

Agenda Item	11i.
Report No	PEO 32/17

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: People

Date: 19 October 2017

Report Title: Management of Schools – Mallaig Associated School Group

Report By: Director of Care and Learning

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report includes the revised plan for Mallaig High Associated School Group (ASG), which has been subject to wider consultation in order to address the more complex rural and island issues of this particular ASG.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Following further consultation with parents, Members are asked to:
- i. Approve the revised plan for Mallaig High Associated School Group, as set out in Section 6.

3. Background

- 3.1 Over the past few years, the Council has recognised the increasing workload on Schools and Headteachers, and the particular challenges facing small and rural schools.
- 3.2 The Council has embarked on its Management of Schools programme to ensure the sustainability of its schools and maintain and improve the quality of its educational provision because of the:
- Requirement for Head Teachers to maintain and sustain quality provision and lead school improvement.
 - New corporate management systems that place new demands on school management.
 - Pressures on time to manage, especially for Primary Head Teachers who are also class committed
 - Challenges filling Head Teacher and other management posts.
 - Continued challenges presented by the geography of the Highland Council.
- 3.3 One critical aspect of the management of schools programme has been to reinforce the sustainability of provision by creating resilience across the Associated School Group, and through a collaborative approach to managing the learning journeys of children in our communities, from age 3 to 18.

4. Educational Benefits

- 4.1 Collaborative 3-18 and Associated School Group (ASG) working promotes benefits across the whole school estate. These benefits are listed below, with reference specifically to the Mallaig ASG:

4.1.1 Leadership and management, including staffing recruitment and retention

With a fluctuating secondary school roll, it is becoming increasingly challenging to recruit staff for Mallaig High School, as often posts will not be on a full-time basis. Joint leadership and management across the 3-18/ASG will help to maximise recruitment and retention by:

- Creating a strong management and leadership team across nursery, primary and secondary. The new team will include a Head Teacher 3-18, two Deputy Head Teachers 3-18, new Principal Teachers in primary schools, secondary Principal Teachers and class teachers. This promotes sharing of experience, best practice and resources to avoid the situation of staff working in isolation. It also assists with forming a strong collaborative vision for education which is matched to the local area while taking account of local authority and national priorities.
- An overall combined 3-18 staffing approach will help to maximise recruitment across the ASG by supporting and increasing full-time appointments which may be deployed flexibly while retaining regularity for children and young people. For example, joint and shared primary/secondary broad general education appointments across curricular areas e.g. literacy and numeracy. In other curricular areas, e.g. art, this could increase specialist teaching input into the primary curriculum. A joint staffing approach will assist in reducing interruptions to children and young people's learning through staffing absences, while promoting continuity in their 3-15 learning.

4.1.2 **3-18 Curriculum and Transitions**

- The 3-18 approach strongly endorses continuity and coherence in curricular pathways across nursery, primary and secondary. It encourages joint planning and evaluation of the curriculum and assists in putting improvements in place across the curriculum to raise attainment and reduce the poverty-related gap. This outcome will be underpinned by the new 3-18 management model and supported by having new Principal Teachers in Primary Schools. It is worth noting that there are currently no Primary Principal Teachers in the Mallaig ASG. Principal Teachers are practising teachers and, with, their non-contact management time, will be in a stronger position to evaluate and suggest improvements for children and young people's learning, progress and attainment.
- The 3-18 approach will also enable Mallaig ASG to progress and enhance objectives for Gaelic Medium Education.
- The 3-18 approach will promote strong pastoral and curricular transitions from nursery to primary and from primary to secondary in the Mallaig ASG. Children and young people will be familiarising themselves with a wider range of specialists and avoiding the big change that is associated with moving from small provisions.
- The sharing and standardising of curricular planning and resources will reduce teacher workload and bureaucracy, and improve and enhance consistency in curricular delivery.

4.1.3 **Additional Support Needs (ASN)**

- A collaborative approach to supporting children and young people with additional support needs across the 3-18 will help to maximise supporting the needs of all learners. This increases the team around the child to support them in their learning and development.

4.1.4 **Business Support, Resources and ICT**

- The review of current clerical and administrative approaches to develop a more collaborative framework of support across 3-18/ASG will promote new career pathways whilst also maximising expertise and resources.
- These benefits will include making best use of revised administrative support, and a revised janitorial services model to support Head Teachers in leading their schools. Currently small schools only have in some cases once-weekly access or less to janitorial services.
- Ongoing piloting of new ICT platforms, such as Chromebooks, locally and across The Highland Council will support developing effective ICT models across the Mallaig ASG. This will take account of the unique geographical challenges of both rural and island communities. This will also assist in maximising the role of technology in teaching, learning and time for teacher preparation.

4.2 **Educational Benefits for Mallaig ASG**

4.2.1 The Mallaig ASG recommendations outlined below strongly endorse and promote collaborative 3-18 and ASG working to help these schools to:

- reduce bureaucracy and workload;
- increase the capacity of school leadership;
- improve and sustain staff recruitment and retention, including planning for succession;
- improve teaching and learning;
- improve transitions, and
- maximise business support.

4.2.2 The recommendations promote strong local partnership working to support all the Mallaig ASG schools and the overall sustainability of the Mallaig area, the Knoydart peninsula and the Small Isles communities.

5. Consultation

5.1 It was agreed at the June Committee to undertake further consultation on the Mallaig Associated School Group (ASG) in addition to that which had already taken place, in order to fully account for the complexities of this unique set of schools, including remote and fragile mainland and island communities. The full consultation programme is outlined below.

5.2 Consultation during session **2015-16** included the following:

- Email correspondence with parents and stakeholders across the ASG.
- Meetings involving the Education Quality Improvement Manager, on Canna, Eigg, Muck and Rum, involving direct discussions with parent representatives.
- Meetings involving the Area Care and Learning Manager and the Education Quality Improvement Manager with parents of the other schools in the Mallaig ASG.

5.3 Consultation during session **2016-17** included the following:

- Ongoing email correspondence with parents and stakeholders across the ASG.
- The Head of Education and council officers video-conferenced with the Small Isles and Inverie, followed up by meetings with the other schools within the ASG.
- The Head of Education and Education Quality Improvement Manager visited Canna, Eigg, Muck and Rum, and Inverie Primary School for direct discussions with parent representatives.
- The Area Care and Learning Manager and the Education Quality Improvement Manager attended meetings with parents in the remaining schools to discuss ASG recommendations.

5.4 The consultation during **June to September 2017**, as agreed at Committee, included:

- Further email correspondence with parents and stakeholders across the ASG.
- Councillors Christie, Finlayson and MacLachlan, and the Area Care and Learning Manager and Education Quality Improvement Manager visited Inverie Primary School for direct discussions with parent representatives.
- Councillors Christie, Finlayson, MacLachlan, and Thompson, and the Area Care and Learning Manager and Education Quality Improvement Manager met with groups of parents from Arisaig Primary, Lady Lovat Primary, Mallaig Primary and Mallaig High School to discuss ASG recommendations.

5.5 A record of these further meetings is included at **Appendix 1**.

5.6 There are just over 200 families across the Mallaig ASG, and they were sent a copy of the revised plan in **September 2017**. Further representations were received in four letters from families, as set out in **Appendix 2**.

5.7 The recommendation to the People Committee has taken cognisance of this extensive consultation, including the most recent meetings and correspondence, to produce a three year staged approach to phasing of the new 3-18 management structure.

5.8 The revised plan for Mallaig High ASG is set out below. There will continue to be close local engagement in a stakeholder group, as this plan is taken forward, as has worked well in some other ASGs.

6. Implementation Plan

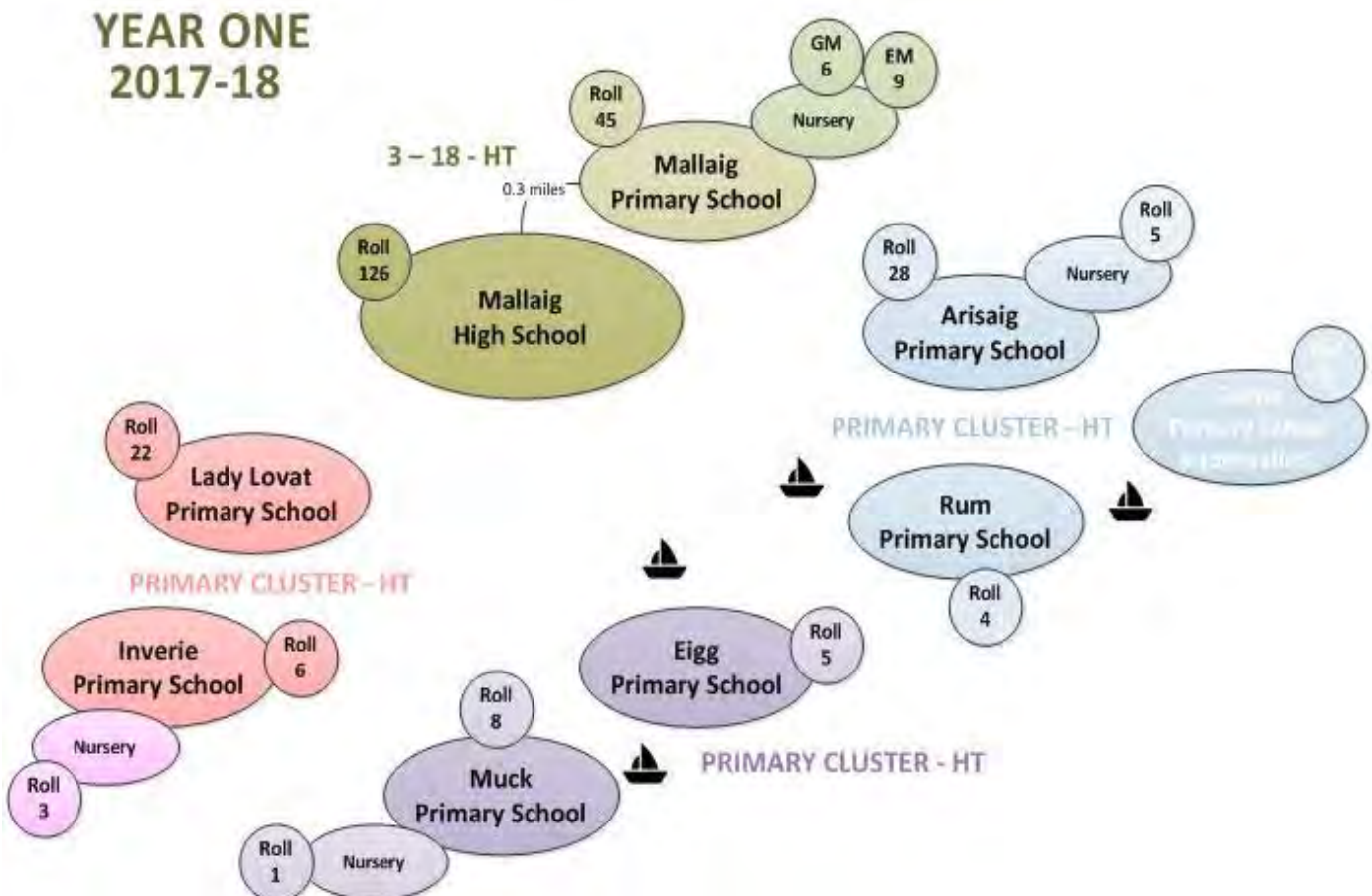
6.1 Year 1: 2017 – 2018

6.1.1 **January 2018:** Mallaig High School joins with Mallaig Primary School to become Mallaig 3-18. The new management structure will consist of one Head Teacher and two Depute Head Teachers (3-18), (one of which is a new post) and three Principal Teachers secondary. An additional full-time management/supply cover teacher will be appointed to support the new structure across the ASG.

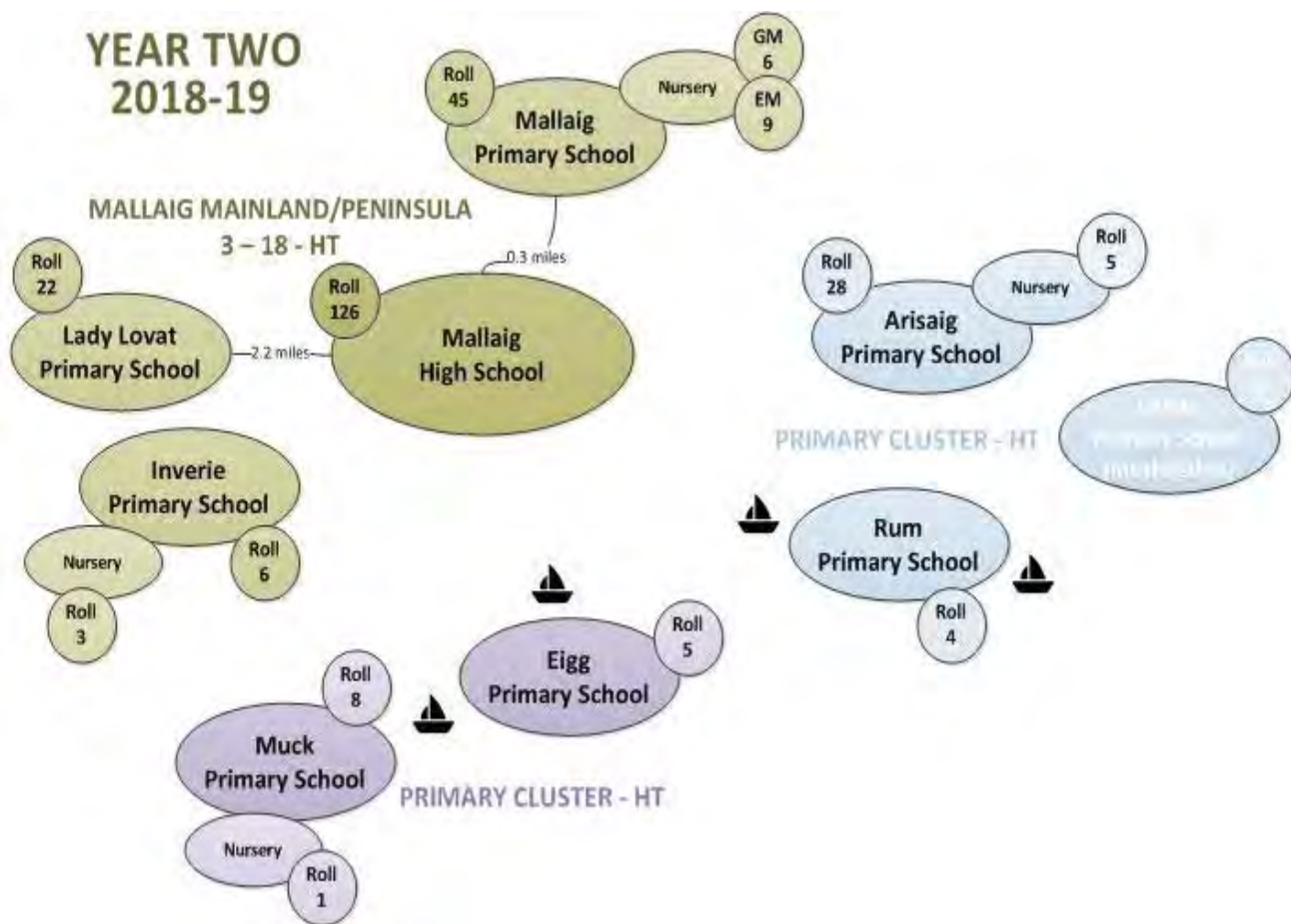
6.1.2 Lady Lovat Primary and Inverie Primary will continue as a cluster with the current Head Teacher. Inverie Primary will be allocated a new Principal Teacher post to support the management of schools and teacher promotion pathways.

6.1.3 Arisaig Primary, Canna Primary and Rum Primary will continue as a cluster with the current Head Teacher. Canna Primary and Rum Primary will be allocated new Principal Teacher posts to support the management of schools and teacher promotion pathways.
(Note: at present Canna Primary has no pupils and is mothballed but is included in the structure to demonstrate the management commitment).

6.1.4 Eigg Primary and Muck Primary will continue as a cluster with the current Head Teacher. Muck Primary will be allocated a new Principal Teacher post to support the management of schools and teacher promotion pathways.



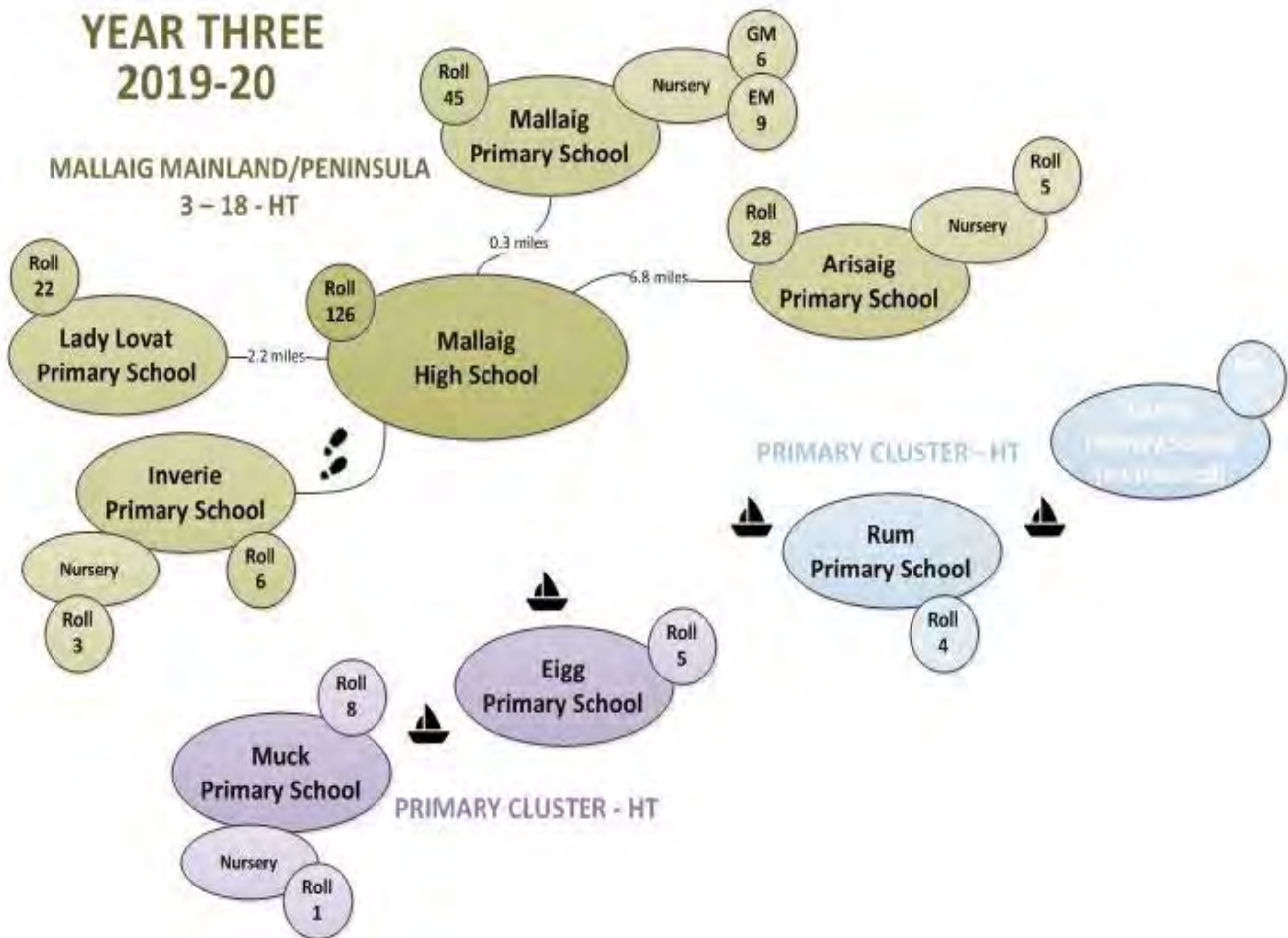
- 6.2.1 Mallaig 3-18 will be joined by Lady Lovat Primary and Inverie Primary to become the Mallaig Mainland/Peninsula 3-18 model. The new management structure will consist of one Head Teacher, two Depute Head Teachers,(3-18), three Principal Teachers secondary and Principal Teachers in both Lady Lovat Primary and Inverie Primary.
- 6.2.2 Arisaig Primary, Canna Primary and Rum Primary will continue as a cluster with the current Head Teacher. Canna Primary and Rum Primary will each have Principal Teacher posts to support the management of schools and teacher promotion pathways.
- 6.2.3 Eigg Primary and Muck Primary will continue as a cluster with the current Head Teacher. Muck Primary will have a Principal Teacher post to support the management of schools and teacher promotion pathways.



6.3 Year 3: 2019 – 2020

- 6.3.1 Mallaig Mainland/Peninsula 3-18 model will be joined by Arisaig Primary. The new management structure will consist of one Head Teacher, two Depute Head Teachers (3-18) three Principal Teachers Secondary and Principal Teachers in Lady Lovat Primary, Inverie Primary and Arisaig Primary.
- 6.3.2 Canna Primary and Rum Primary will continue as a cluster with Head Teacher and one Principal Teacher.
- 6.3.3 Eigg Primary and Muck Primary will continue as a cluster with the current Head Teacher. Muck Primary will have a Principal Teacher post to support the management of schools and teacher promotion pathways.

YEAR THREE 2019-20



- 6.4 This proposal provides a management structure for sustainability and improvement. The new Principal Teacher entitlement is an opportunity for class teachers to take on additional responsibilities and also open up leadership pathways. By year three of the phased approach, Arisaig, Lady Lovat and Inverie would each have a Principal Teacher to support these schools, within the overall 3-18 management cluster.
- 6.5 The Head Teacher and the two Depute Head Teachers within the new management structure would have 3-18 remits. The secondary Principal Teachers specialism would be retained. Eigg and Muck would continue with the current cluster arrangements, with an additional Principal Teacher appointed from year one.

7. Implications

- 7.1 **Resource** – These proposals will help ensure sustainable provision for the Mallaig ASG into the future, at a time of envisaged ongoing budget challenges. Savings related to the full programme of activity across the authority, will fund the further development of future phases of the project, and the overall structure will be modelled to be deliverable within existing budgets.
- 7.2 **Legal** – There are no legal implications.
- 7.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural)** - It is important that these plans maintain and enhance the equity of educational provision across the Highland area. In particular, the revised delivery model must ensure sustainable provision for children, families and staff

- 7.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** - Increased use of technology, both in curricular and business support terms, should reduce current travel requirements.
- 7.5 **Risk** - If this programme is not delivered successfully, there is significant risk that our management and administrative infrastructures will be inadequate to deliver the quality of education that Highland Communities and Highland Council believe in. Indeed, there would be risk regarding the long term sustainability of small and rural schools, and also that access to the breadth of the curriculum will be constrained for many young people.
- 7.6 **Gaelic** - It is envisaged that this programme of work will enable us to progress our objectives for the enhancement of Gaelic Medium Education.

Designation	Director of Care and Learning
Date	6 October 2017
Author	Norma Young, Area Care & Learning Manager

**Mallaig ASG Consultation Meeting
Arisaig Parent Meeting
In Mallaig High on Tuesday 15 August 2017 (5.30pm – 6.30pm)**

Present: Cllr Alasdair Christie, Chair of People Committee
Cllr John Finlayson, Vice Chair of People Committee
Cllr Billy MacLachlan, Caol & Mallaig
Norma Young, Area Care & Learning Manager West
Don Esson, Quality Improvement Manager West
Frances Smith, Business Support (minutes)

Arisaig Reps: Eve MacKenzie
Val Stuart

Cllr Christie opened the meeting by stating that it had been agreed to defer making a decision of the Mallaig ASG Recommendations at June Committee due to mixed representations from Parents that have come in by writing and email. Cllr. Christie advised that the Committee Paper would not be put forward for August Committee, as he wished to give the opportunity for further discussion around the Mallaig ASG and make any revisions with a view to have the Report at the October Committee.

Cllr. Christie stated that there had been a lot of misconceptions around the proposals, so these meetings would give an opportunity for questions and answers. These proposals were not about saving money, rather about sustaining the High School and associated primaries for a better educational experience.

1. Discussion - Both Parents stated that were in favour of the proposals but were confused as to why it was taking so long to start. They were in favour of the change to secure the future of Arisaig Primary and Mallaig High.

Response - Cllr Christie acknowledged their concern and said that a decision would be taken at October Committee and a Stakeholder group would be set up to move the decision on.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager advised that the cluster would benefit from a good management team with the current Head Teacher who was known to staff and would have the best interests of the High School and primaries in going forward with proposals. One of the additional Deputes would be from a Primary background which would help develop 3-18 learning across the cluster. These promoted posts would provide career advancement in the community and make the High School more viable, preventing either pupil or staff travelling to Lochaber High School.

2. Discussion - Cllr Christie asked what the issues were with Arisaig Parents.

Response - The parents present believed that the majority of Arisaig parents understood that the proposals would go ahead and Arisaig Primary would be phased in around year 2. There had been some mixed reactions as Arisaig had already been through a change process with being part of the Rum and Canna cluster. Stakeholder meetings would help and give parents an opportunity to get involved in moving the proposals forward.

D. Esson, Education Quality Improvement Manager noted the vision was developing and dedicated Teachers and Principal Teachers with specialisms working across curriculum areas. For example, in Nursery education, and in other areas, such as an English Teacher could support literacy and other staff who could support other subject areas. This would help keep smaller primaries such as Arisaig and Lady Lovat viable.

Cllr Christie advised that this would be a good news story.

Cllr Thompson agreed to visit Arisaig Parent Council prior to the October Committee to speak with parents.

It was recommended that once a decision is taken, the Stakeholder group would set the framework for change at dates sooner rather than later. This would be a local decision.

Meeting ended around 6.15pm

**Mallaig ASG Consultation Meeting
Inverie Parent Meeting
In Inverie Hall on Tuesday 15 August 2017 (11am -12.20pm)**

Present: Cllr Alasdair Christie, Chair of People Committee
Cllr John Finlayson, Vice Chair of People Committee
Cllr Billy MacLachlan, Caol & Mallaig
Norma Young, Area Care & Learning Manager West
Don Esson, Quality Improvement Manager West
Frances Smith, Business Support (minutes)

Inverie Reps: Samantha Humphries, Parent
Christa Brown, Parent
Yasmin Findlay, Parent
Melanie Sharp, Chair of Parent Council
Jim Sharp, Parent
Matthew Humphries, Vice Chair of Knoydart Community Council

Cllr Christie opened the meeting by stating that it had been agreed to defer making a decision of the Mallaig ASG Recommendations at June Committee due to mixed representations from Parents that have come in by writing and email. Cllr. Christie advised that the Committee Paper would not be put forward for August Committee, as he wished to give the opportunity for further discussion around the Mallaig ASG and make any revisions with a view to have the Report at the October Committee.

Cllr. Christie stated that there had been a lot of misconceptions around the proposals, so these meetings would give an opportunity for questions and answers. These proposals were not about saving money, rather about sustaining the High School and associated primaries for a better educational experience.

1. Discussion M. Sharp, Chair of Inverie Parent Council stated that they wished the structure to stay the way it was and were happy with the system, the school and sharing the Head Teach with Lady Lovat. There have been plenty shared activities with Mallaig and it is not understood why the change has to take place and the timescale. It was stated that present Head Teacher will be due to retire in a few years' time, so why not leave any changes until then. It was understood that there are financial restraints, but if they implemented the change that the Head Teacher salary would have to be preserved for two years anyway, so would not make any saving. The preferred option was to leave the structure as is or just cluster Mallaig, Lady Lovat and Inverie only.

The question in the guidance regarding the administrative statement of 2011, stated that no more than two schools would be clustered. What is current policy? Clarification was sought from the points raised in the letter sent from the Inverie Group following the previous meeting with the Head of Education and the Education Quality Improvement Manager.

Response Cllr Christie responded that the recommendations would not now go to August Committee and that the proposals were not to save money for this ASG. It was not a budget saving but to future proof the sustainability of all Primary schools and the High School in the ASG. The proposal was based on educational needs for the children. There are currently over 700 teacher vacancies in Scotland and these posts are difficult to fill, so these recommendation hope to address recruitment and retention issues to attract and keep Teachers in the area.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager clarified that the Administration circular on cluster schools still stands as a recommendation, but has been superseded as each Cluster is approved at Committee. Policy has been over ridden on each ASG at the Adult and Children Services Committees by Members.

M. Sharp, Chair of Inverie Parent Council said that this clarified that point.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager advised that it was not possible to discuss individuals but that there had been some very early discussion in relation to a possible role in the ASG for substantive Head Teacher post holders.

Mr D. Esson, Education Quality Improvement Manager, advised that this would only be the beginning of the process of change.

- There would be an additional Teacher for the ASG who would be a member of the ASG staffing group on a permanent contract.
- There would be a Principal Teacher (the existing Teacher) on Inverie (with 0.2 management time covered by the permanent additional teacher) plus a Cluster Head in addition which would be front loaded in year 1.
- In Years 2 and 3 the other schools would be phased in.
- This would give long term sustainability for recruitment and retention of staff in the future. .
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2. Discussion What about support if the weather was bad and a Teacher could not get across?

Response

- Flexibility to change the management day to the following day or another day that week would prevail, so that cover would not be lost. It would be a permanent member of staff so they will have that flexibility.

Cllr Finlayson added as talking as an ex Head Teacher, having a Principal Teacher full time would allow for stronger decisions made more quickly which is more of an advantage. Regular Senior Management input and the flexibility of a 0.2 Teacher, plus supply teachers for absence/sickness would enable the structure to be in a stronger position.

Mr D. Esson, Education Quality Improvement Manager added that this would also include PSAs, ASN and any other staff working in the ASG cluster which would have experience and expertise across the High and Primary school level.

Cllr Christie stated that he could see by the group's reaction that were in broad agreement with understanding more on how this would work.

M. Sharp, Chair of Inverie Parent Council on behalf of the group acknowledged that understood more today than at the previous meeting with the Head of Education and the Education Quality Improvement Manager.

3. Discussion – It was asked, if the status quo remains what are the consequences?

Response –

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager outlined that with a fluctuating school roll, it would be hard to recruit in the secondary school. By opening up to the team covering across primary and secondary levels, full time posts could be advertised. e.g. They considered looking at English at around 0.6 and making up the difference with a literacy 0.4fte to make the post more attractive at 1fte.

Cllr Finlayson stated that there are 14 primary schools on Skye and 5 Head Teachers. The Head Teacher's role had changed greatly, resulting in increased management and administrative support for staff and resources, leaving education and teaching to be done by Teachers .

4. Discussion – Concern was raised about the Head Teacher of the cluster in Mallaig as to how one person could take on running a high school as well as all the primaries?

Response – There would be an extra Depute Head at Mallaig, making two to support a Head Teacher. The existing HT has a current teaching commitment so will be released from this (English). As such an English Teacher will need to be recruited. If this is made a full time post, then the primaries will benefit from a part of this post for literacy at all ages and stages. There would be Principal Teacher roles in Inverie and Lady Lovat which would support a stronger framework of staffing and learning/ teaching opportunities.

M. Sharp, Chair of Inverie Parent Council – stated that there had always been good links with Mallaig High and Inverie during the transition process. Parents felt that the new structure was being pushed through without understanding the reasons behind it.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager – stated that transition from Primary to High School was acknowledged as being very strong, but that this would further develop links, and by making this a framework it would futureproof sustainability. Canna has been moth balled and so not part of the management at present. Full time posts were required to attract people to remote areas and keep them in the ASG. A Stakeholder group would be set up to work alongside the ASGs which allow effective working together, under the leadership of the Head Teacher.

Cllr Alasdair Christie – asked the group if they feel the proposal was clearer now? He proposed that a three week lead in of the proposals would be better, to enable comment, before Committee.

The Inverie group acknowledged that they were clearer on the reasoning behind the proposed change, but questioned why Arisaig was included as they believed that they did not want to be part of this cluster. They acknowledged that there had been miscommunication/ understanding at previous meetings. The structure was presented but no narrative was provided to explain.

Cllr John Finlayson – Acknowledged that the group had a legitimate gripe.

Cllr MacLachlan – Stated that it was nice to meet everyone and acknowledged that there was a lack or gap in communications from what he had read in the email representations, but the ASG framework was a huge undertaking. He apologised for coming into this discussion at a late stage, but would like to assure everyone that he would be the link person between the Inverie group and Highland Council. He wanted to back up what Cllr Finlayson has said and assure that this meeting had hopefully given some comfort and would move forward a strategy to better teacher recruitment during future financial constraints. He reflected on the cluster at Spean/ Roy Bridge and Invergarry as working well, but acknowledged that Roy Bridge was now moth balled.

Cllr Christie – Agreed that he would not put through the proposal to the August Committee, but would wait until the October Committee. A Stakeholder group would review the revised proposal and carry on the process once through Committee. He believed developments would be a good news story for the community, following nursery pupils through to their final destination.

M. Sharp, Chair of Inverie Parent Council – outlined that there were currently 4 nursery children and 7 primary pupils (11 in total). The group would be keen to see the support for a nursery plan.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager – agreed that Nursery was fundamentally important to develop 3-5 years in a Nursery. This was a busy tourist area where parents were working, especially through the summer months, where better childcare provision would help support longer hours in the summer months. Winter less which could support Inverie. The new Principal Teacher role was agreed between Highland Council and the Unions with a management roll (0.2 FTE), which was reflected in the salary and revised job description. Job description would be circulated to the group.

The expertise of previous Nursery support would be utilised across the ASG for all nursery settings, giving time for the Early Years Practitioner's to develop. Individual specialisms could be sought when recruiting in future to ensure that the ASG has an appropriate skill set to provide the ASG with the correct specialisms.

Cllr Christie – Projections showed that the High School numbers were looking to drop. He stated that it was important to futureproof the High School for all pupils moving up, by investing in stability and protecting a structure which would produce better educational outcomes.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager – highlighted that the uniqueness of this structure would enable an extra Depute in Mallaig, going above and beyond the model to provide a lot of management support.

M. Sharp, Chair of Inverie Parent Council – responded that it has been good to meet all in person. It had been discovered that Skype was not a good way to communicate on Inverie as the signal could break, resulting in poor sound. As a group, they would welcome any future meetings to be in person, and a proper narrative with documents to be given out.

Cllr MacLachlan – suggested that there were good VC facilities in Fort William (Lochaber House), which would enable communications between Inverness.

Cllr Christie – thanked everyone for their time and stated that a minute and overall summary would be provided with recommendations for October Committee, being issued the first week in September. A Stakeholder group would be set up to take forward the Committee decision from there.

Meeting ended at 1220 hrs

**Mallaig ASG Consultation Meeting
Lady Lovat Parent Meeting
In Mallaig High on Tuesday 15 August 2017 (6.45pm – 7.30pm)**

Present: Cllr Alasdair Christie, Chair of People Committee
Cllr John Finlayson, Vice Chair of People Committee
Cllr Billy MacLachlan, Caol & Mallaig
Norma Young, Area Care & Learning Manager West
Don Esson, Quality Improvement Manager West
Frances Smith, Business Support (minutes)

Lady Lovat Reps: Fiona MacKellaig, Head Teacher
S. Coll
Nancy Campbell

Cllr Christie opened the meeting by stating that it had been agreed to defer making a decision of the Mallaig ASG Recommendations at June Committee due to mixed representations from Parents that have come in by writing and email. Cllr. Christie advised that the Committee Paper would not be put forward for August Committee, as he wished to give the opportunity for further discussion around the Mallaig ASG and make any revisions with a view to have the Report at the October Committee.

Cllr. Christie stated that there had been a lot of misconceptions around the proposals, so these meetings would give an opportunity for questions and answers. These proposals were not about saving money, rather about sustaining the High School and associated primaries for a better educational experience.

1. Discussion - Cllr Christie reported that he had found Lady Lovat parents to be broadly supportive of the proposals.

He outlined the following points that he wanted everyone to take away:

- It would keep Lady Lovat open, despite being a short drive from Mallaig
- Viability for keeping High School going despite a falling role
- Ability to recruit full time staff across an ASG
- Stakeholders would be involved in planning and decision making (involving parents)
- Year 2 would see Lady Lovat being included
- Would utilise the expertise of specialist teaching staff e.g. ASN
- Share resources in literacy and numeracy as well as Gaelic medium
- Agreements have been made with Unions to work on job descriptions and grades

Response – Attendees acknowledged the positives from the above points but highlighted that more had to be done to look at Housing in the area to keep people here. It was outlined that there were real issues with childcare in the area, especially now with the 4.5 day week. Parents were finding it hard to keep work due to lack of childcare as no longer were there any childminders who look after 0-2 years.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager:

- Advised that work would be done with Stakeholders and professional staff (e.g. Family Resource Co-ordinator for the West) to address and support the community in looking at after school care along the structure of an 8am to 6pm model. School facilities would be utilised across the ASG.
- Opportunities were being explored around existing Clerical posts in schools to increase hours which would enable flexibility of duties to assist resourcing school staff numbers. This would consider Janitorial staff as well.

- The structure proposed would be part of a more strategic approach to recruit and retain qualified staff to the area, allowing opportunities for spouses and work with Housing providers to address some of the retention issues. The whole package would be looked at.

Cllr Christie – thanked everyone for their time and stated that a minute and overall summary would be provided with recommendations for October Committee, being issued the first week in September. A Stakeholder group would be set up to take forward the Committee decision from there under the leadership of the Head Teacher.

Meeting ended around 7.30pm

**Mallaig ASG Consultation Meeting
Mallaig Primary and High Parent Meeting
In Mallaig High on Tuesday 15 August 2017 (2pm – 5pm)**

Present: Cllr Alasdair Christie, Chair of People Committee
Cllr John Finlayson, Vice Chair of People Committee
Cllr Billy MacLachlan, Caol & Mallaig
Cllr Ben Thompson
Norma Young, Area Care & Learning Manager West
Don Esson, Quality Improvement Manager West
Frances Smith, Business Support (minutes)

In attendance: Stuart Griffin (Mallaig Primary)
Shirley Tyroung (Mallaig Primary & High)
Dawn MacPhie (Mallaig Primary Head Teacher)
Nick Murray (Mallaig High)
Emma Walters (Mallaig High)
H Gray
Jacqueline McDonell
Louise Beveridge (Mallaig High)
Karen Calder (Mallaig Primary)
Nuria Fuste (Mallaig High)
Mandy Tevendale (Mallaig High)
D Milne (Mallaig High)
Alison Durbin (Mallaig High)

Cllr Christie opened the meeting by stating that it had been agreed to defer making a decision of the Mallaig ASG Recommendations at June Committee due to mixed representations from Parents that have come in by writing and email. Cllr. Christie advised that the Committee Paper would not be put forward for August Committee, as he wished to give the opportunity for further discussion around the Mallaig ASG and make any revisions with a view to have the Report at the October Committee.

Cllr. Christie stated that there had been a lot of misconceptions around the proposals, so these meetings would give an opportunity for questions and answers. These proposals were not about saving money, rather about sustaining the High School and associated primaries for a better educational experience.

He outlined that he would like to explain the proposals which would strengthen the ASG by protecting the primaries and secondary school, teaching staff and provided the best educational benefits for the children. He then opened up the floor to welcome views and questions:

Discussion - A Parent who has children in Mallaig Primary and Mallaig High stated that it was understood by most people, that the change was going ahead for the last two and a half years. It has been really unsettling as it was understood that the 3-18 years was going to start.

Response – Cllr a Christie – Answered that due to the build-up of the Council elections in May a lot of business had been on hold. However, he went on to say that a lot of representations were received about the proposals so the decision to delay going to Committee and get out with Cllr John Finlayson to explain the benefits and advantages of the proposals at meetings was agreed. It was thought necessary to see people again and make sure everyone had the opportunity to have their say prior to Committee taking a decision.

Three Year Phasing Summary

Year 1

- Mallaig High and Mallaig Primary would become a 3-18 years campus.
- A new Depute Head (3-18) would be appointed to support the new model.
- The new 3-18 management team would include with a Head Teacher two Depute Heads (3-18) and a 3 Principal Teachers (Secondary).
- Lady Lovat and Inverie would continue with the cluster Head Teacher.
- A Principal Teacher with 0.2 management time would be appointed for Inverie PS. These hours would be covered by a Teacher based within the ASG rather than supply.

- Arisaig, Rum, and Canna (currently mothballed) would continue with the present cluster Head Teacher model.
- Principal Teachers with 0.2 management time would be appointed for Rum and Canna PS
- Eigg and Muck would continue with the present Head Teacher model.
- A Principal Teacher with 0.2 management time would be appointed for Muck PS.

Year 2

- Lady Lovat and Inverie would join with the Mallaig 3-18 management model.
- The cluster Head Teacher post would cease.
- A Principal Teacher with 0.2 management time would be appointed for Lady Lovat PS.
- The new 3-18 management team would include with a Head Teacher, two Depute Heads (3-18), 3 Principal Teachers (Secondary) and 2 Principal Teachers Primary (Inverie and Lady Lovat) .
- Arisaig, Rum, and Canna (currently mothballed) would continue with the present cluster Head Teacher model.
- Eigg and Muck would continue with the present cluster Head Teacher model.

Year 3

- Arisaig would join the Mallaig/Peninsula 3-18 management model.
- A Principal Teacher with 0.2 management time would be appointed for Arisaig PS.
- The new 3-18 management model would be Head Teacher, 2 Deputes (3-18), 3 Principal Teachers (Secondary), and 3 Principal Teachers Primary (Inverie, Lady Lovat and Arisaig).
- Clerical roles would increase to take in extra hours and flexible duties like classroom assistants, providing additional support to staff. This would also strengthen and develop existing Gaelic medium education across the schools.

- Rum, and Canna (currently mothballed) would continue with the present cluster Head Teacher model.
- Eigg and Muck would continue with the present Head Teacher model.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager:

- These proposals would protect all the primary schools as pupil rolls decline.
- As an ASG group it would be able to sustain a full time post across the various schools but would not be able to retain reduced hours in each standalone school if the status quo remained. This would protect the educational interest of the children and the community.
- The revised model would include the four primaries and the High School.
- The Small Isles would remain separate.
- The Principal Teacher roles would offer opportunity for a pathway to promotion for existing teachers and strengthen the existing structure.

Discussion – A question was raised by Parents as to why could the authority not employ a Bursar to manage the resources and leave the schools alone? A Primary Parent asked the Members to tell the Scottish Gov't that as an authority it was impossible to run schools with the funding provided and refuse to accept these settlements.

Response – Cllr Christie stated that Bursars were not what the Scottish Gov't supported so it would be impossible to go down that route. He outlined that Members were obligated to set budgets and look at how best to provide services. If not, the Scottish Gov't would set a budget and potentially make cutbacks on the Council's behalf, leaving no control of what would happen in our areas, to our services. He went on to say that he believed that this model would be a good news story and would provide flexibility by supporting a reduced role in High School in the future.

Discussion – A Parent asked why children could not be sent to Lochaber High to let them have a better choice of subjects and why change a good primary school system at primary pupil's expense. It was stated by parents attending that there was a lack of attendance at the meeting as it was believed the Council would do what they wanted to regardless of these discussions.

Response – Once a decision has been made at October Committee, a Stakeholder group would take these proposals forward and decide when it happens. The structure did not have to be at the start of an academic year. The reason the decision was delayed was to ensure that concerns could be aired.

Cllr MacLachlan - Introduced himself as the Caol & Mallaig Member and assured Parents that he would be the link to any decisions. He believed these proposals would bring the best outcomes for children. There were many good points in this proposal. There were additional resources proposed, not reductions.

Discussion – Concerns were raised on how the Depute Heads would operate? 0.2 Management time would not be a lot of time to help manage the primaries. Would 0.5 not be a better prospect?

Response – Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager outlined that this would increase from year to year as ASG would hold the budget and it would be reviewed from year to year. This would be at the discretion of the Head Teacher. In other areas for example, recruitment of teachers would be across primary and secondary (works well in Gaelic and PE as there is a common skill set). The Council had a new structure for mentoring staff and for conversion between primary and secondary, and would be done in-house.

The Principal Teacher programme operates successfully in-house, including professional support and development. Stakeholder groups would work in partnership with the authority and the community to review and evaluate how the ASG works, under the leadership of the Head Teacher.

Cllr Christie – He believed that it was a good news story for the community for nursery pupils through to their final destination.

SESSION 2 (where new people arrived and existing left)

Cllr Christie gave an outline introduction again as to why this meeting was being held and opened up for questioning:

Discussion – J McDonnell as Chair of Mallaig Primary Parent Council wanted to know why this process had taken over two years. She stated that having children who were in nursery right through to S6 in High School, meant that there was a keen interest in getting the new proposal to happen. She stated that the projected school roles were falling, and recognised that if there was not a decision to implement the new proposals then it would leave the schools exposed.

Response – Cllr Christie - The time issue was due to the mixed representation, but a decision would be taken at October Committee. It was appreciated that the uncertainty was causing anxiety but by having the current management team to take the structure forward, he was confident that this would be successful.

He wanted to avoid S5 and S6 having to go to Lochaber High School for certain subjects and rather secure the future of Mallaig High for S1 to S6.

Canna/ Rum and Eigg/Muck would remain as separate clusters. Canna would be mothballed for the time being, but would re-open if a family return to the island, on securing staff.

At the beginning of September, proposals (revised) would be issued so that all could see what was being presented to October Committee. This would be done through a school bag drop.

Discussion – Mrs Tevendale stated as a High School English Teacher she was fed up with the time that had been spent at meetings over the last two years and nothing happening. During this time, two Teaching Staff (English & Maths) were lost from Mallaig by redeployment. She wanted to know if these posts would be replaced in this new structure. She questioned if the existing Head Teacher at Mallaig High took on this new role for the cluster schools, would he have to give up his English teaching role as well, which would leave her and classes compromised. How would this benefit the High School? How many full time equivalent additional staff would be recruited in the new structure? Both Computer Science and Home Economics have been lost from Mallaig High over a few years. Would there be a commitment to increase choices? Mrs Tevendale outlined that there were inequalities with subjects offered in Mallaig and what is offered in Inverness High Schools.

It must be understood that broadband strength is not good in Mallaig, so non-traditional methods of delivery cannot be relied on.

Response – Cllr Christie- If we stuck with the status quo there would be a greater impact on Mallaig High. All 29 High Schools in Highland were targeted to bring staffing in line determined by school rolls, over the last two years. This new model would avoid this. The staffing element for the whole ASG may have allowed teachers to stay as there may have been extra capacity, especially in Literacy and Numeracy.

Mrs N. Young, Area Care and Learning Manager:

- advised that opening out the staffing compliment, which would include another Depute and recruit an English Teacher at 0.6 for the High School and possibly 0.4 for literacy across the cluster primaries would secure and futureproof the cluster. This would break away from existing constraints and allow for flexibility.
- In the new structure, there would be a 2 additional persons as Depute, backfilling for the Head Teacher, additional English recruited giving future protection if the High School role fell below 100. It is understood that there were no pupils in one of the year groups in Arisaig Primary.
- It was acknowledged that subjects have been lost at the senior phase and strategies would be looked to sustain best possible options for S5/S6 by working with West Highland College, e-learning and collaborative teaching with LHS.
- It was stated that Jim Steven did recognise that there may be limitations trying to deliver education within small rural High Schools. However, this proposal would have more Teachers across the ASG so would hopefully preserve more subject and work to get more practical subjects back by other means.
- The structure proposed would be part of a more strategic approach to recruit and retain qualified staff to the area, allowing opportunities for spouses and work with Housing providers to address some of the retention issues. The whole package would be looked reviewed.

Cllr Christie – summed up he would draw the key messages from these meetings and outline why the Council is proposing this, and look at how pressure can be put on broadband service providers, Wipro and ICT Services to continue developing better ICT infrastructure.

Meeting ended at 5pm.

Mallaig ASG, collation of responses following meetings

Issue Raised	Responses Given
1. We can see that there are many benefits to an ASG; shared resources, facilities etc. however the question is do these benefits outweigh the costs?	The sharing and standardising of curricular planning and resources will reduce teacher workload and bureaucracy by supporting joint planning across Primary schools which will reduce the need for individual schools and cluster schools having to develop their own curricular models.
2. Will these proposals, if implemented, solve the issues of sustainability and recruitment and retention?	Whilst there can be no guarantee in terms of staffing due to national recruitment issues, this approach does make the recruitment and retention more likely.
3. Will teachers wish to teach both Primary and Secondary?	All staffing matters will be discussed with the Head Teacher and the Work Force Planning Manager and will follow guidance, which includes engagement with teaching staff.
4. <i>"Although these proposals have been welcomed by many Mallaig ASG parents and Parent Councils"</i> . This statement does not reflect the levels of concern expressed at the meetings we have been to, and is somewhat misleading.	This was recognised by the Highland Council and further locality meetings were arranged by the Chair of the People Committee. The Vice Chair and local Members attended these.
5. We disagree with the statement in section 4.1.2 where the document states <i>"the sharing and standardising of curricular planning and resources will reduce teacher workload and bureaucracy"</i> . We don't see how this can be correct given that class teachers and the head teacher will have to work with 2 curriculums, Secondary and Primary.	The broad general education takes place from Early Years to the end of S3. Such joint planning will help to support collaboration and the sharing of a range of skills and expertise for curricular development. This in turn will reduce workload. The 3-18 collaborative approach will also support the joint planning from Nursery to Primary to Secondary for effective learner pathways under the one 3-18 leadership model.
6. Within the paper, it is recommended that, "Following further consultation with parents, Members are asked to approve the revised plan for Mallaig High Associated School Group..." I would question what revisions are contained within the paper, certainly nothing has changed with regards to Mallaig Primary and Mallaig High school since the original paper was published.	The changes include the phased approach of the proposed Management structure and the front loading of some of the PT teacher posts to enable these to be embedded prior to full implementation. In addition, a second Depute Head Teacher has been added to the structure to take account of the number of primary schools and specific issues such as Gaelic Medium Education. Further, the proposals include a narrative to support the previous information shared in table form. The revised paper also includes a summary of the consultation process along with extra detail on the management model proposed. Graphics have also been added to provide more clarity.

<p>7. I would suggest that there are still some fundamental questions that we as parents would like answered, not least what the impact will be on the management time allocated in particular to Mallaig Primary.</p>	<p>The allocation of time to a Depute Head Teacher is at the discretion of the Head Teacher. This is more difficult to define exactly as a Head Teacher would take account of staffing needs and the areas of expertise across the staffing compliment, such as Gaelic Medium Education. The Head Teacher would have a minimum expectation of around 0.2FTE. However, as an example, we have another 3-18 school where the Head Teacher has, this session, allocated 0.8FTE to the DHT.</p>
<p>8. As Mallaig Primary parents, we have always had a concern about appropriate management of the Gaelic medium unit, including the nursery, and I would suggest that the DHT would need more than 0.2 FTE management time each week to effectively achieve this.</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>9. I am also concerned by the suggestion that the DHT might be part of the overall 3-18 management model and be expected to deputise for any of the schools in the ASG model, which would effectively leave Mallaig with a lesser resource, and the smaller primaries, with the support of a Principal Teacher, the Deputy Head Teachers and Head Teacher with significantly more management time.</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>10. The proposal being put forward suggests that the changes would be implemented from January 2018. Given that the meeting will not take place until 19th October, and that for a January implementation everything would have to be in place by mid-December, this does not leave much time for any effective input from a steering group.</p>	<p>The Council has considerable experience in establishing effective and representative Stakeholder Groups and as such, once a decision is reached at Committee, a Stakeholder Group could be established without delay.</p>
<p>11. In June we were told that the Council had a recipe and some of the ingredients, but the exact proportions of these ingredients were still to be agreed. I would argue that, as a parent, I am still waiting on information on the exact proportions and ingredients to be used, and without this information. I remain to be convinced that the recipe being suggested will be a success.</p>	<p>Committee papers were shared with all parents and discussed in full at each of the local meetings.</p>
<p>12. We have been extremely pleased with our children's education so far and have always felt supported by the head teacher with any concerns and extra support the children have needed. We are worried about how this will work within the cluster set up; who will parents go to with concerns and requests for additional support? The cluster proposals state that they will improve teaching and learning, and lessen the attainment gaps, how will this be measured?</p>	<p>The direct contact with the Head Teacher and Senior management team will remains as is.</p>

<p>13. There are still issues with any partners finding work and of course, huge problems with accommodation. What if these struggles to recruit continue? Will they then affect every school in the cluster instead of only one school?</p>	<p>The Council accepts that, at times, it can be a challenge for spouses and partners to find positions. Thus is why in some areas of the Council, additional information is circulated with vacancies, which includes details of other work opportunities, such as Social Workers, Health Visitors and School Nurses. The Council and Service continue to look at other new ways to support recruitment in rural areas.</p>
<p>14. How can we be assured that our primary schools are safe?</p>	<p>Schools will be staffed with the requisite number of teachers and support staff. In addition, schools will be supported by a Senior Management team led by the Head Teacher.</p>
<p>15. We would be happier if Arisaig went in later if it has to join. This gives us time to see how it will all work, particularly as different communities join from further afield than Mallaig. We feel it also gives all the staff a chance to adjust to their new positions within the cluster and find the set up that is most beneficial. With all changes, there are bound to be challenges and teething problems and we feel that if Arisaig is left longer, it will give everything time to settle.</p>	<p>The date of implementation has been shared in the committee paper. The Stakeholder Group will have an important part to play in delivering this programme.</p>
<p>16. New Principal Teacher role at Inverie Primary School in January 2018. We have been assured on several occasions that the implementation will be a gradual process, which will be well-managed. With this in mind, we do not think it is good management strategy to introduce the new position of Principal Teacher to Inverie Primary School half way through a school year when there are new P1s settling in and P7s about to make the transition to Mallaig High School. We would recommend delaying the introduction of the new role to the following school year (Year 2: 2018-19) and keeping the Head Teacher in place for this additional year in order to maintain support.</p>	<p>See 15 above</p>
<p>17. Inverie Primary to join Mallaig ASG in year 2 2018-2019: The new management structure is to be monitored and assessed as it is gradually phased in, then we do not wish Inverie Primary School to join the ASG just 6 months after Mallaig primary School. This does not give sufficient time to evaluate whether the new system is working and where there needs to be adjustments to ensure that at no time the education of our children is compromised. We would suggest delaying the addition of Inverie Primary to the ASG until Year 3 (2019-20).</p>	<p>The implementation of the management structure would be as per the planned programme in discussion with the Stakeholder Group which will be led by the Head Teacher.</p>
<p>18. Additional full-time Management/Supply Cover Teacher: no details are given regarding this role</p>	<p>A permanent supply teacher for the ASG has been appointed and will be available to cover short</p>

<p>and whether it is purely to cover the Principal Teachers' management time or to also cover sickness and other unavoidable short notice absence.</p>	<p>term and unplanned absences.</p>
<p>19. Despite nursery schools now being acknowledged within the report, included in the implementation plan illustrations and numerous mentions of different kinds of support structures, within the 3-18 management model there is no mention of a specific position or even the intention of introducing one, as discussed during our meeting, to ensure ongoing support for our EYPs and who will do this or how it will be done.</p>	<p>The present management structure of Early Years, across the Highland Council area, does not include a PT Nursery post for each ASG. This function is delivered by the Early Years Education Support Officer. This has been discussed at local level as to how local expertise, which we know exists in the ASG, could also be used to further supplement this.</p>
<p>20. In the latest draft report there are mentions of parents and stakeholders in relation to past consultation, but no reference made regarding the establishment of a new stakeholder group, which would include parents, and be an integral part of the continual monitoring and assessing of the new management structure during the staged implementation.</p>	<p>The stakeholder group will be pivotal to the implementation and monitoring of this proposal. The Highland Council has experience of such groups and it would be essential that each community would be involved with this.</p>
<p>21. Such profound and radical change will require thorough monitoring of the effectiveness of the planned change and an evaluation of its successes and failures. However, the report does not specify what success criteria the Council will apply. Do you have a SWAT analysis that you can share with us? You have identified your hopes for gains and benefits but not potential threats to the successful implementation of the plan and how you intend to address such threats.</p>	<p>The Council has considerable experience in establishing effective and representative Stakeholder Groups and as such, once a decision is reached at Committee, a Stakeholder Group could be established without delay. There is ongoing monitoring of the roll out of the Management of Schools programme.</p>
<p>22. The report mentions the two Depute Head Teachers, one of which is a new post, but it does not clarify whether one of these will be based at Mallaig Primary and designated with the task of purely managing and concentrating on the primaries - as was indicated during our meeting. It also gives no indication of the management time allocated to the Depute Head Teachers, which we presume are also teaching roles.</p>	<p>See point 7 above</p>
<p>23. While we understand the reasoning behind the joint and shared primary/secondary appointments, we have concerns and seek clarification about the suitability and even the legality of having certain curricular areas - in particular core subjects such as maths, science or specialist subjects like modern languages - being taught by a primary teacher to secondary pupils and vice versa. Might a primary trained teacher find themselves expected to teach Secondary or Higher Mathematics, for instance?</p>	<p>The suggestion of staff working with 4 and 5 year olds and 15 and 16 year olds is not one the Council is looking to promote. Early Years staff can work across Nursery and Early Years, with upper primary staff doing likewise across the Broad General Education phase of secondary education.</p>
<p>24. Staffing Recruitment and Retention: The other</p>	<p>The General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS) has</p>

<p>crucial point in retention to this teaching approach is whether it will actually attract or retain any teachers (let alone the most suitable ones), who in our experience, prefer to teach either the secondary or the primary curriculum to either a secondary or a primary audience. Both levels are very different and teaching to both may prove to be challenging - especially at somewhere like Inverie primary School where you have a whole range of primary pupils in one class.</p>	<p>identified and recognised the increasing need for cross-sectoral teacher and this is reflected in the developing teaching qualifications nationally in this area.</p>
<p>25. My main concern is that there are absolutely no benefits to Mallaig High School in terms of education.</p>	<p>Teachers have opportunities to teach out of sector, thus broadening their experience of children's learning. Best practice can be shared between sectors. Bringing together different groups of practitioners in cross-sector training is a positive and 'collective opportunity'. Cross-sector lesson observation can support enhancing learning and teaching experiences. It is foreseen that cross-sector developments in teaching and learning will be developed over time by careful planning and review and in conjunction with The Highland Councils Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme.</p>
<p>26. One possible solution was the creation of an ASG with Mallaig High and Lochaber High.</p>	<p>Consultation and professional opinion regarding these proposals does not support this option.</p>