

Council's Chief Executive says the Schools Report 'pulls no punches'



17 of the city's schools were closed last year following storm damage to Oxbgangs Primary School which uncovered building defects in schools built under the PPP1 financing system.

After all pupils went back to their own schools the Chief Executive Andrew Kerr instructed an independent inquiry. He appointed Professor John Cole CBE in August of last year and today he published his 270 page report which contains 30 recommendations for the council. Professor Cole is an industry expert on construction and procurement.

Andrew Kerr said: "Professor Cole commands respect in both construction and procurement fields which has been borne out in the thoroughness and quality of his independent investigation and the report before Council today.

"We set out clear and thorough terms of reference so he could identify the reasons for the wall collapse at Oxbgangs and the subsequent building faults that forced us to close the 17 schools.

"The report pulls no punches and makes clear what went wrong, the reasons for it and where responsibility lay. Clearly there are lessons for the Council and I will now be drawing up an action plan to take our recommendations forward to ensure everyone can have confidence in the safety of all of our buildings.

"The Council, our public and private sector partners both in Scotland and across the United Kingdom, need to take on board

the issues raised and address the concerns highlighted in the report as they have far-reaching implications for the construction industry.”

He added: “As always, our overriding priority was the safety of the pupils and staff and I am pleased that Professor Cole recognises that our decision to close the schools was well founded and that he acknowledged the scale of the alternative educational arrangements required – and ultimately delivered.

“I want to thank parents once again for their patience last year and the outstanding efforts of teachers and other Council staff who pulled out all the stops to ensure our children’s education could continue.

“I would also like to thank Professor Cole and his team for their hard work on this important inquiry. We must ensure that the highest possible standards are adhered to when it comes to future construction projects and ensure that nothing like this can happen again.”