

**Item 12 - Question Time**

To the Leader of the Council

“The move to consultation on the closure of Stoer Primary School will mean that shortly Highland Council will have shut down 4 Sutherland schools in 3 years. This raises the spectre, if not yet the substance, of another era of Sutherland Clearances. What substantive plans does the Administration have to bring about a regeneration of the extremely fragile Sutherland economy?”

Response to Mr J McGillivray

The Council’s programme Local Voices/Highland Choices has as a key ambition to make the Highlands an even better place to live, to thrive and to prosper. We need attractive and sustainable communities throughout the Highlands including those in Sutherland. To achieve this, we need to retain and attract people to live and work in the Highlands and that is why we are working with partners to develop a talent attraction and retention strategy.

The council is also key member of the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership and the Sutherland Community Planning Partnership. Both partnerships have a strong focus on the economic regeneration of the area.