

Agenda Item	13.
Report No	CLH 11/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Care, Learning and Housing

Date: 30 May 2018

Report Title: **Review of Statutory Consultation Exercise into the Proposal to establish a new primary school to serve the Ness Castle and Ness-Side housing developments**

Report By: Director of Care and Learning

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 Following conclusion of the statutory consultation process, this report and accompanying information sets out a recommendation to establish a new primary school in Inverness, to serve the Ness Castle and Ness-Side housing developments.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Consider the Proposal set out within the Review Report (Booklet B pp 1-18) and associated appendices;
- ii. Consider the representations received and the report from Education Scotland;
- iii. Agree to recommend to the Council the establishment of a new primary school for Inverness, to serve the Ness Castle and Ness-side housing developments; and:
- iv. Agree to recommend to the Council the creation of a catchment area for the new school based on Option B of the catchment options outlined in the original Proposal Paper (Booklet B pp 19-32). The map of the proposed catchment can be found at page 35 of Booklet B.

3. Public Consultation

- 3.1 The proposal for decision, the original proposal issued for consultation, and relevant appendices for consideration by the Committee are circulated as appendices to this Paper. They provide details of all consultation comments received, the note of the public meeting, the report from Education Scotland, and the Council's response to comments arising from the consultation.
- 3.2 The proposal was widely circulated to parents, pupils and others. Pupils from Holm Primary were consulted. Overall, a large majority of the children expressed support for the proposal. 203 of the returned questionnaires (72.7%) expressed support for the new school with 76 (27.3%) expressing opposition. Those comments that opposed the Proposal are addressed within the Review Report (Booklet B pp 4-12).

Five other written responses were received. Two specifically expressed support for the new school, and none expressed direct opposition. The majority of the comments received concerned the proposed options for the school's catchment, and three responses suggested the Council needed to look not just a new school at Ness Castle but at educational provision across this part of Inverness, encompassing Lochardil Primary, Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis and secondary school provision. These matters are also addressed within the Review Report at (Booklet B pp 4-12).

Around 20 members of the public attended the public meeting, at which 36 questions/points were raised. None expressed direct opposition to the proposed new school. A number of questions sought clarification on future enrolment, placing requests etc. Others expressed concern about potential negative effects on Holm Primary and others expressed similar views to some of the written responses. The note of the Meeting is attached (Booklet C pp 114-123).

4. Report from Education Scotland

- 4.1 In its report, Education Scotland concludes that the Council's proposal paper provides a strong case for a new school and outlines the clear educational benefits which will result. Parents, staff and children from all three schools who spoke with HM Inspectors fully supported the proposal to establish a new school. Education Scotland commented however, that the Council's final consultation report needs to consider the views of stakeholders on the catchment options and provide reassurance to stakeholders on educational arrangements locally during the three year period before the new school becomes operational. They add that the Council should also address local concerns about road safety in relation to the new school and the new housing. The issues raised are addressed within the Review Report (Booklet B pp 13 and 14).

5. Procedure

- 5.1 The legislation requires that any proposal for decision must be published at least 3 weeks in advance of the meeting at which any decision may be made, to allow time for further representations. The proposal was published on 2 May, with 22 May being the deadline for further representations to be submitted. One representation was received prior to publication of the Committee papers and this is circulated (Booklet C pp 127-128). Any further representations that are received will be tabled for the Committee meeting.
- 5.2 As this report relates to a statutory consultation, any decision taken by this Committee

will be considered by the full Highland Council before being implemented.

6. Implications

- 6.1 Resource – Capital funding for construction of the new Primary School has been identified within the Highland Council's Capital Programme, agreed on 7 March 2018.
- 6.2 Legal - The statutory consultation has been taken forward as per the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 6.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – None.
- 6.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever - The Scottish Government's Climate Change Policy specifies that new buildings should be nearly zero in terms of carbon emissions. The Council's expectation is that the new school would have a Carbon Dioxide equivalent impact of about 15 tonnes per year at most.
- 6.5 Risk – None.
- 6.6 Gaelic – None.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 17 May 2018

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Background Papers: Review of Consultation Report; original Proposal Paper and appendices