

Agenda Item	15.
Report No	CLH 46/18

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Care, Learning and Housing

Date: 18 October 2018

Report Title: **Review of Statutory Consultation Exercise on the establishment of a catchment area for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar**

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 catchment area for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar.
- 1.2 The proposal was advanced because Bòrd na Gàidhlig has issued statutory guidance recommending that local authorities create catchment areas for GME. It is proposed to create a Gàidhlig Medium (GM) catchment for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar on the basis of the map shown at Appendix 4. (Booklet A)

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - i. Consider the Proposal set out within the Consultation Report (Appendix A, Booklet A) and associated appendices;
 - ii. Consider the representations received and the report from Education Scotland;
 - iii. Agree to recommend to the Council the creation of a catchment area for the Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar on the basis shown at Appendix 4 (Booklet A).

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 separately as Booklet A. 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. Many of the pupils from Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar had either no comment or were happy with the map. Some thought that the area of entitlement should be larger and should include Invergarry, Ballachulish or Glencoe. These comments are addressed in the Review Report at Appendix A (Booklet A).

Thirteen other written responses were received although one of these, from Bòrd na Gàidhlig, was received after the closure of the public consultation period. The majority of the written responses expressed concern over the limits to the proposed catchment area. A number expressed particular concern over the position of children in the Invergarry Primary School catchment or the catchments of Ballachulish, Duror, Glencoe and Kinlochleven Primary Schools, and felt that the exclusion of these areas from the proposed GM catchment would be a barrier to children accessing GME at the Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar. These matters are also addressed in the Review Report at Appendix A (Booklet A).

The note of the public meeting is at Appendix 3 (Booklet A). Only two members of the public attended and neither expressed any opposition to the Proposal.

4. Report from Education Scotland

- 4.1 In their report, Education Scotland noted that the proposal is responding to legislation which requires catchment areas to be established for GME provisions, and that the council is taking forward a duty to support and promote GME. They further noted that, while most stakeholders generally support the overarching proposal, there is potential to increase some stakeholders' confidence in aspects of the proposal. The issues raised are addressed in the Report for decision at Appendix A (Booklet A).

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 21 September, with 12 October being the deadline for further representations to be submitted. Any 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 – The proposal largely formalises arrangements that have previously operated on an informal basis. It is possible there could be some minor additional transport costs in respect of transport to the St. Bride's and Ballachulish Primary catchments. This has to be balanced against the possibility that, without these arrangements, the Council would require to set up GME provision within the

Kinlochleven Associated School Group.

- 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 – None
- 6.5 Risk – None.
- 6.6 Gaelic – The Proposal will provide clarity to local parents, in respect of entitlement to GME.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 2 October 2018

Authors: Brian Porter, Head of Resources
Ian Jackson, Education Officer

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