



THE MORAY COUNCIL EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CARE DEPARTMENT

Proposal Paper

To vary the catchment areas of Bishopmill, Lhanbryde, Linkwood, Seafield and West End Primary Schools, Elgin Academy, Elgin High School and Milne's High School.

Statutory Consultation Period:

Monday 21st November 2016 – Friday 20th January 2017 inclusive (34 school days)

All submissions expressing views on the proposals detailed in this document must be submitted by 5.00pm on 20th January 2017 for them to be taken into account as part of the consultation.

It is intended to respond to issues raised during the consultation within a consultation report that will be published, at least three weeks, before the Moray Council meeting on 5th April 2017.

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 vary the zones (catchment areas) of Bishopmill, Lhanbryde, Linkwood, Seafield and West End Primary Schools, Elgin Academy, Elgin High School and Milne's High School based on geographical areas which are delineated on plans contained within this document and described below.
- 1.2 It is intended that the implementation dates for these proposals will be:
- (i) 14th August 2017 for the revised Bishopmill, Lhanbryde, Linkwood, Seafield and West End Primary Schools' catchment areas.
 - (ii) The start of the school session in the August following the opening of Linkwood Primary School on its permanent site for the amendment to the Elgin Academy/Elgin High School and Elgin High/Milne's High catchment area.
(If the new Linkwood Primary School building opens during session 2018/19 then this catchment area change would take effect from August 2019.)

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Following statutory consultations, The Moray Council approved revised zones for Elgin primary schools on 11 November 2015 and revised secondary school zones were approved by the Children and Young People's Services Committee on 22 June 2016.
- 2.2 There are a few issues which arose either during, or after, these consultations which should be now be addressed and would effectively 'tidy up' the school catchment areas within, and bordering, Elgin.
- 2.3 The areas proposed for amendment are described below.
- 2.3.1 It had been proposed that children resident in the area zoned to Lhanbryde Primary School and Elgin Academy which lies to the north of the A96 and to the west of the river Lossie be zoned to Milne's High School. Respondents to the consultation on secondary rezoning made a good case for not altering the secondary zoning arrangements for this particular area and it was decided that children should continue to be zoned to Elgin Academy due to the proximity to Elgin and the potential for a safe cycle route to Elgin Academy. One of the agreed rezoning principles was that the whole of the zone of a primary school should form part of the zone of one secondary school only, except where there is an exceptional case for a different arrangement. This circumstance was seen to be an exceptional case and it was seen as important that the Elgin Academy zone remained in place for children in this area. It is now proposed to consult on rezoning the geographical area described above from Lhanbryde Primary School to Seafield Primary School.

In doing this, any children resident in this area may be able to use a safe cycle route to Elgin Academy and the agreed rezoning principle that the whole of the zone of a primary school should form part of the zone of one secondary school only will be met.

- 2.3.2 The primary school zones agreed in 2015 were based on geographical areas delineated on maps which were informed by post code areas. Subsequent to the Council's rezoning decision it has been brought to officers' notice that there is a small geographical area within post code IV30 6UH (Sheriffmill Road) which, if zoned to Bishopmill Primary rather than West End Primary, would result in a safer walking route to school.
- 2.3.3 At a public meeting to discuss the Elgin primary school rezoning proposals (April 2015) parents suggested extending the new south-east Elgin school zone (Linkwood Primary School) to include Hallowood Road, Troves which is currently in the Lhanbryde catchment area but will be much closer to the proposed site of Linkwood Primary School.
- 2.3.4 Following the consultation on secondary rezoning it was agreed that, for the present time, children resident in Hallowood Road, Troves area should continue to be zoned to Elgin Academy, rather than Milne's High School, due to a number of factors including proximity to Elgin, no through road to Lhanbryde and the fact that none of the children resident in that area, at the time of the consultation, actually attended Lhanbryde Primary School.
- 2.3.5 The area identified in the Moray Local Development Plan as LONG 2 in south Elgin extends beyond the Linkwood Primary catchment area into the Lhanbryde and Milne's High School catchment areas. It is proposed that all of this area is included in the Linkwood Primary catchment area to ensure that, in the future, children resident in Elgin are zoned to an Elgin school. There are currently no residences in this area.

3. THE PROPOSALS

- 3.1 It is proposed to rezone the geographical area which lies to the north of the A96 and to the west of the river Lossie from Lhanbryde Primary School to Seafield Primary School. (See **Appendix 1**)
- 3.2 It is proposed to rezone a small geographical area within post code IV30 6UH (Sheriffmill Road) from West End Primary to Bishopmill Primary. (See **Appendix 2**)
- 3.3 It is proposed to rezone part of Lhanbryde catchment area including the Hallowood Road, Troves area to Linkwood Primary. (See **Appendix 3**)
- 3.4 It is proposed to rezone all of the revised Linkwood Primary School catchment area from Elgin Academy and Milne's High school to Elgin High School. (See **Appendix 5**)
- 3.5 Proposed primary school catchment changes summarised in **Appendix 4**.

4. TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 Pupils living in the affected areas who have already commenced their primary or secondary education at the time of the new school zones becoming applicable can remain in their chosen school. No existing school pupils will be required to move school when new zones are established unless that is by parental choice.
- 4.2 Parents of children making a placing request to their children's zoned school and subsequently enrolling in any of the affected primary schools from 14th August 2017 onwards will do so on the basis of the revised catchment areas.
- 4.3 Parents of children who make in-zone placing requests and subsequently enrol in their catchment area schools after catchment areas change, and have older siblings in the schools which would have been the zoned school under the previous catchment areas, will have to make out-of-zone placing requests if they wish their younger child(ren) to attend the same school as their older sibling(s).
- 4.4 Children resident in the Hallowood Road, Troves area, who currently attend an Elgin primary school by placing request, can transfer to Elgin Academy as an in-zone pupil.
- 4.5 Children who are zoned to Linkwood Primary, following the implementation of revised catchment areas, will transfer to Elgin High School, rather than either Elgin Academy or Milne's High School, from the August following the new Linkwood Primary School building opening.

5. TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 The 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.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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.

- 5.5 If these proposals are adopted there should be no significant changes to school transport arrangements for eligible pupils, however some children will have a shorter distance to their new zoned school. It is also 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. School travel plans will require to be revisited once new catchment areas are confirmed.

6. EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

- 6.1.1 Children resident in Elgin will be zoned to an Elgin school and families will have clear information on their zoned primary school in Elgin, thereby providing a degree of certainty which may be lacking at the present time.
- 6.1.2 Families who live in in the Hallowood Road, Troves area will be much closer to the proposed site of Linkwood Primary School. This will result in a shorter and safer route to school.
- 6.1.3 Children resident on the part of Sheriffmill Road, which lies to the west of the River Lossie, will have a safer walking route to Bishopmill Primary School compared with the current route to West End Primary School which lies on the opposite side of the A96.
- 6.1.4 Children resident in the areas currently zoned to Lhanbryde Primary School and Elgin Academy will benefit from ending split zoning for their area. Split zoning increases the risk of children experiencing a discontinuity in their learning as a result of transition from primary school to a non-Associated Schools Group (ASG) secondary school. Implementing these proposals will improve continuity and progression for learners.

6.2 Likely effects for children currently attending Elgin primary schools

- 6.2.1 The proposals will ensure that all Elgin primary schools will have clear and distinct associations with their local communities. Current zones, which do not match the Associated Schools Group, have not always been understood by parents. Families who live in the affected areas will have clear information on their zoned school.
- 6.2.2 Partnership working between the schools means that children within the ASG study similar progressions of work which have been agreed between schools and have similar starting points when they arrive at secondary phase. Implementing these proposals will therefore result in improved curricular coherence for pupils.

6.2.3 As a member of an ASG children have many opportunities throughout their school life to work collaboratively with children from other ASG primary schools. This is an excellent transition both educationally and socially for those children going to the associated secondary school. These opportunities are available because of the close working relationships which exist between the staff, head teachers and other agencies supporting the ASG schools. Zoning all pupils to the ASG secondary school will ensure all pupils can enjoy these benefits.

6.3 Likely effects for children who become pupils of schools in the next two years.

6.3.1 There would be no detriment to future users of the provision.

6.3.2 Where new zones for Bishopmill, Lhanbryde, Linkwood, Seafield and West End Primary Schools, Elgin High School Elgin Academy and Milne's High School become applicable, children will enrol in these schools from the effective dates following the decision of the Moray Council to change the catchment areas.

6.4 Likely effects on other users of the schools' facilities

6.4.1 There would be no detriment to other users of the schools' facilities.

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

6.5.1 These proposals will have no significant adverse impact on children attending other schools in Moray.

6.6 Other likely effects of the proposals

6.6.1 No other effects have been identified.

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

6.7.1 Teaching and support staff will work closely with all affected children to ensure that their learning, pastoral and social needs are fully supported during any transition process, including enhanced arrangements for children and young people with Additional Support Needs.

6.7.2 An equality impact assessment has been carried out on these proposals and consultation process. This concludes that introducing this proposal will not have an adverse impact on any of the groups considered. The equality impact assessment is attached as **Appendix B**.

6.8 Summary of benefits resulting from implementation of the proposals

6.8.1 The benefits are all highlighted in the preceding paragraphs, but they can be

summarised as follows:

- i) almost all children affected by these proposals will live closer to their zoned school and consequently will have shorter and safer routes to school.
- ii) the removal of split zoning will improve continuity and progression in learning for those children affected by the proposals.

6.8.2 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 authority officers within Education and Social Care, Planning and Transportation which have supported these proposals.

6.8.3 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.

7. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

7.1 Formal consultation will run from Monday 21st November 2016 – Friday 20th January 2017 inclusive (34 school days)

7.2 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 affected schools
- a letter to the parents/carers of children at all Elgin and Lhanbryde 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)
- a public meeting in Elgin as shown below
- consultation with the parent councils of all affected schools
- consultation with the staff of the establishments
- consultation with pupils who will be affected by the proposals
- consultation with Community Councils in the affected areas; and
- consultation with representatives of the teacher and support staff trade unions.

7.3 A formal consultation public meeting is arranged as follows:

Date	Venue	Time
Wednesday 30 th November	Elgin Town Hall (Supper Room)	7.00pm

7.4 Following consultation, it is hoped that The Moray Council will be able to take a final decision on the proposals at its meeting on 5th April 2017.

8. INVOLVEMENT OF EDUCATION SCOTLAND

8.1 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.

8.2 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 proposals. This will take place during the period 30 January to 17 February 2017. 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.

8.3 On receipt of the Education Scotland report, it will be necessary to review the proposals, 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 Moray Council will consider the consultation report and decide whether or not to approve the proposals.

9. NOTE ON CORRECTIONS

9.1 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.

10. EQUALITY STATEMENT

- 10.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried out on these proposals 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
- 10.2 The equality impact assessment concluded that introducing these proposals will not have an adverse impact on any of the groups listed. 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 B**.

11. SUBMISSION OF VIEWS

- 11.1 Responses to the consultation should be made by writing to:
School Catchment Area 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 Friday 20th January 2017 for them to be taken into account as part of the consultation.

12. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION

- 12.1 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
- 12.2 It is intended that a report on the consultation will be presented to the Moray Council on 5th April 2017. This will provide information for Elected Members to make a final decision on the proposals.