

The Highland Council
Education, Children and Adult Services Committee
17 March 2016

Agenda Item	11.
Report No	ECAS 24/16

Achfary Primary School - Proposal to Proceed to Statutory Consultation for Formal Closure

Report by Director of Care and Learning

Summary

Achfary Primary School is currently mothballed, and has been since the end of session 2011/12. This report seeks Members' agreement to proceed to a statutory consultation, under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, for formal closure of the school.

1. Background

- 1.1 Achfary Primary School has been mothballed since the end of session 2011/12. There is currently one pupil of P1-7 age living within the catchment area of the school, with one further pupil who qualifies for nursery in August 2016.
- 1.2 Current projections indicate the maximum roll for Achfary Primary would be 2 pupils by 2019/20.
- 1.3 The Council proposes to proceed to statutory consultation for formal closure of Achfary Primary School. If approved, the Achfary catchment area would be re-assigned to that of Kinlochbervie Primary School.
- 1.4 This proposal is being brought forward, following informal consultation with local stakeholders and elected Members, and having examined viable alternatives that could be considered.
- 1.5 The consultation report and appendices, circulated as **Booklet A**, sets out the basis of the proposal, and related information, including the educational, community and transport implications associated with the proposal.
- 1.6 Subject to a Committee decision to proceed to statutory consultation, a public meeting will be held in Achfary to discuss the Council's proposal and in line with the legislation, there will be considerable opportunity for stakeholders to submit views to the Council in advance of any final decision being made. At this stage, it is expected the statutory consultation timeline would see a final recommendation being considered by this Committee in November 2016, though this may be subject to change to ensure the Council has sufficient time to consider and respond to matters arising from the consultation.
- 1.7 The Achfary Primary School building is leased from the local estate and would

revert to the estate should a closure decision be implemented.

2. Implications

2.1 **Resources** - These are detailed in the report in **Booklet A (Appendix I)**.

2.2 **Legal** - the statutory consultation will be taken forward per the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

2.3 **Equalities** - an equality impact assessment is included with the report in **Booklet A as Appendix J**.

2.4 **Climate Change/Carbon Clever** - The report circulated in **Booklet A** details the implications in relation to school buildings and school transport. It is estimated that in terms of the Council's carbon emissions, the proposal will see a net reduction.

2.5 **Risk** - These will be assessed as part of the statutory consultation process.

2.6 **Gaelic** – There are no implications for Gaelic.

2.7 **Rural** - The proposal does impact on a rural school. The attached report sets out in some detail the rural/community implications, as required by the legislation. A rural impact assessment is included as **Appendix K** to the report in **Booklet A**.

3. Recommendation

3.1 Members are asked to consider this report and the proposal contained in Booklet A and agree to proceed to statutory consultation, per the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, regarding the proposal for formal closure of Achfary Primary School and the re-assignment of its catchment area to that of Kinlochbervie Primary.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 3 March 2016

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