



**EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**JUNE 2017**

**PROPOSAL DOCUMENT**

**REVIEW OF STONEHAVEN TOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL  
ZONES**

**Proposal for the redistribution of primary school catchment areas in the town of Stonehaven.**

**SUMMARY PROPOSAL**

**It is proposed that:**

**The primary schools listed below from catchment areas within the Stonehaven network be amended with effect from August 2018;**

**New pupils joining schools within the Stonehaven network should be educated at their newly zoned school with effect from August 2018;**

**Existing primary pupils within the Stonehaven network should remain at their current primary school for the duration of their primary education and siblings of existing primary pupils in the Stonehaven Network could also attend the currently zoned primary school so that families are not split between different primary schools.**

This document has been issued by Aberdeenshire Council in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

The schools affected by this proposal are:

Arduthie School  
Dunnottar School  
Mill O'Forest School

**DISTRIBUTION**

A copy of this document is available on the Aberdeenshire Council web-site:  
<http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/education-consultations/>  
or by e-mailing [learningestates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:learningestates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

This document will be provided to:

- Parent Council(s) of the schools listed above
- Parents of the pupils at the schools listed above
- Pupils at the schools listed above
- Parents of pre-school age children living within the Stonehaven Network
- Staff at the schools listed above
- Trade union representatives of the above staff
- Stonehaven Community Council
- Relevant users of Stonehaven Network primary schools
- Education Scotland

A copy of this document is also available from:

- Council HQ, Woodhill House, Westburn Road, Aberdeen, AB16 5GB
- Stonehaven Library
- The schools affected by the proposal
- Mackie Academy
- Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Aberdeenshire Council strives to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all of its services. It attaches particular importance to providing the best possible educational experience for all of the pupils in its schools.
- 1.2 The Council's aims for Education and Children's Services are:
  - the building of capacity
  - the realisation of potential
  - the achievement of excellence
- 1.3 In order to fulfil the above vision it is necessary to adapt to changing circumstances. It is essential that the Council regularly reviews the pattern of educational provision across all establishments, with a particular focus on school rolls, accommodation and quality of education.
- 1.4 This proposal document is focused upon the three Stonehaven town primary schools. Located within the Kincardine & Mearns area of Aberdeenshire, the Stonehaven network comprises of ten primary schools, one secondary school and one special school.
- 1.5 This proposal is solely focused on Arduthie School, Dunnottar School and Mill O'Forest School. This proposal will not impact the rest of the primary schools in the network. These schools are Bervie School, Catterline School, Glenbervie School, Gourdon School, Johnshaven School, Kinneff School, Lairhillock School or Carronhill School.
- 1.6 This proposal does not impact upon secondary provision at Mackie Academy.

## **2. Reason for Proposal**

- 2.1 The Stonehaven Rezoning Consultation was prompted by an imbalance of rolls across the Stonehaven network and the impact of current housing developments in and around Stonehaven.
- 2.2 Housing developments within the Dunnottar catchment will continue to put pressure upon Dunnottar School roll for the coming years. Currently within the network there are sufficient pupil places across all schools for the next few years, as houses in the new developments are sold and families move into them.
- 2.3 Whilst there is currently capacity across the whole network, it is no longer in the right place. The purpose of the rezoning exercise is to change the catchment areas of the three primary schools in the town of Stonehaven so that current and future pupils can be educated in school buildings with sufficient space.
- 2.4 The vast majority of recent and planned housing in the North and West of Dunnottar School catchment area. However Dunnottar School has a capacity of 195. This housing was originally expected to put the roll at Dunnottar School up to around 217 pupils by 2020 or sooner.

- 2.5 In 2015, the Learning Estates Team undertook an online survey to assess the opinions of Stonehaven residents on the current school catchments. There were 223 respondents to the Survey Monkey questionnaire.
- 2.6 28% of the respondents send their children to a school that is not their zoned school. Of these respondents 46% cited the reason for this is because the school is 'closer/easier for transport'.
- 2.7 The Learning Estates Team hosted a series of informal stakeholder engagement meetings in Stonehaven as part of the rezoning exercise. The meetings took place in several venues during May and June of 2016. At each session maps were put on display showing new proposed catchment areas for Arduthie, Bervie, Catterline, Dunnottar, Glenbervie, Gourdon, Johnshaven, Kinneff, Lairhillock and Mill O'Forest Schools. Three further engagement sessions were held at Arduthie, Dunnottar and Mill O'Forest Schools.
- 2.8 These meetings proved very useful and a number of suggestions were made over the course of the sessions. The suggestions from the engagement events and those received from the online survey have been taken into consideration.
- 2.9 The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 requires that when a change is to be made to a school boundary or catchment area then a formal consultation must be undertaken with all relevant stakeholders.

### **3. Online Survey Responses**

- 3.1 Parents of pupils attending schools and of pre-school age children in the schools covered in this proposal were invited to take part in an online survey in 2015. Respondents were asked whether they attended their zoned school and which school they believed their postcode should be zoned to. 223 people responded to the survey. One question asked respondents to give their views about the zones changing. There were 128 responses to this question. Several respondents were supportive of the need to rezone provided the zones are appropriate. Several comments were made requesting that Dunnottar School retain the rural part of the zone. Many parents expressed concern about their children being moved away from the school they are currently attending or made to go to a different school from siblings. There were also comments pertaining to the rezoning exercise in which the Blairs area was removed by Aberdeen City Council from the Cults Academy catchment area and concern regarding which school the children would then attend.

### **4. Details of the proposal**

- 4.1 The council proposes that the existing primary school catchment areas within the Stonehaven town should be amended with effect from August 2018; and that from this date all new pupils attending primary schools within the town of Stonehaven should attend their newly zoned school. The council also proposes that all existing primary pupils should continue their education at their current school. If the proposals are implemented any siblings of current pupils would be able to join their brother/sister(s) at the same school.

- 4.2 It is important that these proposals do not have a negative impact upon any children currently attending schools within the Stonehaven network and that they have continuity in their education. There are no plans to move existing pupils to a different school if these proposals are adopted. They would only come into effect either for new children moving into the area, or for the new cohort of P1 pupils in August 2018.
- 4.3 Currently the school nurseries in Stonehaven (and across Aberdeenshire) do not have catchment areas and this is unlikely to change for the foreseeable future.
- 4.4 Officers have identified a preferred option based upon what they think would work best given the number of current pupils, children under 5 in Stonehaven and expected house building rates.
- 4.5 This proposal document contains a number of maps and there is a map showing the preferred change for each of the primary schools in the network. The council wants to know which of these changes would be preferred for that school.
- 4.6 Printed copies of the maps will be on display in each of the schools affected by the consultation and available on request at Gordon House in Inverurie. Pdf copies of the maps will be available on the Aberdeenshire Council website: <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/education-consultations/>
- 4.7 Pupils living 2 miles or more from their zoned primary school would have an entitlement to free school transport.

**Option 1 – Realign the catchment areas of Dunnottar, Arduthie and Mill O'Forest Schools in Stonehaven and re-distribute the rural elements of Dunnottar School to Arduthie and Mill O'Forest Schools**

The maps for Option 1 show changes to the three town primary schools in Stonehaven. This option removes the rural element of Dunnottar School and redistributes pupils to Arduthie School and Mill O'Forest School. This proposal would mean that the pupils who are eligible for transportation would now be schooled at Arduthie or Mill O'Forest and not Dunnottar School.

**Option 2 – Retain the rural element of Dunnottar School and realign the catchment areas of Dunnottar, Arduthie and Mill O'Forest Schools in Stonehaven**

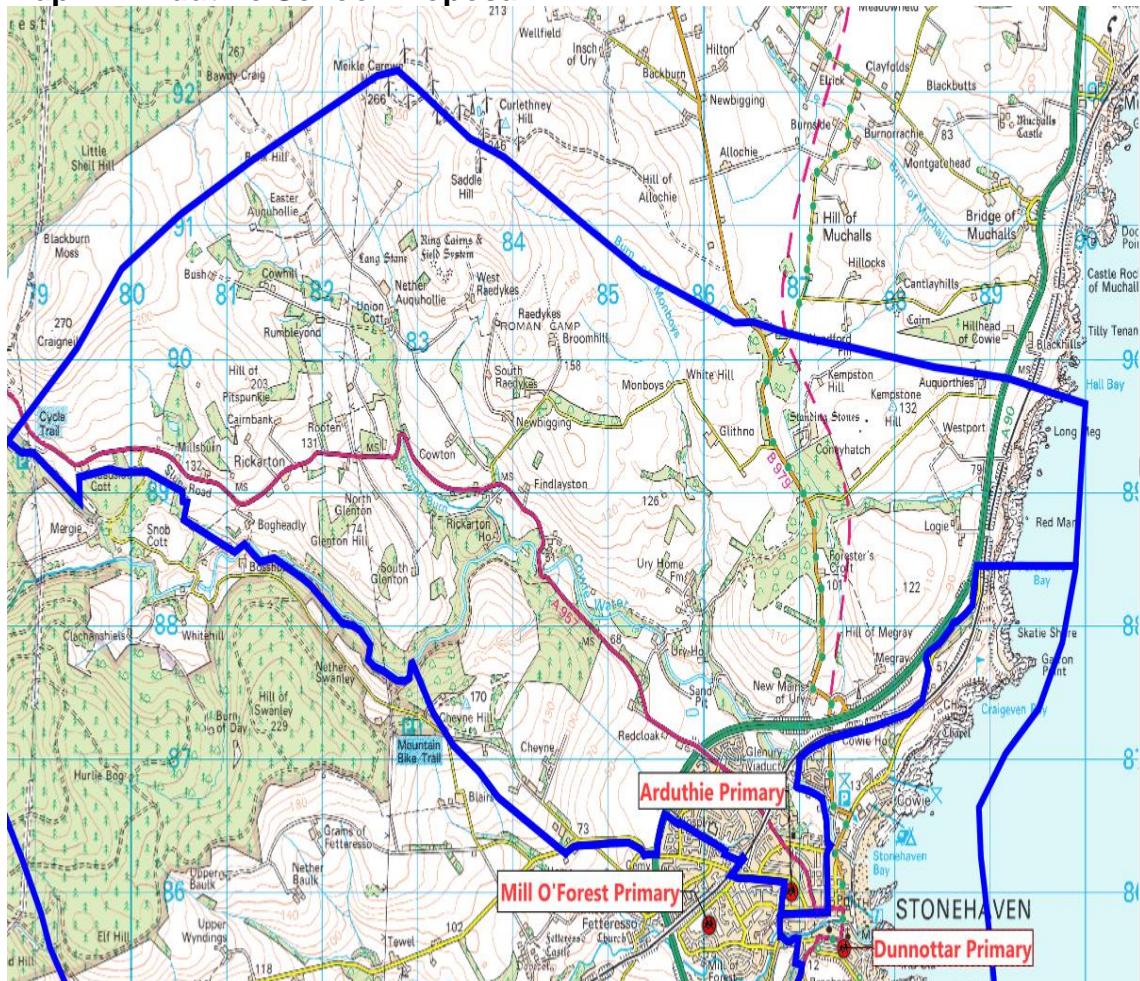
The Maps for Option 2 show changes to the three town primary schools in Stonehaven. This option rezones the rural part of the Arduthie catchment to Dunnottar and rezones the North West part of the Mill O'Forest catchment area to Arduthie. This proposal would rezone the housing developments of Ury House East Lodge and Ury House to Arduthie School. It would also rezone the housing developments of Kirkton of Fetteresso and Carron Den to Mill O'Forest School.

**Option 3 – Retain the Status Quo**

Keep the current zoning arrangements for the Stonehaven network with no changes made to catchment areas.

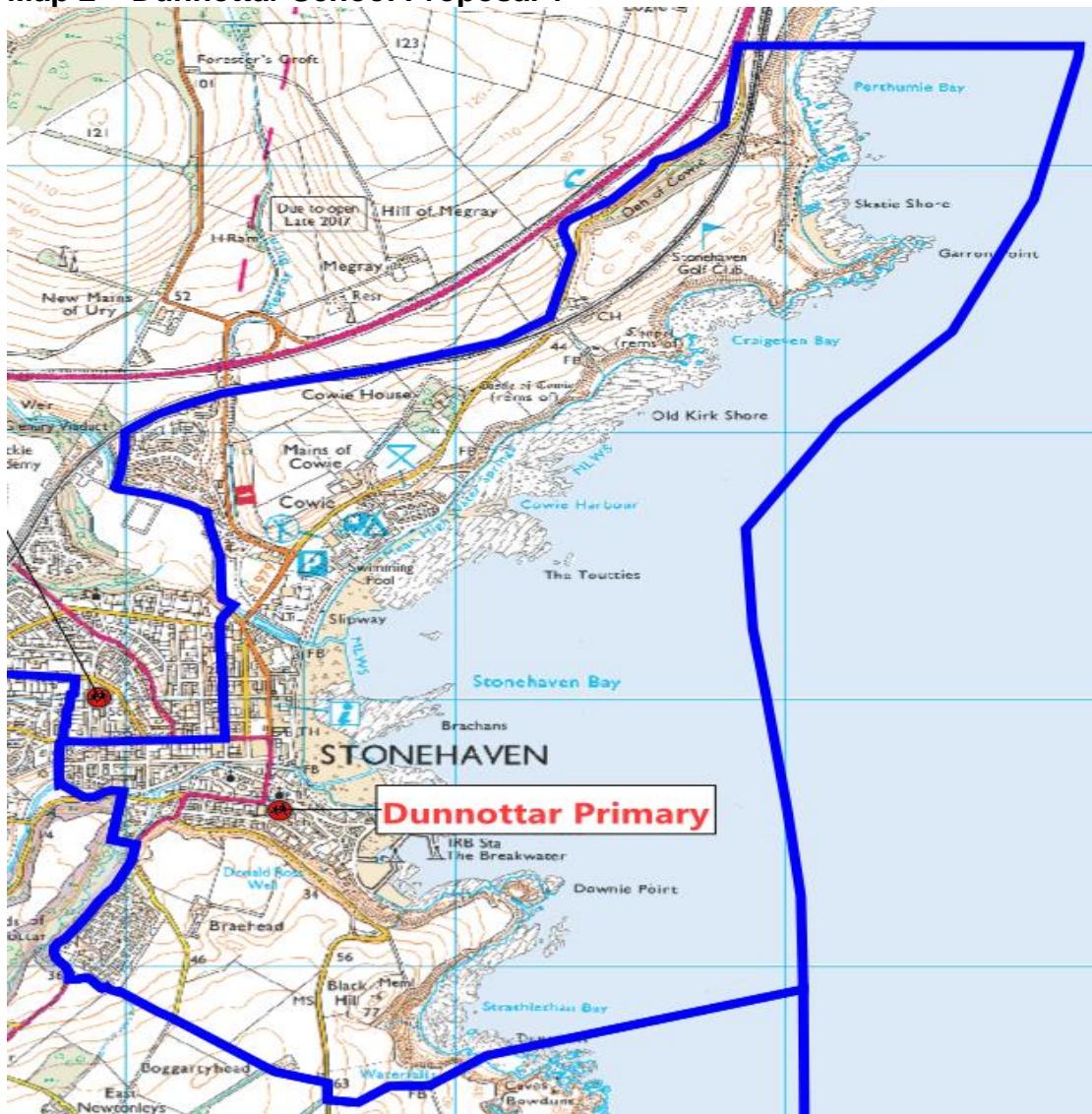
**Option 1 - Realign the catchment areas of Dunnottar, Arduthie and Mill O'Forest Schools in Stonehaven and re-distribute the rural elements of Dunnottar School to Arduthie and Mill O'Forest Schools**

**Map 1 – Arduthie School Proposal 1**



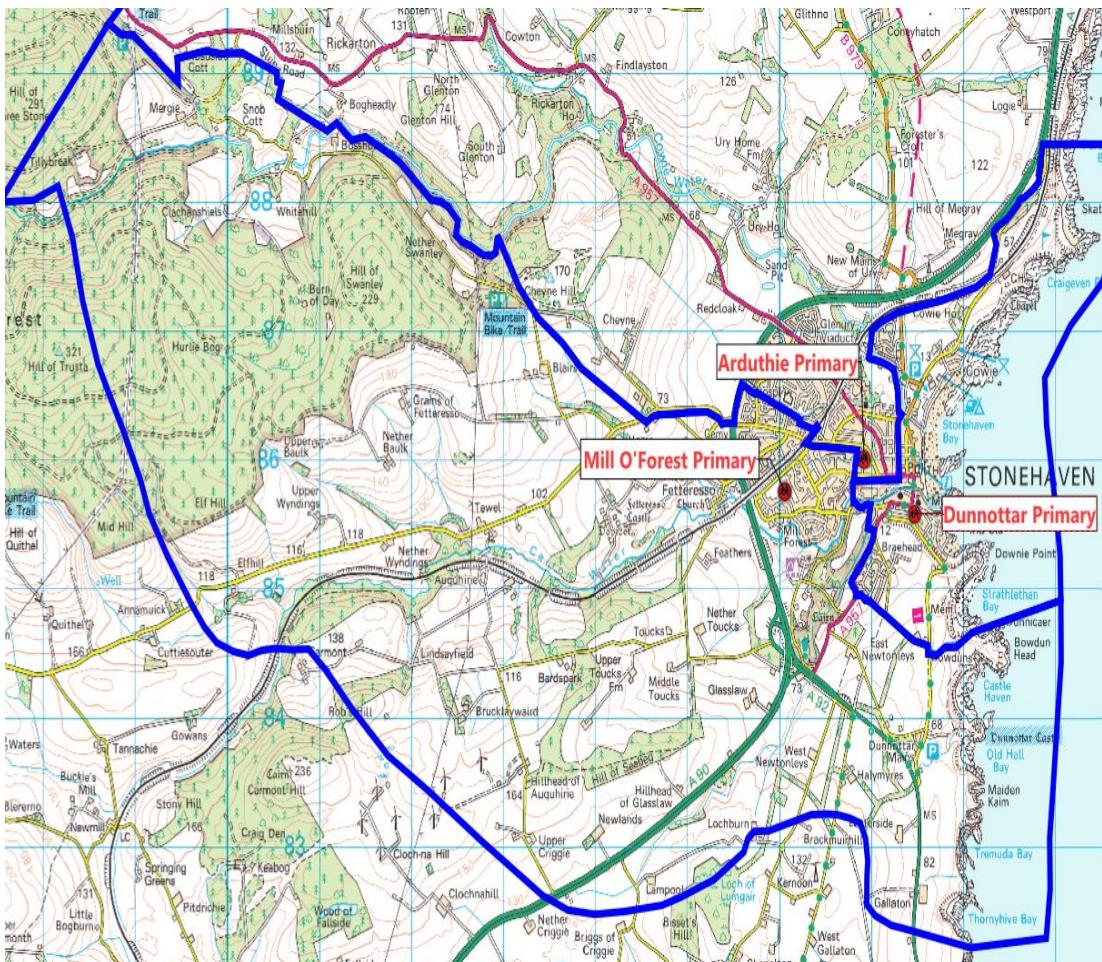
Summary of changes - Inclusion of the north and west rural area currently zoned to Dunnottar School. Currently, part of the Ury House East Lodge allocation is contained within the Arduthie School catchment and the other part of the allocation is in the Dunnottar catchment. This proposal seeks to include all of the Ury House East Lodge housing allocation within the Arduthie catchment area.

**Map 2 – Dunnottar School Proposal 1**



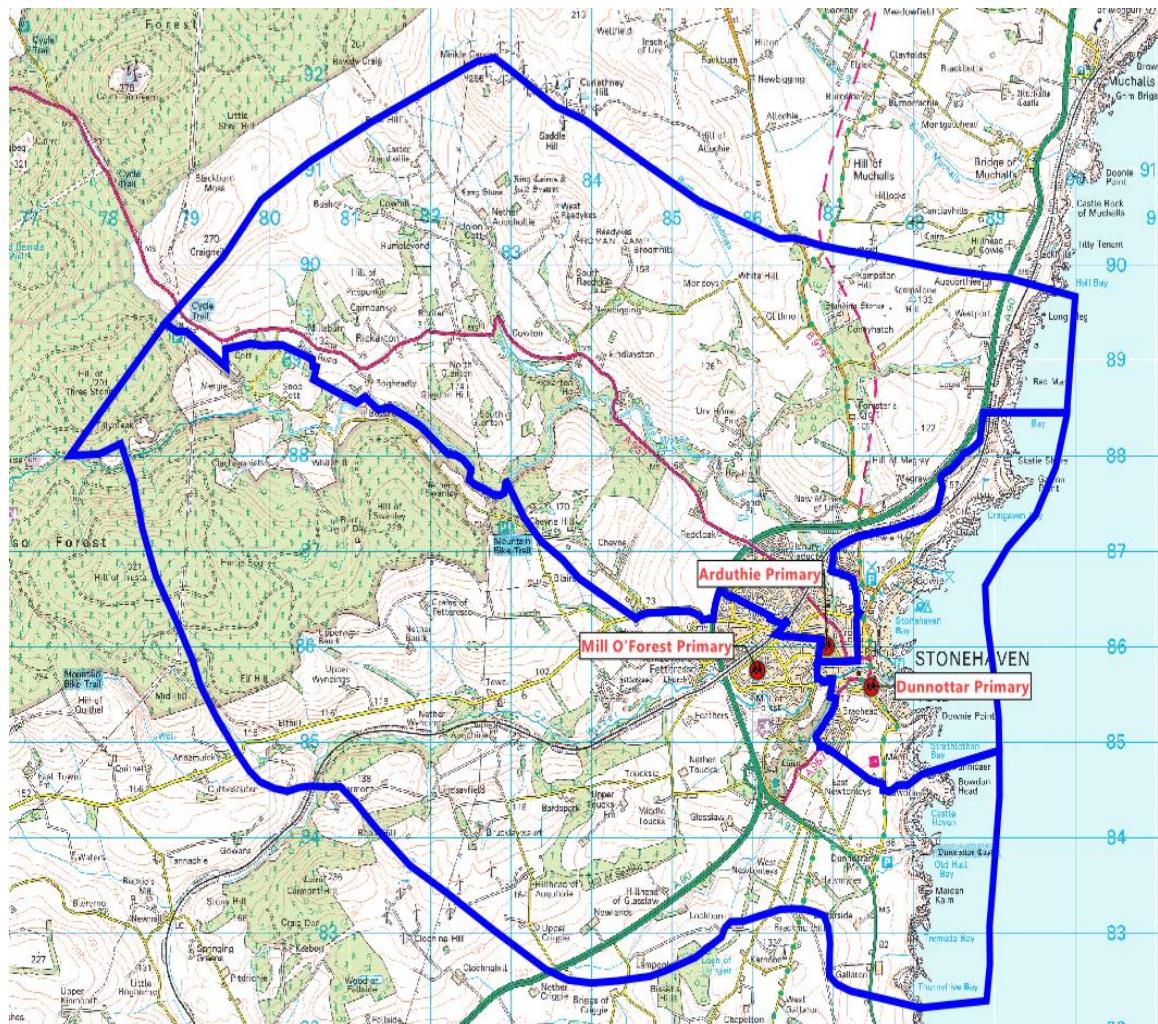
Summary of changes – Rezoning of the extensive rural areas currently in the Dunnottar catchment and redistributing them to Arduthie School and Mill O'Forest School. This options proposes to rezone all the current large housing developments away from the Dunnottar School catchment area.

### Map 3 – Mill O'Forest School Proposal 1



**Summary of changes – Inclusion of the South and West rural area currently zoned to Dunnottar School. This proposal rezones the current North West area of Mill O'Forest to Arduthie and rezones some of the streets south of the hospital from Arduthie to Mill O'Forest. This proposal will include the housing developments of Caron Den and Kirkton of Fetteresso.**

## Map – 4 Option 1 Overview

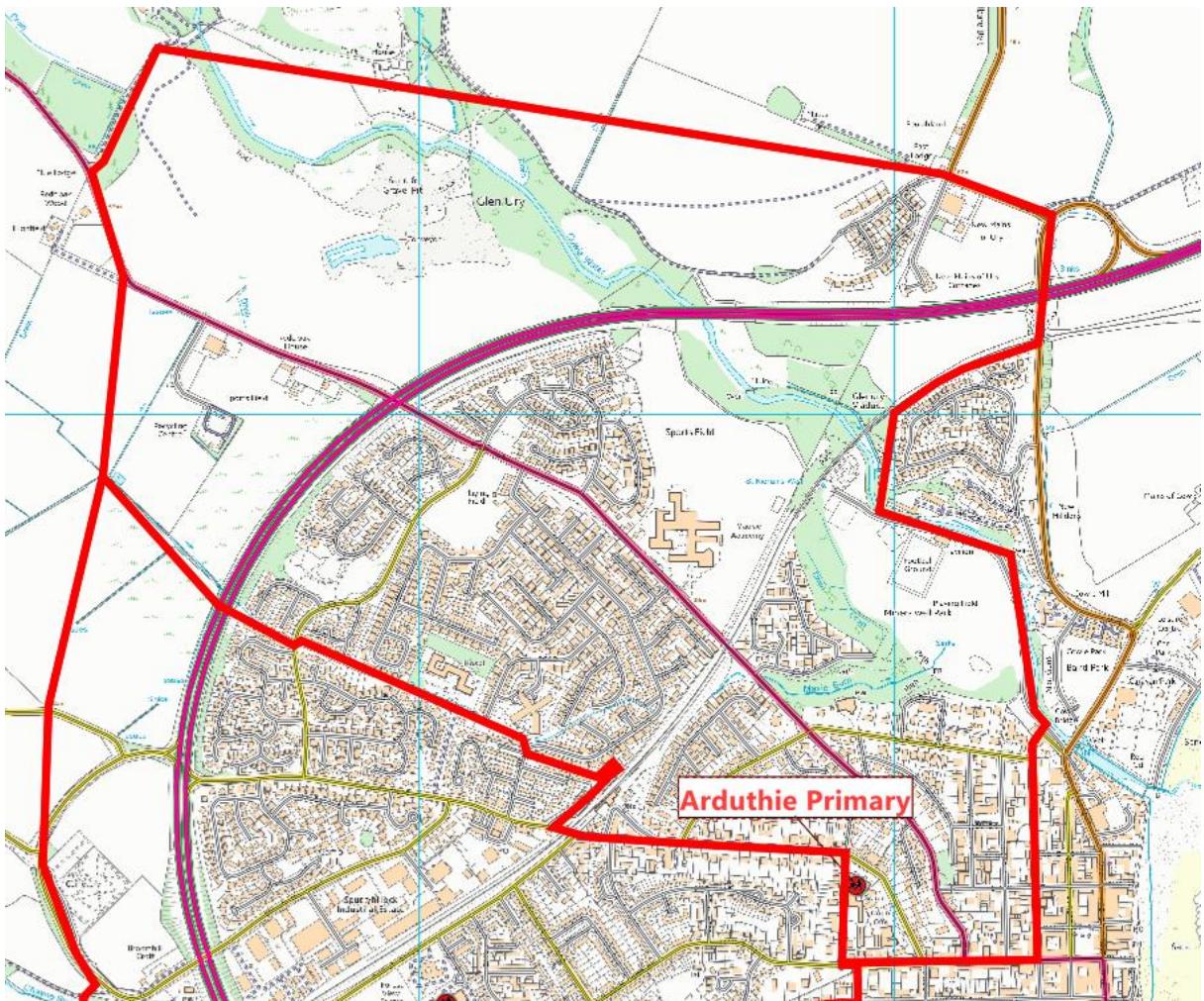


**Table 1**

Proposal 1		Live Forecast Projected Rolls (Updated May 2017)					
Schools	Capacity	Current Roll	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Arduthie	415	349	348	379	369	370	385
Dunnottar	195	209	210	202	180	196	198
Mill O'Forest	442	330	330	338	352	361	369

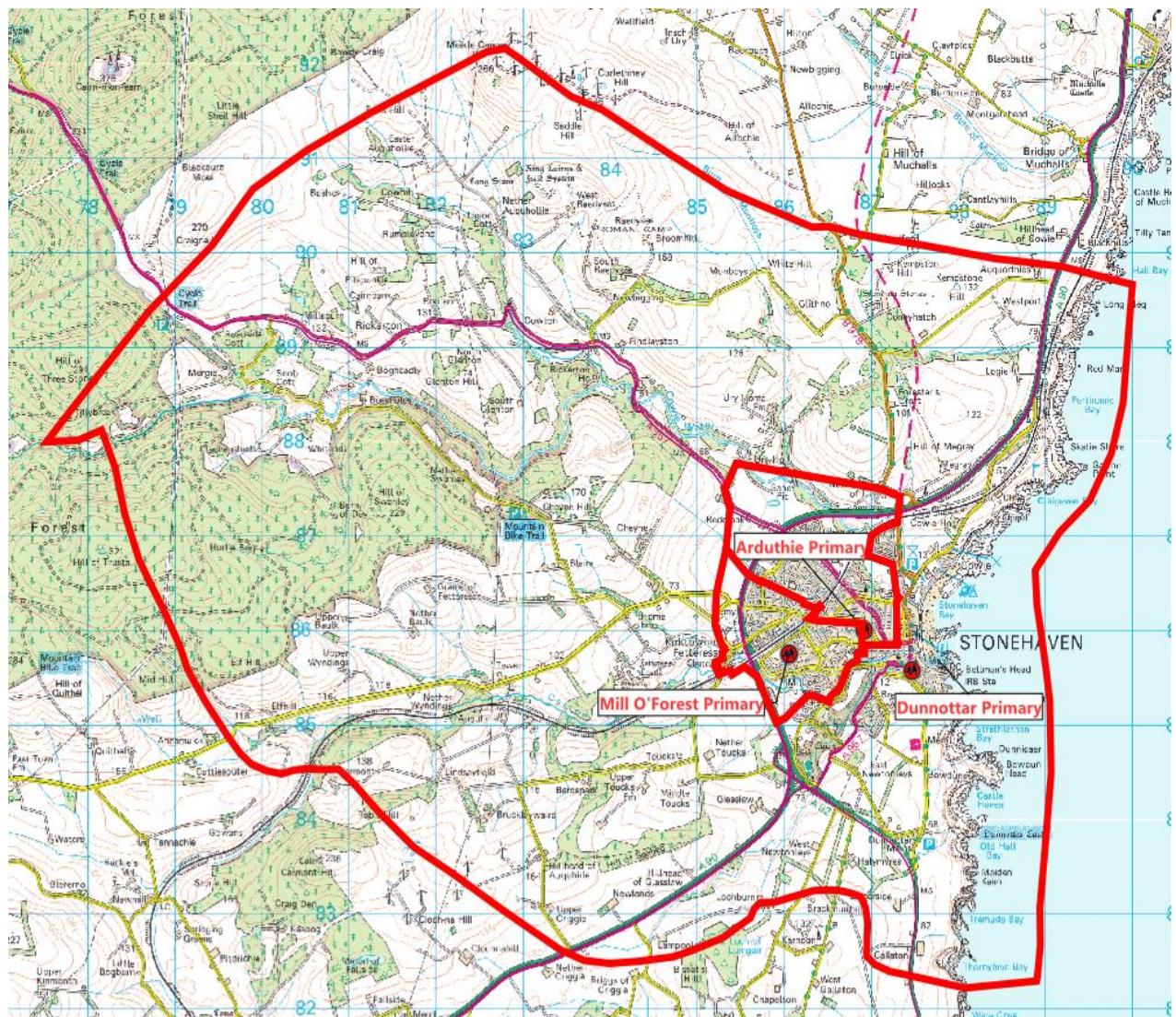
**Option 2 - Retain the rural element of Dunnottar School and realign the catchment areas of Dunnottar, Arduthie and Mill O'Forest Schools in Stonehaven**

**Map 5 – Arduthie School Proposal 2**



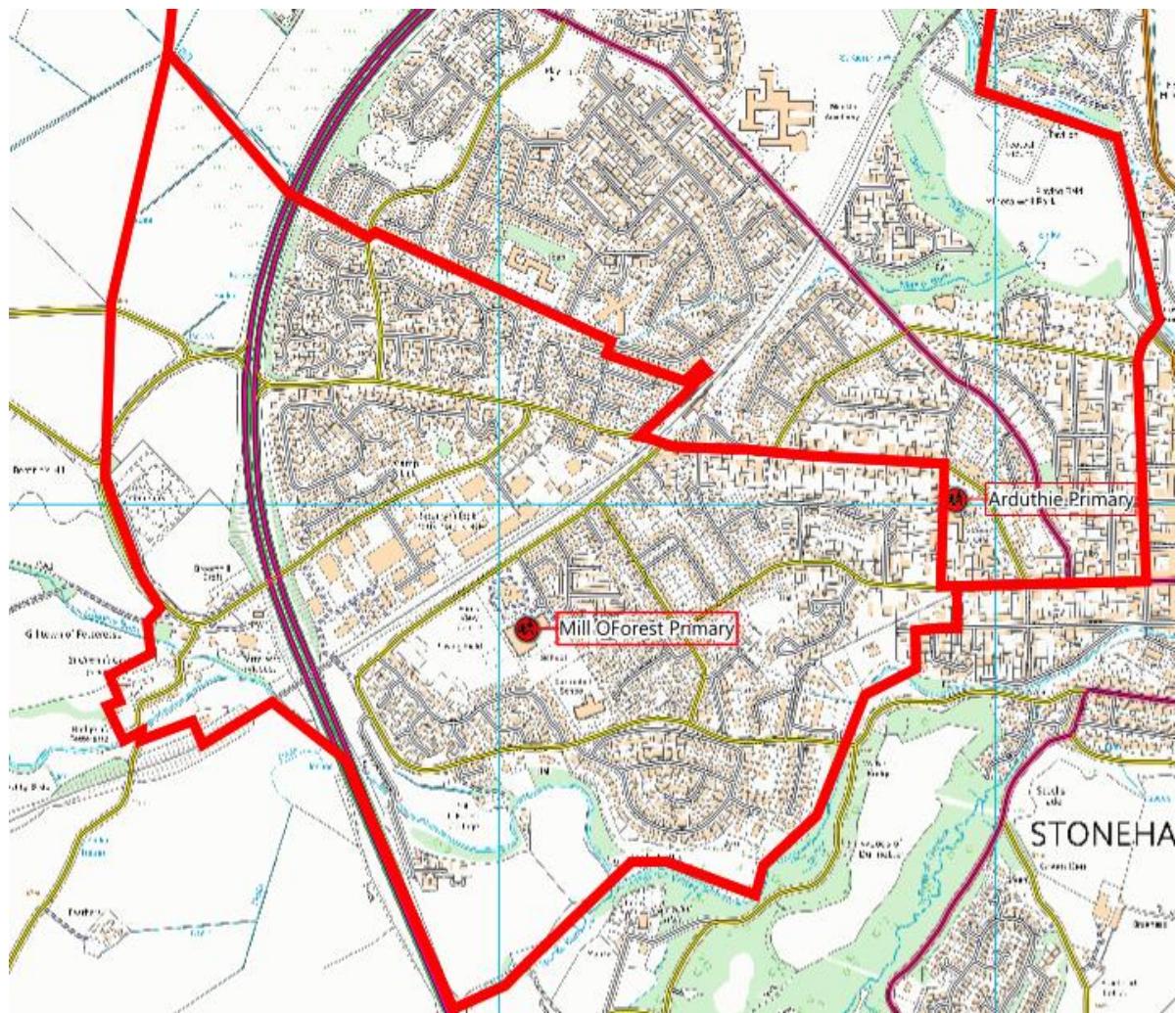
**Summary of changes – This option includes the housing allocations for the north of the town of Stonehaven and retains the rural areas in the Dunnottar catchment.**

## Map 6 – Dunnottar School Proposal 2



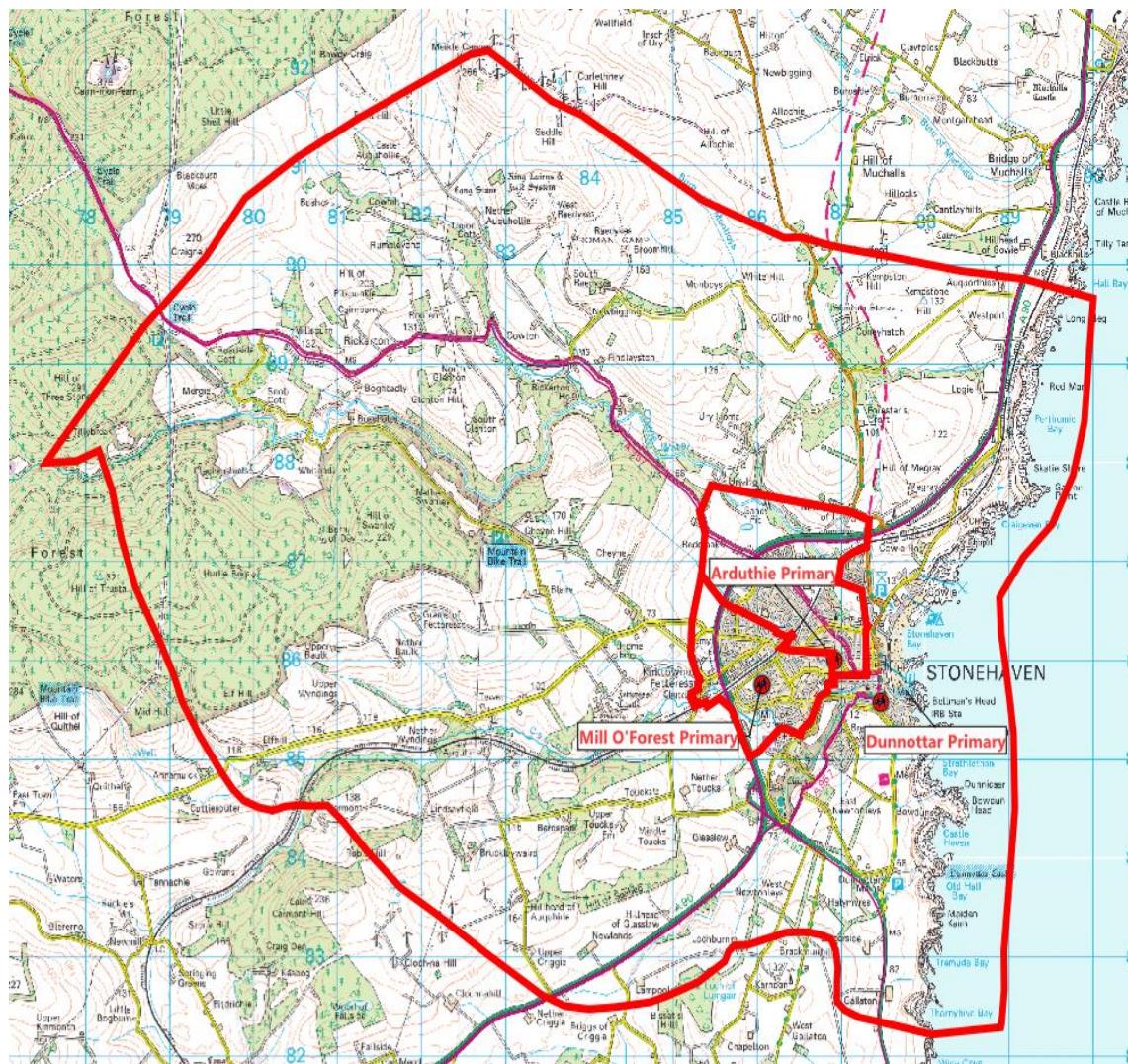
**Summary of changes –** This option retains the rural areas at Dunnottar School and includes land currently in the north west of the Arduthie catchment area. This option rezones the land at Carron Den and Kirkton of Fetteresso to Mill O'Forest School.

## Map 7 – Mill O'Forest School Proposal 2



Summary of changes – This option rezones the northern part of the current Mill O'Forest catchment to Arduthie School and includes part of the current Dunnottar catchment to the south.

## Map 8 – Option 2 Overview

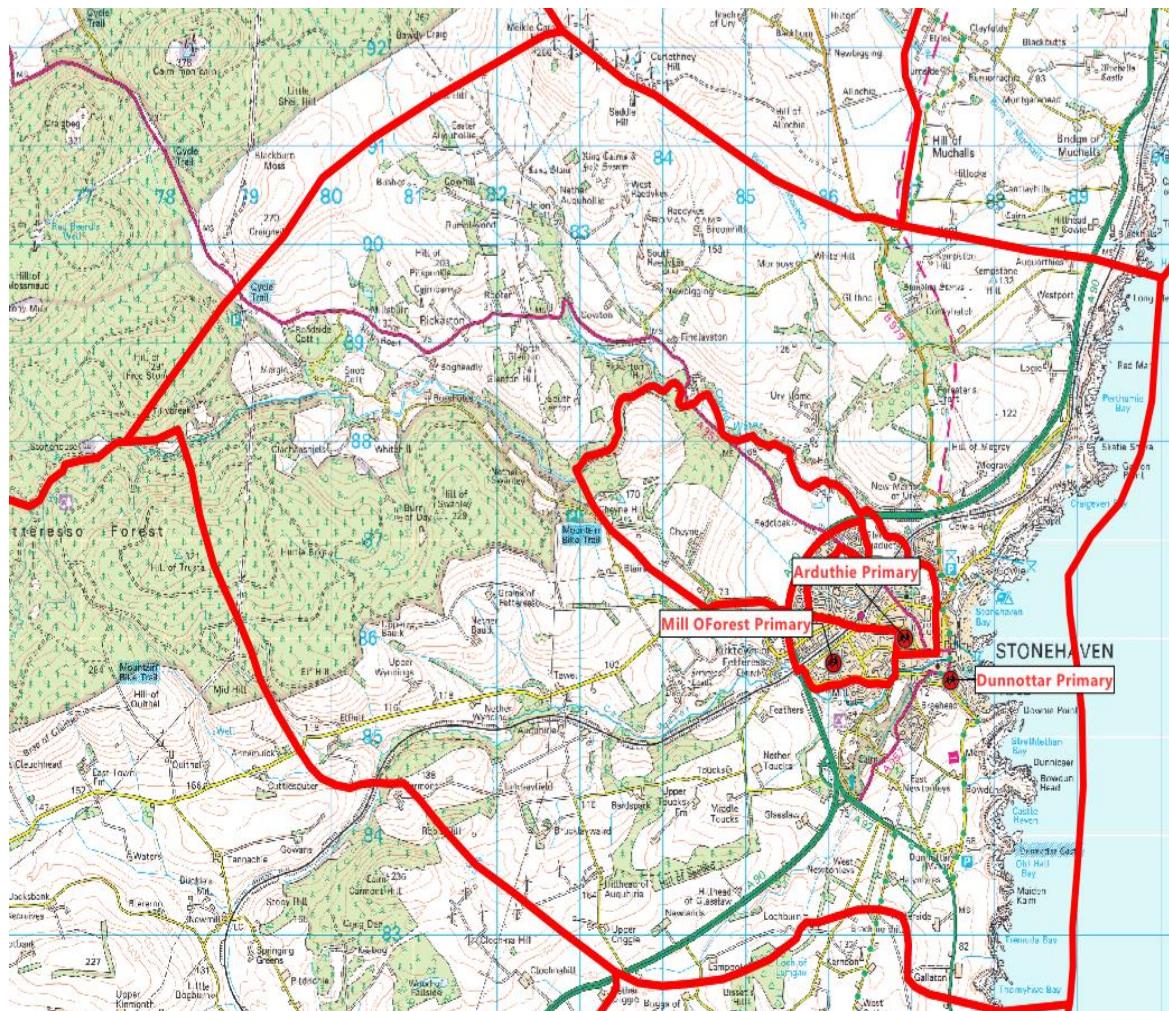


**Table 2**

Proposal 2 (Preferred Option)			Live Forecast Projected Rolls (Updated May 2017)				
Schools	Capacity	Current Roll	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Arduthie	415	349	348	377	363	358	368
Dunnottar	195	209	210	212	198	204	195
Mill O'Forest	442	330	330	325	331	339	346

## Option 3 – Retain the Status Quo

### Map 9 – Current Catchment Areas



**Table 3**

Current School Roll Forecast			Live Forecast Projected Rolls (Updated May 2017)				
Schools	Capacity	Current Roll	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Arduthie	415	349	348	342	341	339	349
Dunnottar	195	209	210	222	210	219	217
Mill O'Forest	442	330	330	308	302	297	290

There are also a number of housing sites allocated in the local development plan over the next few years. These are detailed in table 4 below.

**Table 4 – Housing Forecast**

Location	Total Units	Status	Zoned School	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Ury House, (Blue Lodge)	51	Full Planning	Arduthie	0	0	5	5	10	10	10
Caron Den	110	Under Construction	Dunnottar	9	8	10	20	24	24	15
Ury House East Lodge,	179	Under Construction	Dunnottar	15	18	14	14	25	25	22
Kirkton of Fetteresso	49	Full Planning	Dunnottar	0	12	9	9	9	10	0
Ury Home Farm	5	Under Construction	Dunnottar	1	2	2	0	0	0	0
Glithno Farm, Ury Estate	17	Under Construction	Dunnottar	4	5	4	4	0	0	0

## 5. Educational Benefit Statement

- 5.1 Some of the schools within the network are operating close to or above maximum capacity. This results in less space being available for pupils, and imposes restrictions in delivering the curriculum.
- 5.2 Conversely some of the schools in the network are operating well below capacity, whilst pupils have ample space for learning, this does not afford all pupils in the network the same opportunities and access to resources.
- 5.3 The proposed changes address the capacity issues to a large extent and over time will provide the additional learning space for pupils in schools that are currently full.
- 5.4 Aberdeenshire Council is committed to delivering entitlements to learners in the 21st century according to a Curriculum for Excellence.
- 5.5 The zoning options should help to consolidate what is happening in practice at a number of schools through out of zone placing requests. Currently a large number of families are submitting placing requests to Arduthie School from Mill O'Forest School and Dunnottar School.
- 5.6 Some of the feedback received from the informal sessions, head teacher meetings and the parental survey has confirmed that parents would prefer that children in the rural areas who require transportation to school, should attend the same school for continuity.

## 6. Alternatives to the proposal

- 6.1 A range of alternative possibilities have been considered as noted below.
  - Continuing the status quo – this does not address the concerns regarding the

capacity of some schools as new housing developments are built. This is however being consulted on as an option to make no changes.

- The following zoning options have been discounted by Aberdeenshire Council Officers:
  - An option to zone the postcodes north of Mineralwell Park to Arduthie School. This option was discounted by officers after comments on the online survey requested for these postcodes to continue to attend Dunnottar School as it is deemed the better walking route.

## **7. Effect on the local community**

- 7.1 There are significant developments planned, and underway across the Stonehaven network. These will generate new communities and extend existing ones. These proposals will help ensure that adequate educational facilities are available to the communities as the developments progress.
- 7.2 These proposals will help reduce the amount of placing requests by aligning the catchment areas with the current trends of parental choice.

## **8. School Transport**

- 8.1 As the change in school zones would only apply to new children entering education in the Stonehaven network, there will not be any change to transport provision for current pupils.
- 8.2 There are currently 27 primary pupils within the Stonehaven town and 176 primary pupils within the Stonehaven network who are transported to school by Aberdeenshire Council.
- 8.3 There could be a change in school transport provision for some families with children starting school in the more rural parts of the Stonehaven network if proposal one is the preferred option, although this would be that their children would simply be transported to a different school, rather than a change to entitlement.
- 8.4 There may be a slight increase in the overall transport requirements, the vast majority of children within the proposed rezones not requiring transport the increase will be minimal. There may also be new catchment areas where there is no transport entitlement.

## **9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 Some of the zoning options could result in a need for additional teaching staff at the receiving schools. Any changes would be gradual and would be managed through existing HR recruitment policies.

## **10. Sustainability**

- 10.1 The proposed changes should ensure that pupils in the town will be able to walk or cycle to school safely, and there would be no requirement for school transport. The majority of households in rural areas would have had an entitlement to school transport for future pupils, so the difference would be in the school they would be taken to.

## **11. Equal Opportunities**

- 11.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a statutory requirement on the Council to assess the policies and practices necessary to meet the requirements of anti-discrimination and equalities legislation. It also affords an opportunity for the Council to consider the impact on the education service. In addition an EIA can provide more information to develop and deliver services that meet the needs, in this case, of children and parents.
- 11.2 The aim of an EIA is to examine policies and practice in a structured way to make sure that adverse effects on groups with protected characteristics are avoided. It is also a tool to enable the Council to assess what positive steps it can take to promote equality of opportunity and measure the results of the actions that have been taken.
- 11.3 With regards to the rezoning of the Stonehaven town schools, it is not believed that this will have a negative impact on any of the groups with protected characteristics.
- 11.4 As part of the consultation process the Council will consult with a wide range of stakeholders, including staff, parents/carers and young people, and will address comments about equality during this consultation.
- 11.5 Under The Equality Act 2010 education providers must not treat disabled pupils less favourably and should take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage. Existing arrangements in place for pupils within the Stonehaven network with additional support needs will continue.

## **12. Implications for staff**

- 12.1 Initially there should be minimal implications for staff. As the overall roll of the Stonehaven network continues to rise there will be a requirement for additional teaching staff.

## **13. Consultation Arrangements**

- 13.1 At its meeting on 14 June 2017, Aberdeenshire Council's Education & Children's Services Committee were asked to agree that a proposal document should be issued as a basis for consultation. No decision will be taken by the Council on the proposal contained in the paper until after the end of the consultation period. The Council will then receive a report on the consultation and will reach a view on the proposal
- 13.2 A copy of this document will be issued free of charge to all of the consultees listed on the first page of this document and it will also be published on the Council's website at: <http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/schools/education-consultations/>
- 13.3 The period for consultation will extend from Wednesday 28 June 2017 until Friday 29 September 2017 which covers a minimum period of 30 school days.
- 13.4 A public meeting will be held at Arduthie School, Stonehaven on Wednesday

6 September 2017 at 7pm. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting is free to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Council and the Council will present the reasons for bringing forward the proposal. There will be an opportunity for questions and comment. A note will be taken so that comments can later be summarised and considered.

- 13.5 Meetings will be organised for the staff working in the affected schools during the consultation period to discuss the proposals, and a number of opportunities will be arranged for all primary pupils at the affected schools to engage in the consultation during the next school session.
- 13.6 An online survey will be available as part of the consultation. This can be completed at the following address:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/StonehavenRezoning>
- 13.7 The Council will also take into account written comments which should be sent to Mrs Maxine Booth, Quality Improvement Manager, to be received no later than 5pm on Friday 29 September 2017. They should be posted to Aberdeenshire Council, Education & Children's Services, Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie, AB51 3WA or emailed to [learningestates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:learningestates@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)
- 13.8 A copy of this document will also be sent to Education Scotland (ES). ES will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Council during the consultation period or, if ES agree, a summary of them. ES will further receive a copy of any oral representations made at the public meeting and a copy of any other relevant documentation. ES will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal. In preparing their report, ES may visit the school and make such reasonable enquiries as they consider appropriate.

### **Consideration of Consultation Responses**

- 13.9 The Council will review the proposals having regard to the ES Report, survey results, written representations that it has received and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting. It will then prepare a report on the consultation. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats. It will be available on the Council web-site and from Council Headquarters, as well as at the schools, libraries and offices listed on pages 2 of this document, free of charge. Anyone who has made written representations during the consultation period will also be informed about the report.
- 13.10 The report will include a record of the total number of written representations made during the consultation period, a summary of the written representations and a summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting. The report will also include the Authority's response to the ES Report, a response to issues raised through any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the ES Report and any other relevant information, including details of any alleged inaccuracies and how these have been handled. The report will also contain a statement explaining how the Council has complied with the requirement to review the

proposal in light of the ES Report and representations (both written and oral) that it received.

- 13.11 The last section of the report will include an officer recommendation as to whether the proposals should be adopted and implemented. The Consultation Report will be published at least 3 weeks prior to the Council making a decision.
- 13.12 As the proposal is to implement the changes from August 2018, a copy of the Consultation Report will be in the public domain from January 2018 to support parents making Primary 1 applications for their children at that time.

#### **14. Decision Making**

- 14.1 The consultation report will be considered firstly by the Kincardine & Mearns Area Committee who will be asked to make a recommendation as to whether the proposed changes are implemented. This is expected to be in November 2017.
- 14.2 Following discussion and recommendation at the Kincardine & Mearns Area Committee, the Education & Children's Services Committee will consider the report and be asked to approve the officer recommendation in the report. This is expected to be in December 2017.

#### **15 Conclusion**

- 15.1 There are strong educational and financial arguments in favour of this proposal.
- 15.2 The Council believes that the measures proposed in this document will enhance the provision of primary education in this area.
- 15.3 The proposed changes to the catchment areas will help to alleviate the pressures on capacity at Dunnottar School and will realign the pupil numbers along with the placing requests submitted to the Council each year.