned to Seafield Primary. There is no obvious advantage for this, in terms of routes to school, and it is proposed that this area is zoned to East End Primary.

2.13.6 West End Primary. The roll is projected to remain stable at approximately 78% of capacity by 2021. There is potential to extend the West End Primary zone in the future to include the Mosstowie Primary catchment area. This would entail a new build, or an extension to the existing building. Such a plan would have to be the subject of a more detailed analysis and be the subject of a future proposal and consultation. The south western boundary of the West End Primary (with Mosstowie Primary) zone has been clarified, for this consultation, as including all of post code IV30 1YF zoned to West end Primary.

2.14 Based on these proposed changes to school zones as detailed, the roll forecasts are as follows:

School	Functional Capacity**	Current Roll*	Projected Rolls						
			2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Bishopmill	390	359	374	393	405	418	390	390	390
New Zone (North)							103	191	278
East End	233	203	169	214	257	300	264	264	264



Greenwards	390	331	348	348	338	350	338	353	360
Mosstowie	75	49	55	53	55	54	54	58	50
New Elgin	531	511	297	320	339	370	396	425	460
New Zone (South East)			303	328	333	348	338	345	334
Seafield	353	278	267	290	318	335	353	353	353
St Sylvesters	232	205	208	202	201	206	203	202	204
West End	249	234	231	222	222	232	232	222	223

*Census Data September 2014 ** Functional Capacity 2014/15

2.15 In arriving at the above projections the following assumptions have been made:

- A new south east school would be available from August 2015 (this date was picked, for illustrative purposes, to make best use of roll projection methodologies which predict 7 years in advance)
- All pupils in the area identified as being in the new south east zone would attend a new school in that zone
- Pupils re-zoned from New Elgin Primary to Greenwards Primary would move to Greenwards Primary
- Pupils attending Bishopmill, East End, Seafield and West End Primaries, through out of zone placing requests, would remain at their current school.

It is very difficult to accurately forecast the roll for a proposed new school in the north of Elgin until timescales and anticipated numbers of new houses are known.

2.16 There is scope to expand current accommodation to provide additional classrooms at Bishopmill, Greenwards and Seafield primaries, however in each case it would take the schools beyond an ideal number of 14 classes. This number of classes has previously been identified as providing benefits in terms of school dynamics where there is the opportunity for teachers to work with 'stage partners' to plan for greater coherence in pupils' learning. Pupil numbers associated with greater than 14 classes would place significantly increased pressures on school management.

2.17 Once revised school zones are approved, there will need to be a further statutory consultation exercise to establish new schools within these zones. At that stage details of school locations, school designs and capacities, travel plans and relevant safety issues will need to be clear.

2.18 It should be noted that certain proposals, if accepted, will have knock-on effects for secondary school zones in Moray. Any proposals to change secondary school zones would have to be the subject of a future consultation.

3. TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

- 3.1 Pupils living in the affected areas detailed in Section 2 who have already commenced their primary education at the time of the new school zones become applicable can remain in their chosen primary school. No existing primary school pupils will be required to move school when new zones are established unless that is by parental choice.
- 3.2 Existing placing arrangements will remain for enrolments of new pupils residing in a proposed catchment area for one of the new schools until such a time as placing arrangements for the new schools come into effect.
- 3.3 Children enrolled in an already established school who are resident in the proposed revised catchment areas will have the option to transfer to their new designated primary school once the new zones become effective.
- 3.4 After new zones for north and south east Elgin are agreed, and until new schools are constructed to serve these zones, children will continue to attend their existing schools. Once new schools are established in these areas children will have the option to transfer to their new designated primary school.

4. TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 While zoning is important in addressing capacity issues in Elgin, pupil safety is also of paramount importance. These proposals are designed to make travel to school as safe as possible.
- 4.2 Moray Council currently provides free school transport for primary school pupils who reside more than 2 miles from their designated zoned school, determined following any decision on zoning taken by the Moray Council.
- 4.3 Parents who make successful placing requests for their children to attend schools, other than their catchment area school, have to make their own transport arrangements and meet the costs thereof.
- 4.4 School travel plans are an essential part of the Moray Council's strategy to address issues related to transport to school. School travel plans also include promotion of initiatives to increase the number of children who walk or cycle to school. School travel plans can help reduce congestion, increase road safety, make routes to school safer, help protect the environment and encourage children to adopt healthy lifestyles.
- 4.5 If these proposals are adopted there should be no significant changes to school transport arrangements for eligible pupils. However, it is recognised that there may be changes to methods of travel for some pupils who will, in the future, be within closer walking or cycling distance to their zoned school.

Establishing new schools is likely to ensure that traffic problems around existing schools do not increase. Travel plans will require to be revisited once school catchment areas are confirmed and travel plans will be developed when establishing any new schools. These will be available prior to the effective dates of new school zones.

5. EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

- 5.1.1 Pupils who are resident within the delineated zone for a school will be able to attend their zoned school and be taught with peers from their community.
- 5.1.2 Families who live in the affected areas will have clear information on their zoned primary school, thereby providing a degree of certainty which may be lacking at the present time. This will have the benefit of removing the anxieties which children and parents have experienced in recent years over the availability of places in their zoned school.
- 5.1.3 The proposals will ensure that all Elgin primary schools will have clear and distinct associations with their local communities.
- 5.1.4 The establishment of new primary schools in Elgin will have a positive impact on the balance between the numbers of pupils in the Elgin primary school communities. It will alleviate projected pupil roll pressures across Elgin from potential housing developments identified in the adopted Local Development Plan.
- 5.1.5 Pupils, whose parents make placing requests to have them enrolled in schools outwith their zoned school, will be more likely to gain admission. This will have the benefit of removing the anxieties which children and parents have experienced in recent years over the availability of places in their chosen school.

5.2 Likely effects for children currently attending Elgin primary schools

- 5.2.1 By alleviating current and future capacity pressures on the existing school estate, the ability to create flexible learning spaces in all schools will improve the range of learning environments across existing schools and any new schools. This will allow aspirations, attainment and achievement to continue to improve across Moray primary schools.
- 5.2.2 The proposals will bring a better balance between the numbers of pupils in the Elgin primary school communities and the capacities of these schools, ensuring the schools will have sustainable rolls which will deliver the full breadth of Curriculum for Excellence.
- 5.2.3 The alleviated roll pressures will enhance the opportunity to create more adaptable environments for learning, in which to facilitate co-operative and

interdisciplinary learning, reduce pressure on technology and practical teaching spaces, and improve the social environment.

- 5.2.4 The curriculum in all schools will provide the opportunity for learners to achieve across all curricular areas and develop skills, attributes and capabilities through courses aligned with the design principles of Curriculum for Excellence: challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance.
- 5.2.5 Children and young people will be provided with a broad range of opportunities for personal achievement and interdisciplinary learning across all curriculum areas and subjects by building on best practice in curriculum design in Moray schools.
- 5.2.6 Any new school will benefit from design practices which support the varied range of teaching environments that best deliver learning. Spaces for learning will be designed in such a way as to allow a range of teaching styles and approaches including: active learning, interdisciplinary learning and outdoor learning.
- 5.2.7 Experience in other new school buildings has demonstrated that a new and flexible learning environment has inspired pupils and has a positive impact on the general health and wellbeing of learners and increases aspirations, attainment and achievement.
- 5.2.8 In any new school, the provision of high quality technology for learning will provide the potential to transform ways of learning and teaching by giving young people and staff flexible access to a digital learning environment.
- 5.2.9 Any proposed new school will provide excellent facilities for children, families and other users' outwith core school hours. New schools will provide accessible facilities that could be used to meet the learning, leisure and social needs of the community.

5.3 Likely effects for children who become pupils of Elgin primary schools in the next two years.

- 5.3.1 There would be no detriment to future users of the provision.
- 5.3.2 Where new zones for Greenwards, East End, New Elgin, Seafield and West End primaries become applicable, children will enrol in these schools from the effective date following the decision of the Moray Council Children and Young People's Services Committee to change the catchment areas.
- 5.3.3 In situations where children are resident in an area designated as a zone for a new school and this zone is not yet applicable as the effective date has not been reached, they will continue to enrol in the school in their existing zone until such time as a new school is established. When a new school is

established, children in these circumstances will have the option to remain in their existing school or attend the new school they are zoned to.

5.4 Likely effects on other users of the schools' facilities

- 5.4.1 There would be no detriment to other users of the schools' facilities. Any new school will build on current, and facilitate new, opportunities for effective integrated working with other services and partner agencies and will provide necessary support to children and families in the new school catchment area.

5.5 Likely effects on children and young people in other Moray Council schools

- 5.5.1 This proposal will have no significant adverse impact on children attending other schools in Moray. This proposal has the potential to bring financial benefits to the Moray Council and therefore allow for a more equitable distribution of resources.
- 5.5.2 If approval is granted to change the primary school catchment areas, then there will be knock-on effects for secondary school zones in Moray. Any proposals to change secondary school zones would have to be the subject of a future consultation.

5.6 Other likely effects of the proposal

- 5.6.1 The additional learning and teaching community at any new school will provide increased opportunities for collegiate working to share good practice, to improve curriculum development, to share thinking and materials across Elgin schools and to secure ongoing improvements in achievement. This will also result in greater scope for delivery of continued lifelong professional learning for all staff.
- 5.6.2 Any new schools will have nursery provision to meet the increasing demand for nursery places in north and south Elgin.
- 5.6.3 Any new school will be designed in such a way as to promote accessible, inclusive learning which will meet the needs of all learners including those with Additional Support Needs. New schools will provide additional specialist provision to enhance the local authority's capacity to meet the needs of young people with Additional Support Needs to remain in mainstream education.

5.7 How the Council intends to minimise or avoid potential adverse effects



- 5.7.1 Teaching and support staff will work closely with all affected primary schools to ensure that the learning, pastoral and social needs of children are fully supported during any transition process, including enhanced arrangements for children and young people with Additional Support Needs.
- 5.7.2 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. From the impact assessment, it is concluded that this proposal would have potential positive benefits for young people. The equality impact assessment is attached as Appendix 4.

5.8 Summary of benefits resulting from implementation of this proposal

- 5.8.1 The benefits are all highlighted in the preceding paragraphs, but they can be summarised as follows:
- i. By far the most important driver of the proposal is the prospect that rezoning should ensure, first and foremost, that children who are living within an area zoned for a particular school are able to attend that school.
 - ii. Where new schools are built or existing schools are refurbished there will be greatly improved accommodation for the nursery children and school pupils, including those with Additional Support Needs, and staff.
 - iii. There is an opportunity here for the Council to make best use of the finances available, and make the most effective use of resources at a time when the need for these is acute.
- 5.8.2 The Council has arrived at these conclusions, primarily, from a comprehensive analysis of historical placing requests within Elgin and a detailed study of future housing developments. There has also been consultation with head teachers on the potential impacts of roll projections on schools' ability to continue to deliver good quality learning and teaching in suitable learning environments. There has also been a range of informal discussions with parent councils and authority officers within Education and Social Care, Planning and Transportation which have supported these proposals.
- 5.8.3 In delivering these broad benefits, the authority is confident that it is discharging its duty to secure best value by continuous improvement in the performance of its functions, as required in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

6. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 6.1 Formal consultation will run from Monday 13 April – Friday 29 May 2015 inclusive (32 school days)



6.2 As required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, formal consultation includes:

- the preparation of this proposal paper;
- a letter to the parents/carers of children at all Elgin primary schools
- a letter to the parents/carers of children at all Elgin pre-school centres (those children expected to attend the affected schools within two years of the publication of these proposals);
- information, including the proposal paper, placed on the Council's website;
- information on the proposals communicated through social media;
- an announcement of the proposal in the local press, inviting any person to make written representation to the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care);
- four public meetings in Elgin as shown below;
- meetings with the parent councils of all affected Elgin primary schools;
- meetings with the staff of the establishments;
- meetings with the pupil councils of all affected Elgin primary schools;
- consultation with pupils of all affected Elgin primary schools;
- consultation with Community Councils in all affected areas;
- consultation with representatives of the teacher and support staff trade unions, and
- meetings with other interested bodies.

6.3 Formal Consultation Meetings are arranged as follows:

Date	Venue	Time
Monday 13 th April 2015	Bishopmill Primary School	7.00pm
Thursday 16 th April 2015	New Elgin & Ashgrove Hall	7.00pm
Monday 27 th April 2015	Elgin Town Hall	2.00pm
Monday 27 th April 2015	Elgin Town Hall	7.00pm

6.4 It is hoped that the Children and Young Peoples Services Committee will be able to take a final decision on the proposals at its meeting on 9th December 2015.

7. **INVOLVEMENT OF EDUCATION SCOTLAND**

7.1 A copy of this proposal document has been sent to Education Scotland. Education Scotland will also receive a copy of any written representations that are received by Moray Council from any person during the consultation period. Education Scotland will also receive a summary of any oral representation made to the Moray Council at the public meetings and a copy of any other relevant documentation.

7.2 After the Moray Council has sent Education Scotland all representations and documents mentioned above, Education Scotland will prepare a report on the

educational aspects of the proposal. This will take place during the period 21st August 2015 to 11th September 2015. In preparing their report, Education Scotland may visit the affected establishments and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there, or such other people as they consider appropriate.

- 7.3 On receipt of the Education Scotland report, it will be necessary to review the proposal, and thereafter, the Corporate Director (Education and Social Care), on behalf of the education authority, will prepare and publish a consultation report, containing the views of Education Scotland and including an explanation of how the Moray Council proposes to deal with any issues raised. After a period of no less than three weeks, the Children and Young Peoples Services Committee will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to approve the proposals.

8. NOTE ON CORRECTIONS

- 8.1 If any apparent inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this proposal document either by the Moray Council or any person, the Moray Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or if there has been an inaccuracy. If it is determined that there has been an inaccuracy or omission the Moray Council will then take appropriate action which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of the proposal paper or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period as appropriate. In that event, any person highlighting the inaccuracy to the Moray Council, relevant consultees and Education Scotland will be advised.

9. EQUALITY STATEMENT

- 9.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out on this proposal and consultation process to assess the proposal's relevance to the public sector equality duties on the basis of:
- Sex
 - Religion
 - Racial group
 - Disability
 - Sexual orientation
 - Gender reassignment
 - Pregnancy and maternity
- 9.2 The equality impact assessment concluded that introducing this proposal will not have an adverse impact on any of the groups listed. From the impact assessment, it is further concluded that the proposals 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 Appendix 4.

10. SUBMISSION OF VIEWS

- 10.1 Responses to the consultation should be made by writing to:
Elgin Primary School Rezoning Consultation
The Moray Council
Community Support Unit
High Street
Elgin
IV30 1BX

or by e-mail to: futureschools@moray.gov.uk
or by completing the attached consultation response form
or by completing the on-line consultation form by following the links at
www.moray.gov.uk

All responses must be submitted by 5.00pm on 29th May 2015 for them to be taken into account as part of the consultation.

11. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

- 11.1 It is intended that a consultation report including a summary of the submissions will be published on the council website. This will be available by following the links at: www.moray.gov.uk
- 11.2 It is intended that a report on the consultation will be presented to the Children and Young People's Services Committee on 9th December 2015. This will provide information for Elected Members to make a final decision on the proposal.



APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

Bishopmill Primary School (13th April 2015)

In attendance:

Graham Jarvis (Head of Lifelong Learning, Culture & Sport)
 Paul Watson (Senior Education Adviser for Schools Consultations)
 Alison Hannan (Community Support Officer)
 Sylvia Jamieson (Community Support Officer)

Elected Members In Attendance:

Cllr Kirsty Reid (Scottish National Party)
 Cllr Mike Shand (Scottish National Party)
 Cllr Patsy Gowans (Scottish National Party)
 Cllr John Divers (Scottish Labour Party)

Number of Community Representatives In Attendance:

Number	Interest
2	Press
7	Parent
1	School

Community Support Unit Officer Alison Hannan welcomed all to the meeting and provided introductions of the staff in attendance and a brief introduction to the meeting.

Graham Jarvis and Paul Watson carried out a presentation on the Elgin Primary School Rezoning proposal. A question and answer session followed the presentation.



Questions & Answer Session

<p>Q</p>	<p>You have mentioned that Bishopmill primary school already has 50% of pupils from out with the zone area and moving the zone to the proposed area will not solve that problem. Therefore how do you make sure that this school will not become full, especially as if the school currently has capacity out of zone pupils will still be accepted; but what happens if people move into the zone and the school then becomes full?</p> <p>Is something going to be done to cap the number of out of zone pupils at each school?</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>Directors have the authority to reserve places for in-zone pupils; if it becomes clear that there is significant pressures within a zone at an early stage; spaces can be reserved. (PW)</p> <p>Legally, under current legislation if places are available at a school (e.g. the school is not full) then pupils must be provided with a space within that school. (GJ)</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>It seems like you can draw the lines where you like, but the bottom line is people can still go where they want and the Moray Council is wasting a lot of time on a consultation and meetings to move the lines, when the placing system in Scotland is the way it is.</p> <p>In Elgin people are crossing major traffic areas because they want to attend a particular school. Is there not scope to be more accurate and say there are schools available near your address, rather than people travelling and increasing the major traffic issues in the area?</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>Childcare is a significant issue; attending a school close to where the childminder lives is a significant issue. (PW)</p> <p>Inward place requests to attend Bishopmill last year comprised of 104 Seafield catchments, 27 East End catchments, Alves, Hopeman, Burghead and Greenwards, Mosstowie, Lhanbryde, Keith, New Elgin, Portgordon, catchments. It is difficult with the current legislation to reserve too many places. (GJ)</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>There is the issue, that to ensure their children attend the school of their choosing, people will use grandparents addresses e.g. family lives in Buckie but used the grandparent address to ensure the child could attend New Elgin Primary School. Is there a way to stop this from happening in the future as that will have huge pressures on the schools?</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>We can look into that. If an address is provided which is in the zone of the chosen school and the name of the addressee and the child are the same; it would be difficult to investigate if this is the child's actual home address.</p> <p>We do take a cursory look over, but every year there is approx 1000 pupils starting primary 1 so it is very difficult to look at every address. (GJ)</p>



<p>Q</p>	<p>Have a child starting school next year and another starting in 2018 and at the moment it does not look like she will be able to attend Bishopmill and we live in the catchment area. The new school is approx 2021 in Elgin North. When a child starts nursery they are asked to fill in a form which includes the preferred primary school but the nurseries have not been told, therefore a lot of parents do not know about the consultation or the problems the schools are having with capacity numbers.</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>All nurseries and pre-school partner providers have been informed of the consultation and asked to advise parents. Catchment zone children have the priority as the places are reserved in advance. (GJ)</p> <p>The capacity problems have been published widely, especially regarding New Elgin and the consultation has come about because people have come back to us with questions regarding the various published information. (GJ)</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>Do the projections include historic placing requests? Therefore 50% of those requests will be historic requests and these requests will no longer be granted? (Cllr Reid)</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>Yes. It could in the future occur that only 20% requests are actually granted. The 80% places would be for in-zone places only. Therefore catchment areas would have priority. (PW)</p> <p>We could get to the situation in Bishopmill were there are no out of zone places being accepted at all in Primary 1 as they will be filled by in-zone pupils only. Officers in Moray Council look at in-zone placements, they look at in-zone placements and then what is left, look at of out of zone. (GJ)</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>In-zone trumps even if you have a child in school already. (Cllr Reid)</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>Yes in-zone children will trump out of zone children even if they have siblings at that chosen school. In-zone children must be given priority. (GJ)</p>
<p>Q</p>	<p>Projected rolls until the new building is opened, Bishopmill primary will be increasing do we have enough capacity to take all these pupils or can we stop placing requests? Class sizes increasing and pressure on teachers is concerning. Will the standards of teaching and learning become a problem if the class sizes increase further?</p> <p>Standards should not suffer. Can you cap out of zone at any time?</p> <p>Present class size of 30, less attention than class of 25, particularly Primary 1. I personally struggle with class sizes increasing as quickly and the teacher cannot provide each child with the same amount of contact.</p>
<p>A</p>	<p>Standard of teaching and learning should not suffer. In terms of the out of zone pupils being placed at Bishopmill, yes these will be limited, if the in-zone pupil numbers increases. (PW)</p> <p>The Moray Council is complying with the law regarding the class sizes. (PW)</p> <p>When the number of pupils on the roll changes there is an impact on the number of teachers allocated to that school. (GJ)</p>



Q	Will the Council be able to recruit for the new schools?
A	<p>Moray is struggling for teachers but not within the town of Elgin. There is more promoted staff support for teaching staff in larger schools. Elgin is not an issue; problem is in schools where head teachers are also teachers and do not have the same capacity as dedicated non-teaching head teachers. (GJ)</p> <p>Trends tend to suggest bigger schools and bigger towns attract more applicants. (PW)</p> <p>We will continue to proactively recruit teachers until all our positions are filled. (GJ)</p>
Q	Looking at the projected roles at the moment; you said that a new school would not be built until approx 2018. Are there going to be any provisions put in place to alleviate some of the pressures on the schools in the meantime until those schools are built?
A	<p>Some are happening already including the increased class sizes in primary 2 and 3. The functional capacity shown in the presentation is at September 2014 and these will all increase in the next year when the class sizes increase. For example some schools may be able to take 20 extra pupils next year due to the class size increases. (PW)</p> <p>It also depends on the makeup of the classes; the more single stage classes on the timetable, the less pressure on the school; as legally it must be 25 pupils maximum in a composite class but it can be up to 33 in a single upper stage class. (PW)</p> <p>Different proposals for different school sites as to what we can do. For example, at the New Elgin site there is no possible way we can add in more accommodation on this site (e.g. six huts), as there is no space and the current traffic problems. Whereas at East End we could reconfigure the current space to allow us to add further space on this campus, which we may want to consider at a future date to allow us to add more pupils. Other schools such as Seafield and Bishopmill have a lot of ground space and if it was pushed, it would be possible to add temporary accommodation.</p> <p>This is a decision for Elected Members as to what happens within the school estates. (GJ)</p>
Q	Current projections shown in the presentation, does that take into consideration the new catchments as well?
A	That is the old one.



Q	That is my concern, as it sounds great having the change of catchments, but if there is not going to be a new school for two years at best, what is going to happen in the meantime?
A	<p>If all the figures are put together, we are very close to accommodating all the children in Elgin as it stands currently with the alterations at New Elgin and East End. It may be that the children may not end up going to the first choice school as per the parents' request. We currently have space at Greenwards and Seafield. (GJ)</p> <p>We do not want to move children out to other areas such as Rothes and Hopeman; which is also an option. (GJ)</p>
Q	Has there been a particular reason in the delay for the new school proposal, especially taking into account the recent increase in developments in the New Elgin area?
A	<p>There were previous proposals for a new school in current developed zone; south of New Elgin in the Master Plan at the time. There was previously a location recognised for a primary school in New Elgin South and the developers pushed that we were accommodating all the pupils already so a new school was not required. (GJ)</p> <p>It was recognised by the Council and Elected Members of the increased development and the growing numbers and that a new school would be required and this was the reason for extending the capacity of Elgin High School. There is no reason to think of why a new school would not be required. (GJ)</p>
Q	When you take into account that you have to take into consideration what the school is going to look like, the layout and the location. The timescale you have given us and the length of time it will take; I just can't think based on the proposals that have been there for the development of Elgin. I can't help but think why has there not been a proposal for a new school before now?
A	<p>At the present time, we have no idea on the rate the developer will build the houses; if we knew the developers would build at a rate of 50 houses per annum over the next 20 years there would not be the same pressure on our schools.</p> <p>Up until 2011 Moray Council did not do its own roll projections (bought in prior to this from Aberdeenshire Council as a legacy of Grampian Region). New buildings appear not to have been factored in properly and projections were well below the actual builds. Roll projections are now carried out in-house and using local knowledge. (PW)</p> <p>1500 houses at 0.3 children per house would equal a school. But when developers only sell a small number of houses and there are only a small number of children living in these houses; how do you factor this in?</p> <p>There is some responsibility on developers of those houses to pay something towards the infrastructure costs of that school that the Council have to provide.</p>



	Therefore do we ask the developers to contribute to the £10 million towards the costs of a 400 pupil new school? We need to work out who pays for the school. (GJ)
Q	Potentially the school considered for the North may never actually be built? How are we going to accommodate all these children? We already cannot feed all children at the same time, dining hall bursting at the seams, it is eating into school time e.g. primary 1 to 3 free meals and the Primary 6 to 7 are getting poorer quality of meals as they are waiting so long.
A	These are external factors; we have no control over free meals being introduced and for example the increase in preschool childcare. These factors are great but we do have a physical capacity problem. (GJ)
Q	It is not as simple as saying there is land available at these sites to accommodate the physical extensions that are required.
A	When looking at school design it is easy to cram on six classrooms but not general purpose areas, kitchens and core facilities to cope with bigger numbers. Therefore the issue is not just how do we accommodate another 180 kids but how do we accommodate the core facilities e.g. the dining hall. (GJ)
Q	If it is agreed in December that a new school is required will the school actually be built?
A	If these proposals are agreed by Elected Members we have a zone identified for the North of Elgin for establishing a school at some point in the future. We then have to carry out further statutory consultations to establish a location of where to build. This is the very first step of the consultation process. (PW)
Q	You mentioned earlier that there was a proposed site across in New Elgin previously but then due to developers reaching an agreement and that location was turned into houses rather than a school; is that likely to happen again if developers stand up and state they will only build so many houses at one point.
A	<p>The proposed developments that appear the Elgin South Master Plan says three thousand houses in New Elgin which is the same size as Lossiemouth which has two big primary schools and a secondary. There is no hope that we can accommodate in existing premises that number of pupils. (GJ)</p> <p>When the decision was made ten years ago the birth rate had not begun to rise. (PW)</p> <p>That decision was made approx 12 years ago; the figures for New Elgin for the present day at that time were 350 pupils and New Elgin is now at 511 pupils. These figures shows how far out the projected figures were and the proposed school (at the time) would not have been able to accommodate the current number of pupils. (Cllr Divers)</p> <p>At that time this current exercise was not carried out; whereas today we have identified the zone which will produce enough children to fill a school in the areas. Cannot foresee anyone saying a new school is not required. (GJ)</p>
Q	Are there any proposals for preschool?
A	The first choice would be to build a primary with a preschool; therefore there



	would be the transition between preschool and primary school. The plans for the redesigning of Seafield campus show the preschool becomes part of the primary school. (GJ)
Q	It is based on what you said earlier about out of catchment areas, more people are choosing these areas because of childminders. If there were more childcare provision there would be less need for childminders.
A	The Council do not provide wraparound childcare, it only provides nursery childcare. The Council would be encouraged when building a new primary that a nursery is built along side. (GJ)
Q	There is a huge strain on childcare especially in the Bishopmill area, for example I live in Lossie Road but my child had to go to the Ark which is a very difficult journey when you do not drive.
A	The childcare is difficult as the Council provide education and not necessarily childcare, and for those parents who are working and require 8am until 6pm childcare it is difficult. The Moray Council is able to offer every three to four year old preschool for up to approx 15 hours per week free. This may not be in the parents' first choice of location but there is a good record. (GJ)
Q	The locations of childcare offered are not always logical and the travelling time can be unrealistic for some parents. If there was provision available within the catchment areas it would make a huge difference.
A	There is a nursery at Seafield and there is VIP Childcare at Elgin Community Centre which is a 'not for profit' social enterprise.
Q	Will the Secondary schools be able to cope or will you have to rezone the associated primary schools for each secondary?
A	<p>Almost certainly have to look at secondary school zones across Moray but there should be capacity. You would think that currently primary school pupils would be zoned exclusive to a secondary school when in fact some schools are not as they are actually split zones; therefore this does need a tidying up exercise but also the impact on the rezoning of Elgin itself will result in further consultation and consideration. (PW)</p> <p>Elgin High School role will be 1000 pupils; therefore we are creating capacity at the school; dual zoning needs sorting. (GJ)</p> <p>Elgin High School was 150 pupils out in projections 10-12 years ago. (Cllr Divers)</p> <p>If you have better proposals (these are just starting points) please tell us. (PW)</p>
Q	1500 houses and 450 pupils does not make sense.
A	The factors used in projections are based on census data. Similar roll projection methodology is used across Scotland. (PW)
Q	Has planning gone through yet?
A	<p>Councillors are willing to listen to developers who wish to develop on that site in New Elgin.</p> <p>Development Plan sitting at Scottish Government.</p> <p>Market and other factors.</p> <p>Not a planning permission.</p> <p>There is only a site available for development at present. There is no planning</p>



	permission for any houses.
Q	Elgin South Master Plan has two private nurseries (and Forres). (Cllr)
A	Fochabers private childcare on campus and another voluntary provider is on campus. Wraparound childcare is very difficult; Moray Council does not want to get too involved in this. Other options are voluntary organisations, private, social enterprises, Moray Council provision (unlikely). (GJ)
Q	Is South zone further ahead than North?
A	Already houses there, can project better reasonably accurate figures. (PW)
Q	Will Elgin North get to the same stage?
A	This is a political decision; we can prove the need in formal planning but need to find the money.
Q	2019 figures; 103 pupils does this include new houses?
A	Figures are not claimed to be 100% accurate, purely for illustrative purposes; could be worse, unlikely. (PW)
Q	Once a trigger number of houses are built, a school then has to be built?
A	Can be built into the planning permission. Elgin South Plan this happened nurseries etc. (Cllr)
Q	School didn't happen, concerned this will happen again.
A	Hard lesson learned; Aberdeenshire Council projections used at the time. (Cllr) Factoring in the number of house builds into role projections In reality a much smaller number of houses projected ten years ago compared with actual houses built. Nothing wrong with methodology. (PW)
Q	When a development proposed percentage of social housing? Look at figures for social housing, more overcrowding.
A	Based on national averages.

Alison Hannan concluded the meeting by thanking those in attendance for coming along and participating.

Questions / Comments Received in ballot box

No questions / comments received

Questions / Comments Received from regarding the zones

No questions / comments received



New Elgin & Ashgrove Hall (16th April 2015)

In attendance:

Graham Jarvis (Head of Lifelong Learning, Culture & Sport)
Paul Watson (Senior Education Adviser for Schools Consultations)
Alison Hannan (Community Support Unit Officer)

Sally Stewart (Education Scotland)

Elected Members In Attendance:

Cllr Kirsty Reid (Scottish National Party)
Cllr Mike Shand (Scottish National Party)
Cllr Graham Leadbitter (Scottish National Party)
Cllr John Divers (Scottish Labour Party)

Number of Community Representatives In Attendance:

Number	Interest
27	Members of the public

Community Support Unit Officer Alison Hannan welcomed all to the meeting and provided introductions of the staff in attendance and a brief introduction to the meeting.

Graham Jarvis and Paul Watson carried out a presentation on the Elgin Primary School Rezoning proposal. A question and answer time followed the presentation.

Questions & Answer Session

Q	<p>We have concerns for parents who already have pupils within a school and the potential that they may have to drop off and pick up pupils at two different schools.</p> <p>New Elgin functional capacity is 531 and in 2016 it will be 63 pupils over and in 2018 it will be 134 pupils over; what is the plans for before the school is built?</p>
A	<p>There are a number of issues for this, for example we cannot expand the school estate of New Elgin, it is just not possible.</p> <p>The projected figures do include an element of out of zone placements. This year at New Elgin primary, the Council has refused all out of zone placing requests. That should affect that figure for next year. As yet we do not have a definitive answer of what we are going to do; what we can say is that looking at the numbers we do have enough capacity if all the schools in Elgin are</p>



	taken into account, but not necessarily in the zoned school or the first choice of school. (GJ)
Q	Why are we in this crisis situation?
A	We are in this crisis due to a lack of investment, innovation and creativity in the management of the school estate in previous years. The last time the Elgin school zones were looked at was in 1977 when Greenwards was built. (GJ)
Q	Once of the major sources of stress at the moment for a parent is that siblings are not being granted placements at the same schools. Research has shown that this is severely disruptive to children and I am wondering how that fits in with 'getting it right for every child'?
A	How we accommodate siblings at the same school; if they are in-zone resident that is not a problem as we have not turned down any in-zone pupils at present. Where they are out of zone placing requests, we are at the stage in New Elgin (and almost at Bishopmill) where there is not the capacity / physical space to accommodate any out of zone pupils. Accepting one out of zone placing request is not a guarantee that future siblings will be accepted.
Q	So this is due to physical space reasons rather than sound education reasons?
A	One trumps the other; if we do not have the physical space this would ultimately impact on the sound education. (GJ)
Q	In the transition phase will sibling placements still be considered?
A	We will look to revise the Admissions policy to reflect the impact of rezoning.
Q	What happens if you are in-zone at the minute with a child at school and the other child starts the next year, do you change them to a different school?
	We are currently zoned for New Elgin but next year due to the proposals I would be zoned for Greenwards. Does this mean I would have children at two different schools? At the minute I am doing everything right, the children go to the catchment nursery and then the catchment primary but next year my catchment changes. I have not chosen this; you are choosing this for me.
A	That is the reality of the situation. We will try to mitigate against any potential negative impacts. (PW)
Q	I think you should honour the current zones.
A	As far that it is possible, the Council would try to place pupils in the chosen schools. The reality is that we have inherited a situation from lack of investment for a number of years and the fact zones have not been looked at and we are where we are now. Every child will hope to be placed in the most suitable school. We are obviously restricted by the physical space. (PW)
Q	You have spoken about portacabins and how this cannot be considered at New Elgin due to traffic safety issues etc, but that would accommodate siblings and you would not have increased traffic as it would the same person dropping off more than one child.
A	If we tried to accommodate more at New Elgin it would mean building on top of current playground space. (GJ)
Q	I personally as a parent would rather give up a small amount of land to help accommodate more pupils.



A	<p>We are not convinced that planning permission would be granted. (PW)</p> <p>This is however an option that can be noted and considered. (GJ)</p> <p>All of this does depend on what the final decision is regarding these proposals. All comments and suggestions are welcome and will be taken into consideration. (PW)</p>
Q	<p>I am currently in the catchment for New Elgin and will remain so based on these proposals. You mentioned in your presentation, that due to roll pressures you were considering capping roll numbers. The new development area in New Elgin is growing and development is continuing, what happens if in-zone pupils reach the capped roll numbers; will you start to turn away in-zone pupils?</p>
A	<p>This is a possibility. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>Child safety has been mentioned; that at Bishopmill primary for safety reasons you would not want children crossing the Elgin to Lossiemouth road to go to school. You also mentioned East End and the A96 crossing; my worry is that Thornhill Road is going to be the link road once that is complete; you have not mentioned that children may have to cross this road to get to New Elgin primary school in the future. Why is this not included?</p>
A	<p>That is a very good point and will need to be looked at; the difficulty will be in the size of schools that will need to be created. An original plan for a new school zone was showing the new school as far too big and New Elgin would have been too small; which would have taken us from one extreme to another. However if there is any way to create a zone that avoids that, then it would be taken into consideration. (PW)</p> <p>The preferred site for the new school would be on the south side of Thornhill Road. No sites have been identified as yet but this would be the preferred site. Therefore for your particular circumstance a new school would be in the estate where you live and would not have to cross over the link road. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>Will there be a point where the Council can say 'stop building the houses'? Should it not stop until the education estate issues have been rectified and to allow us to accommodate the children we currently have in Elgin?</p>
A	<p>That is certainly a question for the Elected Members. The decision to allow house building and the increase in population of the area is because the Council wants to; the Council wants to bring prosperity to the area. I am not sure if we would get to the stage where we have to say enough is enough. There is an obligation on the developers to contribute towards the costs of local infrastructure to service the needs of the people of the houses that are being built. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>It is great that the area has shops and a medical surgery but education is just as important and should have been taken into consideration; I know hindsight is a wonderful thing.</p>



A	The roll projections for New Elgin primary in 2014, made ten years ago, was 310, but in reality it is 200 more than the projected figures. Given that the other roll projections for the other schools in Elgin were accurate (generally within plus or minus 10%) shows the methodology used works. What may not have been factored in correctly was the projected number of houses; these figures appear to have been significantly underestimated. This has then impacted on the roll projection figures. (PW)
Q	What is the capacity of the new school going to be?
A	If it is built on purely projected numbers, we would want the schools across Elgin to be a similar size. A school which has 14 classes (two classes for each year) that gives us a capacity of approximately 350 to 400 pupils, a management structure of a head teacher and two deputy heads and accommodation for additional support needs would be preferred. This is the size of school that we the Officers will be suggesting are built and this is what we would say is the optimum size of the schools. (GJ)
Q	Figures suggest 0.3 per household and in Elgin the majority of houses built recently are three or four bedroom houses; has that figure increased in the last few years?
A	There has been single dwelling houses built recently, therefore we know that these houses will not have children living there. This is an average figure rather than specific figures for each area of development. (GJ)
Q	This number does not seem correct as some houses may have one child and others may have more or none. Would it not be better to assume each family home has one child?
A	It is assuming that three children of primary school age per ten households. Other children may be pre-school or secondary school age. The Council have only recently taken the roll projection forecasting in-house, this was previously carried out by Aberdeenshire Council. Revising roll projection methodology can be looked into. (PW)
Q	How can the new school be the same capacity as the other schools in Elgin if you are basing the figures on the housing developments?
A	If 3,000 more houses are built on top of the current development projections more than one school will be required. (GJ)
Q	Lessons need to be learned from this and past mistakes, so they are not in the same situation in a few more years.
A	Elgin High School is currently being built and the current roll is less than 700 pupils for what will be a 1000 pupil capacity school. (GJ)
Q	Has the Elgin High School build started yet?
A	It is due to start in June of this year. (GJ)
Q	You are being optimistic with putting forward a rezoning consultation when there are no plans and no land identified. I know there was land previously identified and it did not work. Should this not have been started a year ago? If things continue it is going to 2020 before anything is ready? What happens if there are complications, this will eat into the timescale?
A	We have new Elected Members and new Officers looking into things; Elgin has never seen such a rapid demand, therefore everything is new. We do



	spend a lot of time on school designs and we are working with a number of developers, which will allow us to purchase a school design off the shelf. The site is the key component as to what we can have. (GJ)
Q	If that is the case, why does it take 18 months?
A	This is how long it takes to build the actual school. (GJ)
Q	Do you have specific land that you are considering?
A	<p>We have had discussions with the property section of the Council and considered where we would like to build. As you can see from the proposed maps it is always best if the school is in the centre of the community. We have estimated the cost of building a 400 pupil school and the approximate construction time.</p> <p>The first stage is for Elected Members to agree to build a school, while this is taking place we shall be considering possible build sites and seeking permission from Scottish Government for possible funding. Once a site is confirmed the design process will begin. (GJ)</p> <p>There are a number of possibilities for sites but this will all depend on the zones and where they are situated. After this consultation process, if changes to the zones are required, these may have impact on the proposed school sites. (PW)</p>
Q	How are the other schools; are they going to be deprived if budgets are invested elsewhere?
A	We are currently trying to bring all of the school estates up to a good standard. New Elgin for example is a great school but the building itself is not that great; the current approximate cost to bring all of the schools in Moray up to standard is £140 million. We are currently spending £17 million on four smaller sized schools (GJ)
Q	In other areas there are not enforced catchment areas; why does Elgin have catchment areas, why are the residents dictated to?
A	Scotland has catchment areas due to the Scotland Education law. This means that we are able to offer all in-zone children a place in the zoned school. If it is a free for all how do we determine which pupil receives free transport and where should a new school be built? (GJ)
Q	I would not expect the Council to pay for my transport.
A	In Scotland it is traditional that each pupil who lives out with two miles of the zoned school receives transport. In rural areas every child receives transport to school on safety grounds. (GJ)
Q	August 2015 school roll projection is 552, was this based on the old formulae? Is the school going to be at functional capacity for the first day of term?
A	No not this year. The number of pupils does change due to the composite classes. The functional capacity for this year will be 546. (Head Teacher)
Q	Have parents been notified that they do not have placements for this year? If we have not heard anything does that mean we are in?
A	Yes, if you are zoned residents; there are no out of zone placements being accepted at New Elgin primary school this year. It is important to remember that the more we squeeze in pupils in primary one section the further impact this has on throughout the following years. (GJ)



Q	I am concerned that at New Elgin primary space is so tight. We have to have the rezoning in place by January next year or we are going to be in the same situation again.
A	There is the concern that next year New Elgin primary may have to turn away zoned resident requests due to the capacity of the school. (Head Teacher)
Q	Regarding transport costs, at an earlier meeting you said that Moray Council will not pay for transport costs for children who live out of zone; however if you live within the zone of the school and are refused a place at this school; will the Council pay for transport?
A	That will be a decision for Elected Members to make. This scenario will need to be taken into account. (PW) New policies will need to be developed to take these new issues into consideration. (GJ)
Q	If you are in a zoned area for a particular school but you cannot get into that school and are forced to go elsewhere; how does it get decided which school to attend?
A	Consideration will be given which school in the immediate area has capacity. (PW)
Q	You mentioned that if these proposals are carried out it should become easier to grant placing requests. Will each request still be assessed in the same manner; for example will siblings still be in the top priority?
A	Top priority is in-zone pupils, then those with siblings attending. The policy which the Council follow complies with the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. (GJ)
Q	If we were to be refused an out of zone placing request are we guaranteed a place at our dedicated zoned school?
A	It is only at New Elgin primary that out of zone placing requests have been refused. It will depend on the capacity of each school where we can accommodate placing requests. (GJ)
Q	What about St Sylvester's, what is the difference?
A	They are governed by separate legislation as a denominational school. The zone for St Sylvesters's is what used to be the parish, which covers all of Elgin, Hopeman, Lossiemouth and Burghead. (PW)
Q	If an in-zone placement is refused due to capacity issues, how is it decided which in-zone pupils are accepted and refused?
A	Those geographically closest to the school will be accepted. (GJ) A clear and definitive answer will be provided to those who have been refused placements. (PW)
Q	With regards to the figures provided, how far along can you continue to accommodate all of the pupils within Elgin?
A	Currently up to 2019, just not necessarily at the zoned school or the first choice of school. (GJ)
Q	Is the rest of Moray not as bad?
A	No, it is due to the rate of development within Elgin. (GJ)
Q	Can you guarantee that no Elgin pupil will be transported to another school within Moray?



A	No, but this would be an absolute last resort for this to happen. Consideration would need to be taken with regards to current schools and the possibility of temporary structures being built to accommodate pupils within the area. (PW) We cannot guarantee this as it will all depend on the continual development of housing estates in Elgin. (GJ)
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Discussion took place with Elected Members in attendance regarding the Thornhill Road and the possibility of crossing patrols, as the current crossing islands are not safe for anyone.

Alison Hannan concluded the meeting by thanking those in attendance for coming along and participating.

Questions / Comments Received in ballot box

No questions / comments received.

Questions / Comments Received from Greenwards Zone

Q1	Will children with learning disabilities still be catered for at Greenwards even if out of zone?
A1	Yes. (Response PW)
Q2	Zoned to New Elgin-zone changes to Greenwards in 2016; the siblings will be split up due to this rezoning.
A2	The Admissions policy will be looked at to try to mitigate against any adverse impacts. (Response PW)
Q3	What if you move out of zone after the first child goes to school. What is the position for other children younger in the family?
A3	A placing request would have to be made. (Response PW)

Questions / Comments Received from New (South East) Zone

Q1	Please can you extend to Hallowood Road?
A1	This will be considered, however the proposals were designed so as not to impact on the roll of Lhanbryde Primary School. (Response PW)

Questions / Comments Received from New Elgin Zone

Q1.	In the calculations for future projected school rolls there have been significant assumptions made; what contingencies are in place for if these are wrong?
A1	The roll projections are revised every year and roll projections four years in advance have been reasonably accurate. (Response PW)
Q2	Stay in catchment, one child at school and sibling due to start in 2016. Will he be honoured a space as the new zoning puts him out of catchment as it is not my choice to change zones.
A2	The Admissions policy will be looked at to try to mitigate against any adverse impacts. (Response PW)



Elgin Town Hall (27th April 2015 (Afternoon Session))

In attendance:

Graham Jarvis (Head of Lifelong Learning, Culture & Sport)
 Paul Watson (Senior Education Adviser for Schools Consultations)
 Alison Hannan (Community Support Unit Officer)
 Dawn Brodie (Community Support Unit Officer)

Alistair Brown (Education Scotland)

Elected Members In Attendance:

Cllr Kirsty Reid (Scottish National Party)
 Cllr Patsy Gowans (Scottish National Party)
 Cllr Stewart Cree (Independent (Leader))
 Cllr Chris Tuke (Independent)
 Cllr John Divers (Scottish Labour Party)
 Cllr Mike Shand (Scottish National Party)

Number of Community Representatives In Attendance:

Number	Interest
4	Members of the public

Community Support Unit Officer Alison Hannan welcomed all to the meeting and provided introductions of the staff in attendance and a brief introduction to the meeting.

Graham Jarvis and Paul Watson carried out a presentation on the Elgin Primary School Rezoning proposal. A question and answer time followed the presentation.

Questions & Answer Session

Q	Can I ask about the secondary situation? If you re-jig the zones and I am thinking of Elgin South; does that mean the capacity will exist in the high school for the number of kids in the current three primary schools including Mosstowie?
A	When I talked to a property developer and he said if you take 3000 new houses, that is approximately the same size as Lossiemouth and Lossiemouth has two primaries and one secondary. So if you have 3000 new houses in South Elgin we would have a problem with capacity. At the moment we are building a new high school in New Elgin for 1000 pupils to replace the current 650 pupil school. So we are building capacity right



	<p>away, to cover the medium term future. Certainly for the long term future this Council will have to look at what they do in Elgin if it continues to grow as planned, as these are houses that five years ago no one had foreseen would be built.</p> <p>No one thought that 1500 houses would have been built in this timeframe. We are fairly confident over the next seven to nine years we can accommodate all the pupils zoned for the new secondary school.</p> <p>We are also looking at primary schools that have two secondary schools zoned. As a further stage to reviewing the school zones we will be looking at the catchment areas for secondary schools. These primary schools could easily be zoned elsewhere, for example Forres, Lossiemouth or Milne's. In the longer term the Council will have to consider the future builds in Elgin.</p> <p>Graham explained about relooking at school timetables. Timetable models can be reviewed as the planned model is aimed at using all the classrooms more often; therefore there will be the same amount of classrooms but used in a more economical way to help increase the capacity of the school. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>Are developers asked to contribute financially any way to the new schools? Will Springfield and Barretts developers be asked to contribute?</p>
A	<p>Yes, they are asked to contribute towards infrastructure.</p> <p>Graham explained about developers contributions. It depends on whether or not the new development necessitates expenditure on increased schools. Whereas in New Elgin the development of the houses has resulted in the requirement of a new school; a contribution is / will be requested. The planning department can enforce the contribution. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>How many houses are there so far in New Elgin? I mean they have been going up for years?</p>
A	<p>Cllr Divers confirmed 1,500 houses in south side.</p>
Q	<p>I am just wondering why it has taken so long. To see that there is a major problem. It has taken so long to deal with that side the 1,500 houses planned for the north side will the same thing happen, build, build, build and then become a disaster level oh gosh, we need a new school?</p>
A	<p>No, to date no permission has been granted for those houses to be built. There is no developer appointed yet.</p> <p>A school of 400 pupils costs approximately £10.5 million to build, not including the cost of land or any other costs regarding the land conditions. We do need to talk to the developers to encourage how much of that they are going to pay. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>Is the Council currently laying aside money to pay for the new school?</p>
A	<p>GJ passed over to Cllr S Cree to answer: The roll estimates for south of Elgin were wrong, that's the first line, we wouldn't be in this position if we had more accurate estimates at the time. It's just a matter of fact.</p> <p>With regard to the Capital Plan we don't for the most part fund purchases like</p>



	<p>this out of the kitty. We borrow money, to invest in the construction of schools, but we need to be able to repay that. We need to prove that and have a Capital Plan that says if we borrow this; that is how much it costs every year. It's like a mortgage.</p> <p>We have reserves at the moment that are currently not ear-marked for a new school, but could be used to help towards paying back the on-going Capital costs. But then, developer contributions can be significant in these cases and certainly in the north of Elgin development, we are well placed at this time.</p> <p>Some of these decisions go way back even before Moray Council time; we are where we are with some of them. We do have a greater control this time around and want to emphasis this. The planning process would seek to ensure the Council is not disadvantaged by the costs of a new school. (Cllr S Cree).</p> <p>I think it is worth saying it's come out now that we got the numbers wrong when we were looking at the Elgin South Master Plan. I questioned the figures time and time again saying they were way out. It's a sad thing to say that I have been shown to be correct. The Officers at that time (and they are not the same Officers here now) failed to go away and recheck the figures at that time. (Cllr J Divers)</p> <p>GJ came back in and concluded the discussion: The north site currently has no one on site therefore it is in a good place to discuss sites of a new school before developers begin. The planning department can enforce certain restraints on the speed of the houses being built, for example if a play park is to be built before another house can be built. (GJ)</p>
Q	To confirm with Cllr Cree, the Council would normally have to borrow money to build a new school but there is money within the reserves that could be used to put towards a desperately needed new school in New Elgin?
A	<p>It is not the conventional way of this Council to fund that type of development. Reserves are normally for unforeseen purposes. If you had said to me six years ago that the population of Moray would have increased by 6000, you would have found it difficult to find an analyst in Scotland to suggest this. You couldn't have said that in 2008 you would have had an economic crash, scale of which we haven't seen post war.</p> <p>We are supposing that plans in north Elgin will go ahead, what if new rules are implemented by the Government then these houses may not be built? There are so many varying factors that affect the outcomes and are not controlled by the Council. We are 6,000 people more in Moray than the last census and that has surprised everyone we are among the fastest growing Local Authorities in Scotland. (Cllr S Cree)</p> <p>If Westminster had decided to close down the RAF base in Lossiemouth there would be no demand for these houses in the north of Elgin. (GJ)</p>
Q	I still have concern about New Elgin itself and the necessity of the school. I



	<p>have been told the numbers were all wrong and the population boost was not anticipated; but the planning has still been granted. You only need to drive up Rothes Road and they are still going up at quite a pace. At what point will the developers be told that we need a new school and cough up?</p>
A	<p>Cllr C Tuke answered – I am pleased to hear that developers are entering discussions at least. It is very difficult to get money out of developers retrospectively. We can get planning obligations for schools before the event when existing schools reach capacity. In this case there were no projections for schools reaching capacity and we had no remit to charge developers at that time. Certainly we are in a different position in the north where we can see the problems coming in Elgin north and revising the obligation scheme, so we shouldn't encounter the same problems as in the south. (Cllr C Tuke)</p>
Q	<p>You would not expect developers to pay for a whole new school, is it just a percentage?</p>
A	<p>It has happened before; for example in Perthshire a large number of houses are being developed and the developers have been asked to build a new school. (GJ)</p> <p>The 1500 houses in Findrassie will trigger the requirement for a new school. (Cllr C Tuke)</p> <p>It is a big development, as they will not build 1500 houses in one year. (GJ)</p> <p>Look at areas such as Bridge of Don and go and have a look at the schools they are boarded up as there was no thought given to predicating how many children would require schooling. It's so hard to estimate. (Cllr S Cree)</p> <p>The advantage now, is that we carry out the roll projections in-house. Up until 2011 they were done by Aberdeenshire Council. We have local knowledge of the types of houses being built.(PW)</p>

A discussion took place between the Elected Members and Officers regarding the style of houses within developments and the census data's impact on how the primary and secondary roll projections are calculated.

A discussion took place regarding the facility requirements within the new housing developments that is not just educational.

Q	<p>Are there contingency plans for any slippage in the new primary school for New Elgin? Is there a point where the two other schools would not be able to cope in accommodating the extra pupils?</p>
A	<p>We have no land at New Elgin Primary School to enable accommodation expansion; we could perhaps create accommodation at Seafield, Greenwards and Bishopmill. The contingency plan would be to add temporary accommodation at these locations. (GJ)</p> <p>We can accommodate pupil roll projections for Elgin until 2019 within our current schools. However, this would mean that some children would not go</p>



	<p>to their zoned school or their first choice of school. (GJ)</p> <p>Beyond this timescale we would have to either look at expanding one of these sites or transporting children out with Elgin to Lhanbryde, Lossiemouth, Hopeman or Rothes to whichever is closest; this would be the last option we would choose. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>When it comes to East End pupils, I have heard there are quite a lot people not happy with the East End zone because even though there are children having to cross the A96 to get there where previously they were zoned to Seafield. It's probably a safer walk to school to Seafield than actually crossing the A96.</p>
A	<p>There is a crossing patrol on the A96 at Institution Road. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>Is there a way in this rezoning proposal that this could reconfigured?</p>
A	<p>We would not have built East End primary where it is if we had a choice. Last year the consultants suggested building a central primary school which would combine West End and East End; there is not a suitable location to accommodate this plan. There is nowhere in the middle of Elgin we could locate it. We have to deal with the problems at New Elgin, West End and East End due to their locations; the new schools which could be built will be designed to accommodate all safety issues. (GJ)</p> <p>When the configurations for the rezoning were looked into, the possibility of children from the Pinefield area attending New Elgin was considered but the problem is the numbers. It could result in East End becoming too small and New Elgin becoming too large.</p> <p>These are all only proposals and can be changed in light of responses. (PW)</p>

Discussion took place regarding traffic changes and possible changes to traffic flow and road systems.

Alison Hannan concluded the meeting by thanking those in attendance for coming along and participating.



Elgin Town Hall (27th April 2015 (Evening Session))

In attendance:

Graham Jarvis (Head of Lifelong Learning, Culture & Sport)
 Paul Watson (Senior Education Adviser for Schools Consultations)
 Alison Hannan (Community Support Unit Officer)
 Sylvia Jamieson (Community Support Unit Officer)

Elected Members In Attendance:

Cllr John Divers (Scottish Labour Party)
 Cllr Mike Shand (Scottish National Party)
 Cllr James Allan (Scottish Conservative & Unionist Party)

Number of Community Representatives In Attendance:

Number	Interest
8	Members of the public

Community Support Unit Officer Alison Hannan welcomed all to the meeting and provided introductions of the staff in attendance and a brief introduction to the meeting.

Graham Jarvis and Paul Watson carried out a presentation on the Elgin Primary School Rezoning proposal. A question and answer time followed the presentation.

Questions & Answer Session

Q	If you have a current child at New Elgin and then your other child is due to start school but you are now in a different zone; how is a parent supposed to drop two children off at two different locations at the same time? Are you looking to have different start times?
A	<p>No, we would not change times at school unless we had to. It is a question that has previously been asked in particular for New Elgin. This is the first time in Moray where we have refused enrolments to pupils who have siblings at the same school. Priority must go to pupils from within the zoned areas and the next priority is out of zone pupils who have siblings already at the school.</p> <p>In the past we have always been able to accommodate both of those categories and sometimes had to turn down out of zone placements for people who do not have any children already at the school. For the in-take in August this year for the first time in Elgin, we have had to say even if you have a child already at the school and you are out of zone we are physically full we can't take any kids in. Therefore your choice is to go to your zoned school.</p>



	<p>Graham asked the attendee how far away. The attendee responded that it was a theoretical question. We can't guarantee to educate the two children together at the same school unless it was your zone school. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>Would you recommend that parents move their children?</p>
A	<p>We do not necessarily recommend this; what we are saying is that we cannot take any more at New Elgin Primary. The parents have a choice to place their children at two different schools or for both children to attend the zoned school. I understand this sounds cruel, but that is the situation we are currently in. (GJ)</p> <p>Alternatively, we end up not being able to take in-zone pupils because we have too many out of zone pupils. (GJ)</p> <p>We do need to look at the Council's Admissions policy as it was written when this sort of situation did not occur. Interim arrangements need to be considered during this period until a new school opens to try and ensure that families, as far as possible, are not disadvantaged. (PW)</p>
Q	<p>Looking at the figures for the future, it looks like in-zone pupils may not be able to attend New Elgin either. Take the figures 531, the figures from the New School and the current roll; what is the short term plans for the in-zone pupils?</p>
A	<p>That is one of the reasons why we have refused out of zone pupils even with siblings already attending. New Elgin has refused out of zone placing requests; we are acutely aware that next year we may have a problem with in-zone pupils at New Elgin; there is not a definitive answer at this point. What we can't do is add to New Elgin as it is full to capacity. If you have a child at the school, you'll see they have lunches on the stage. We just don't have the physical capacity.</p> <p>Due to the location of the school and the traffic safety issues we could not expand the school as it would take away playground space which is very precious to us, and it would not help with the other facilities such as the dining space and quality PE.</p> <p>We have unique problem for New Elgin and we are going to have to really think hard about enrolments for next year. Turning away in-zone enrolments is not what we want to do. We would have to look at transport arrangements to take them to the next nearest school. It is one that is currently on our minds. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>I am currently a teacher at Seafeld Primary School and I live in the catchment area for Seafeld. My daughter attends Bishopmill Primary and my son is due to enrol next January at Bishopmill as a placing request. My placing request is because I didn't want my children to be at the same school I work at. What is the situation with that, because looking at the figures it looks like that even in-zone children won't be able to get into Bishopmill, same as what New Elgin is facing now? Is there even going to be an option for a placing request for Bishopmill next year?</p>
A	<p>You can still make a placing request, if it is accepted or not is a different</p>



	<p>matter.</p> <p>Bishopmill have refused non siblings in the past and West End is currently refusing out of zone pupils who do not have a sibling attending already. We do not have any priority for Council staff, whether teaching staff or anything else they are treated exactly the same as everyone else. Therefore the fact that you are teaching at a school and you don't want your children attending the same school as you teach at is not covered by current policy. (GJ)</p> <p>We understand your feelings entirely, and you wouldn't be alone. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>The attendee explained, that if she knew what the outcome of her placing request would be in advance she could look to make arrangements to accommodate the outcome of her placing request now rather than waiting and finding out later. The attendee was asking for a rough idea if her placing request would be successful.</p>
A	<p>You would currently be a higher priority than someone out of zone with no children already attending. It's very difficult to predict how many placing requests we are going to get. (PW)</p> <p>Priority is given to in-zone placements, then out of zone placing requests with siblings already in attendance, (children with siblings closer in age range receive higher priority to those with siblings of a wider age gap); and then next priority is the distance from the school. Graham went on to explain the guidance Local Authorities followed was dictated by Scottish Education Law which explains the placing requests priorities. This information is available for the public to look at. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>In the predicted rolls, Mosstowie is regularly 20 children less than the predicted roll; would it not benefit other schools in the area if their rural catchment areas are transferred to Mosstowie?</p>
A	<p>That does not help as it would only be approximately another 25 children. The maximum number Mosstowie can take is 75 children. (PW)</p> <p>If a rural school capacity rises above 69 the Council loses some funding, which is currently significant. To take a further 20 pupils at Mosstowie we need to decide how to draw the lines to change the catchment area; it's worth a look at and we have made a note of it this evening to consider it. (GJ)</p>
Q	<p>Concerned regarding Mosstowie and the possible extension at West End and moving Mosstowie pupils to attend West End. If that was to happen, would Mosstowie primary need to close?</p>
A	<p>This is a 25 year project; the West End building is not in great condition. Therefore we, the Officers, would suggest building a campus in a suitable location, and amalgamate the two zones which would result in two school closures. A process would need to be followed if this was considered; the Council has recently agreed not to consider rural school closures but this may be something that has to be considered in the future. (GJ)</p> <p>It's not part of this consultation; it's much more a longer term plan. (PW)</p>
Q	<p>My youngest daughter is due to start school in 2017, if the new zones begin in 2016 and the new school is not anticipated until 2018; will she still receive</p>



	priority for New Elgin over those which are zoned to the new school?
A	If you are currently in-zone for New Elgin and will remain in the zone for New Elgin, you will be the highest priority as you are in-zone. (GJ)
Q	Are there any plans for parking at East End?
A	This does need to be reviewed; the Heritage Centre staff and visitors currently access the car park via the school gate. We do have Roads and Transportation department carrying out a survey in this area and looking at the issues. Even if we were to implement a drive in and drop off area and drive out, we would still cause dangers due to people stopping and waiting in the drop off areas. East End, New Elgin and St Sylvester's are the biggest problem for traffic issues. (GJ)
Q	Could they do something about the streets round about the schools, such as half hour zones?
A	The problem with the zones is that they need to be enforced. East Lothian has closed the roads around certain primary schools between core hours so it is a no-through area. All suggestions are welcome. (GJ)

Discussion took place regarding the safety of children at schools due to the increased level of traffic, where the schools are situated and who is causing the increased level of transport; in-zone or out of zone residents.

Discussions took place regarding other possible transport routes, such as transporting pupils to Mosstowie rather than New Elgin and East End; opening up Memorial Road for access to New Elgin primary.

Q	Why does New Elgin have coach transport?
A	There are two coaches everyday bussing children to New Elgin. For transporting the pupils who live more than two miles away to school. (GJ)
Q	Some parents like to stay and watch the children as there is no one at the schools to watch the children until the school session starts. Could people be provided to help solve this problem?
A	It has been suggested that two drop off areas may be required; especially if parents are dropping off children at two different locations can they be ensured the pupils will be safe. This does come with insurance issues as well as staffing and financial issues for the Council. (GJ)
Q	The new proposed housing developments in the South side; where are these people going to come from?
A	Moray's population has increased by 6000 in-between the last two censuses. (Cllr J Divers) The developers must have some predictions that show people will purchase these houses. (GJ)

Discussion took place regarding developers' contributions to the infrastructure of the housing sites; these include shops, play parks and roads and planning conditions; which are enforced to planning permission requests.

Discussion took place regarding teacher recruitment problems.



Graham Jarvis concluded the meeting by thanking those in attendance for coming along and participating.

Questions / Comments Received in ballot box

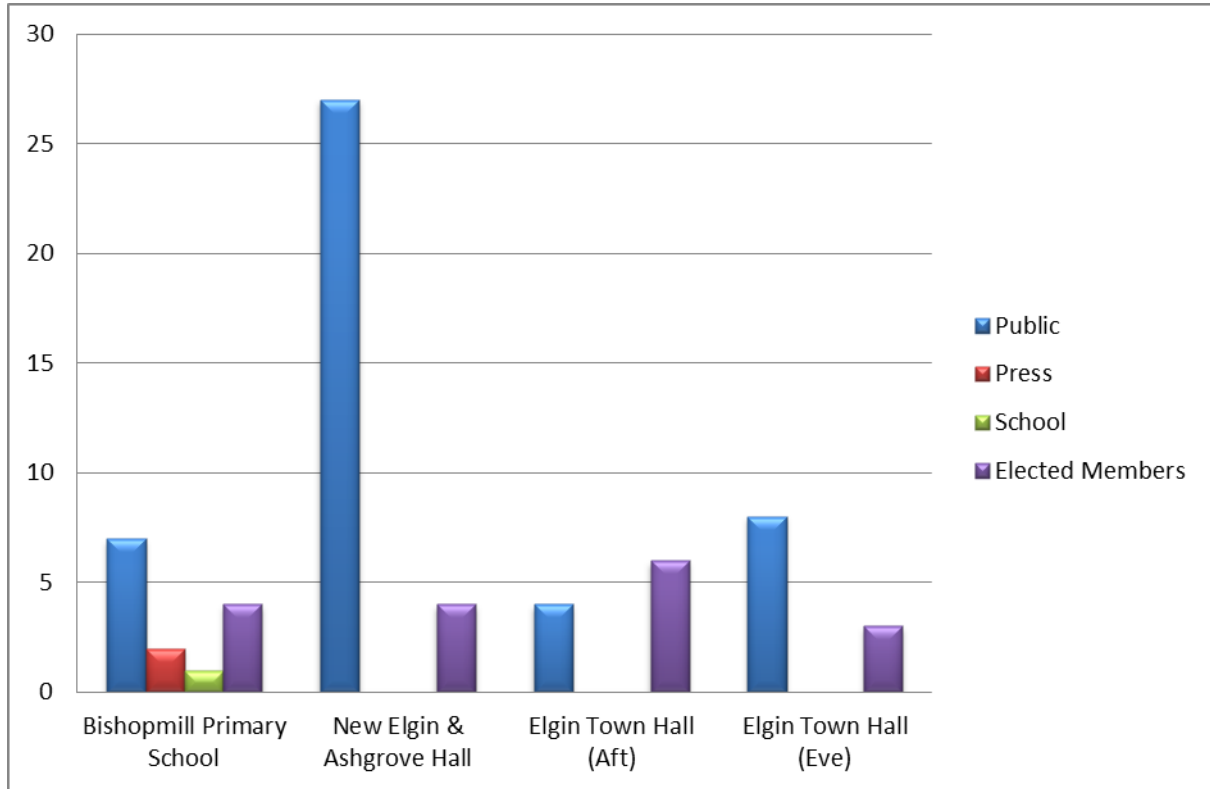
- Larger scale maps would have assisted a more detailed understanding of plans.
- Timetable / format of conversation could have been communicated in advance (i.e. presentation, Q&A etc).
- Very well laid out at the Town Hall – staff excellent.

Questions / Comments Received from Zone West End primary

Mosstowie primary school should be retained with its own rural catchment area.

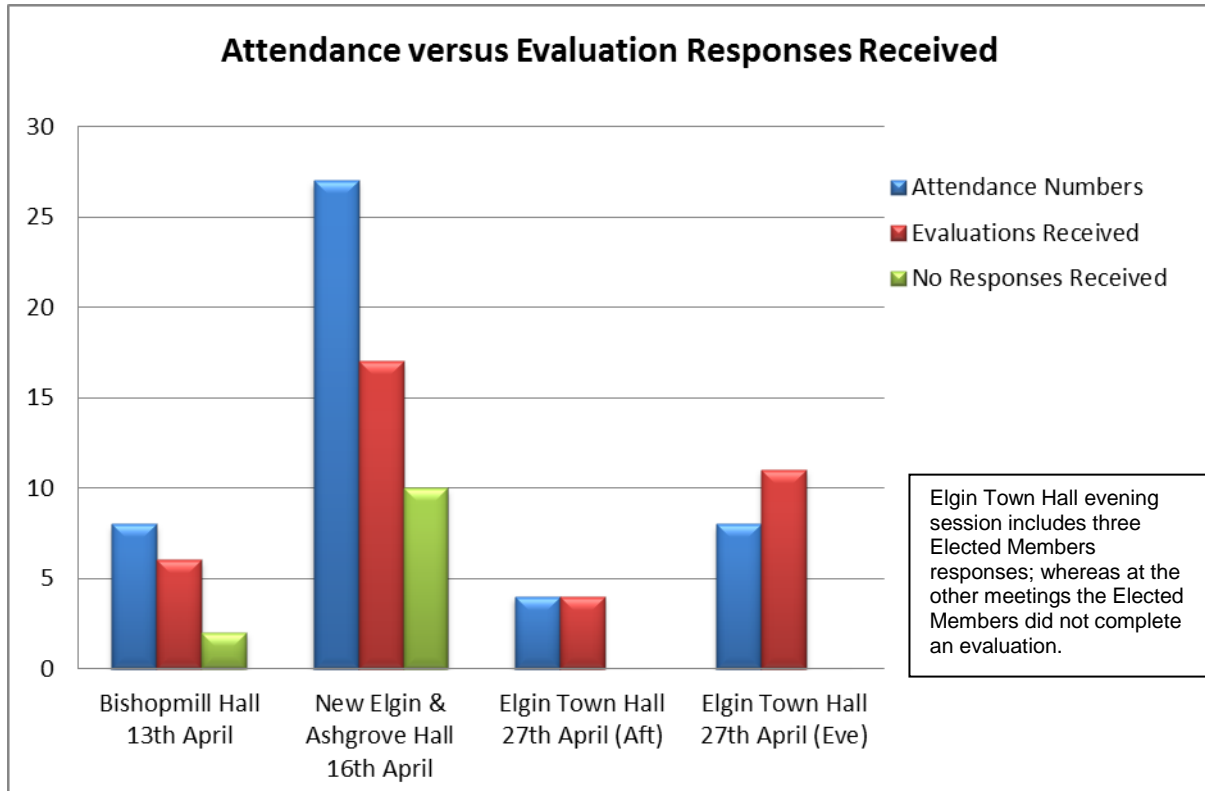


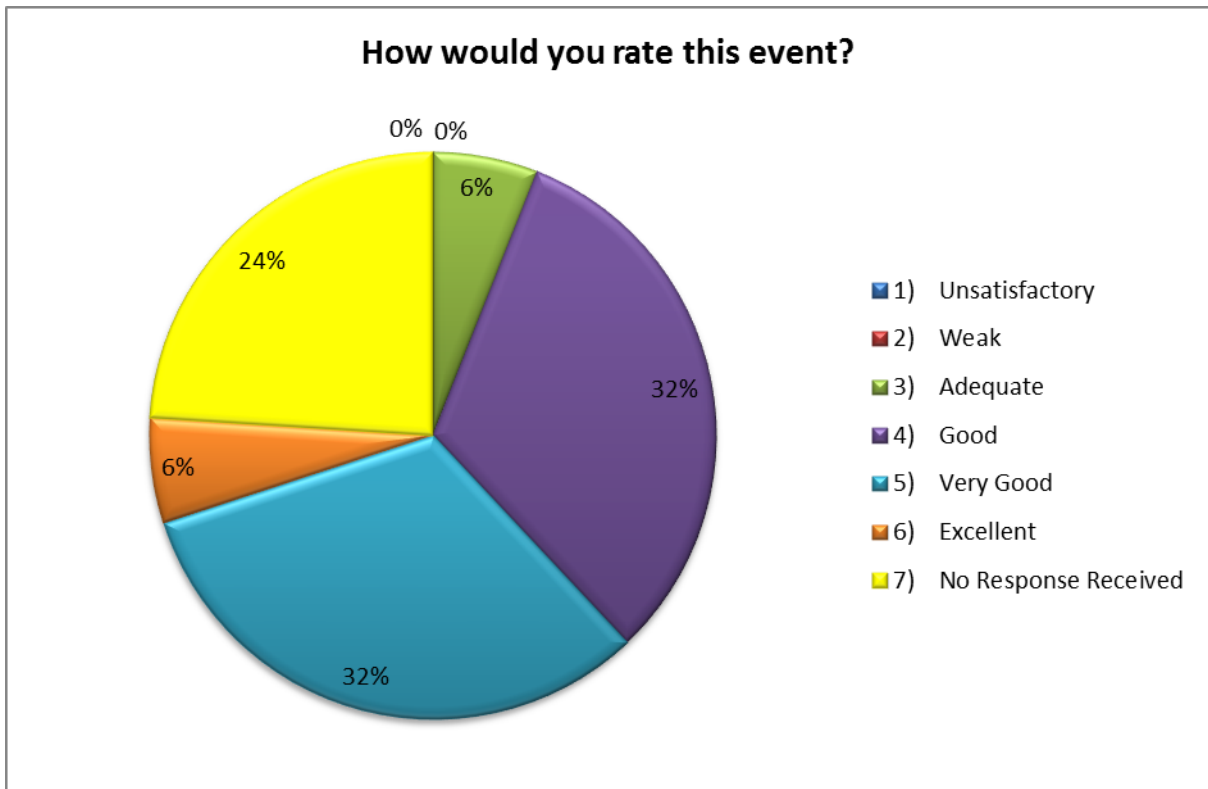
Attendance Breakdown

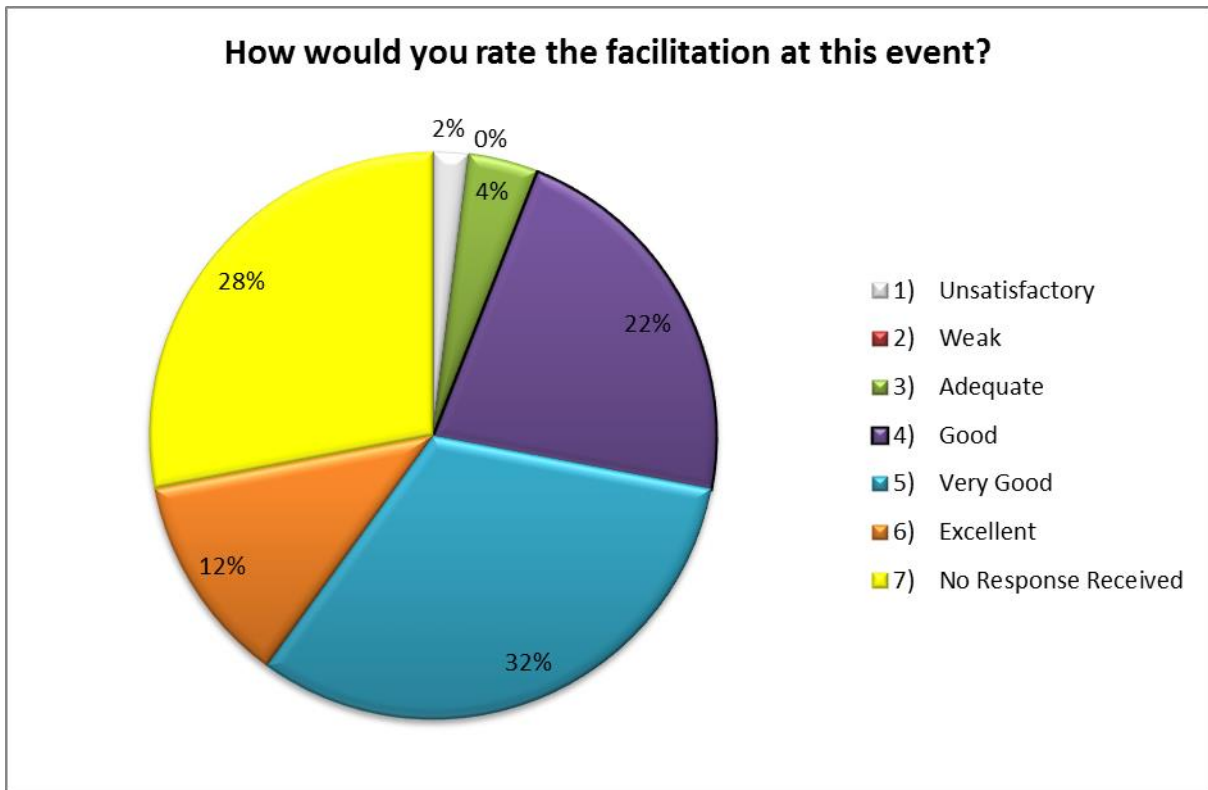




Collated Evaluations







APPENDIX C: EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by The Moray Council to vary the catchment areas of Bishopmill, East End, Greenwards, New Elgin, Seafield and West End Primary Schools in Elgin, including establishing zones for two new primary schools.

1. Introduction

This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of

The Moray Council's proposal to make the following changes to primary school catchment areas (zones) in Elgin:

- to vary the catchment areas of Bishopmill, East End, Greenwards, New Elgin, Seafield and West End Primary Schools in Elgin based on geographical areas which are delineated on plans contained within the proposal document;
- to establish a catchment area for a new primary school, including nursery, to serve a delineated geographical area in south east Elgin; and
- to establish a catchment area for a new primary school, including nursery, to serve a delineated geographical area in north Elgin.

It is proposed that the implementation dates for these proposals will be:

- January 2016 for the revised catchment areas;
- no earlier than August 2018 for the new school to serve south east Elgin; and
- no earlier than August 2020 for the new school to serve north Elgin.

Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to

publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.1 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.2 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the public meetings held on 16 April 2015 and 27 April 2015 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and visits to the site of Bishopmill, East End, Greenwards, New Elgin, Seafield and West End Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation Process

2.1 The Moray Council undertook the consultation on its proposals with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 The statutory consultation period ran from 13 April to 29 May 2015. The council held four public meetings on 13 April 2015 at Bishopmill Primary School, 16 April 2015 at New Elgin and Ashgrove Hall, along with afternoon and evening meetings on 27 April 2015 at Elgin Town Hall.

2.3 As part of the consultation the council held meetings with parent councils, staff and pupil councils of all affected Elgin primary schools, consultation with Community Councils, discussion with the Local Negotiating Committee for

Teachers. It also offered the opportunity for consultation with representatives of support staff trade unions, although this offer was not taken up.

2.4 The council received 59 responses to their online survey to the proposal and six written responses were received. Most of the responses supported the proposal. Parents and staff responses indicated that they were keen to know more about some particular catchment areas and also precise locations of the proposed new schools.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 The proposal has a number of educational benefits for current and future learners at the schools. Overall, the proposal will lead to important improvements in the quality of learning environments for children. The proposal should support improved transitions for children from early learning and childcare settings to primary schools. Revised school rolls will alleviate current pressures in particular schools in terms of practical teaching spaces, dining spaces and social areas. This is particularly important for New Elgin Primary School which is currently operating at capacity. The proposal will also assist the council to make efficient and effective use of its resources by addressing capacity issues across its school estate in the Elgin area.

3.2 The aspect of the proposal related to varying the catchment areas of six primary schools should support children to attend the school for which they are zoned. The council has given reasonable consideration to the proposed new catchment areas. Stakeholders in several schools would like the council to consider alternative approaches to the delineation of school catchment areas. For example, they would like to see particular roads, landmarks and natural neighbourhoods being used rather than the council's proposed use of postcodes. The council should respond to suggestions by individual local school communities in taking forward the proposal.

3.3 The council has acknowledged that it will need to review individual school travel plans. In doing so, it should ensure that safe routes to school are identified and communicated to stakeholders.

3.4 Almost all school staff, representative groups of pupils and parents from all establishments affected by the proposal who met with HM Inspectors were positive about the proposal. The community of New Elgin Primary School expressed a number of reasonable concerns about overcrowded dining facilities, lack of flexible learning and social spaces and the challenges of traffic management. In taking forward its proposal, the council will need to work closely with stakeholders, particularly those from New Elgin Primary School to clarify how it will address their concerns.

3.5 Stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors had a number of reasonable concerns related to the potential for siblings to be separated due to capacity at individual schools. In taking forward its proposal, the council will need to provide families and stakeholders with clear guidance on how it will approach the



placement of siblings, particularly where families may be split as a result of the proposed rezoning.

3.6 The aspect of the proposal related to the building of two new schools has potential educational benefits. These relate to the easing of overcapacity issues at current Elgin schools and the creation of more flexible learning and social environments, which will support active learning and collaboration between groups of children. The proposed new establishments will include up to date information and communications technologies which will enhance learners' experiences. However, there are currently no plans or details of exact locations for proposed new schools.

he council acknowledges that, once plans are available, it will need to carry out further consultation. Stakeholders have indicated that they would like the council to clarify its long term plans and timescales for improving the school estate and how it calculates roll projections. These are reasonable requests which the council will need to address in taking forward its proposal.

4. Summary

Overall, the proposal has a number of educational benefits. It should lead to important improvements in the quality of learning environments for children, along with improved transitions for children from early learning and childcare settings to P1 at school. In taking forward its proposal, the council will need to work with individual school communities to clarify its reasons for believing the current proposal is the most reasonable and viable option open to it. It will need to review each school's travel plan, to ensure safe routes to school are identified. There are reasonable concerns regarding New Elgin Primary School which is currently facing challenges in terms of overcrowded dining facilities, lack of flexible and social learning spaces and traffic management. In preparing and publishing its final report, the council should address concerns of stakeholders at New Elgin Primary School, particularly in relation to the interim period before any new school is established. The council should provide clear guidance on its approach to the placement of siblings, particularly where families may be split as a result of the proposed rezoning. The council has indicated that the aspect of the proposal relating to the building of two new schools will result in a new consultation. In taking forward its proposal, the council will need to engage with stakeholders and address their reasonable concerns about roll projections and about the timescale for the building of the schools.

**HM Inspectors
Education
Scotland August
2015**