

Agenda Item	13.
Report No	EDU/14/22

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Education Committee

Date: 15 September 2022

Report Title: Review of the statutory consultation exercise on the establishment of a Gaelic Medium catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School

Report By: Executive Chief Officer, Education 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 formally establish a Gaelic Medium (GM) catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School.
- 1.2 The proposal was advanced in line with statutory guidance issued by Bòrd na Gàidhlig, which recommends that local authorities create catchment areas for Gaelic Medium education (GME). Glenurquhart Primary School is the only primary school within the Glenurquhart School Group (ASG) to offer GME. It is proposed to formally create a GM catchment that overlays the current English Medium catchments of Glenurquhart Primary School, Balnain Primary School, and Cannich Bridge Primary School. Currently there are pupils who live outwith the Glenurquhart PS catchment who attend GME at that school. The proposed GM catchment therefore reflects existing practice that has developed on an informal basis.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:
 - i. consider the proposal set out within the Consultation Report (Appendix 1) and associated appendices.
 - ii. consider the representations received (Appendices 3i-3iii); and the report from Education Scotland (Appendices 4 and 5).
 - iii. agree to recommend to the Council that a Gaelic Medium catchment area be created for Glenurquhart Primary School on the basis set out at Paragraph 1.2 above.

3. Implications

- 3.1 Resource – It is intended to use the existing transport to Glenurquhart High School to meet any additional transport requirements arising from the new GM catchment. No additional costs are expected to arise.
- 3.2 Legal - The statutory consultation has been taken forward as per the requirements of The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 3.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – None
- 3.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever – None
- 3.5 Risk – None
- 3.6 Gaelic – The Proposal will provide clarity to local parents, in respect of entitlement to GME.

4. Overview

- 4.1 **Appendix 1** is the proposal for decision. The original proposal issued for consultation, and relevant documents for consideration by the Committee, are all also 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.
- 4.2 The proposal was widely circulated to parents, pupils and others. There were 3 written responses received during the consultation period. Two responses were on behalf of organisations - Comann nam Pàrant, and Bòrd na Gàidhlig. These are addressed in the "Responses" section of Appendix 1 (pages 4-5) of Appendix 1). A list of those who attended the public meeting can be found at the head of the note of the meeting, at Appendix 2.
- 4.3 In their responses to consultation, both Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant expressed support for the Proposal. The remaining response, from a local parent, did not oppose the Proposal but felt the suggested GM catchment should be extended to cover the Kilchuimen Associated School Group. It is not proposed to accept this suggestion, for the reasons given in Appendix 1.
- 4.4 In their report, Education Scotland agreed that the proposal has potential to result in educational benefits. They also identified two issues arising from the consultation that merited further consideration. Again, these are addressed in the "Responses" section of Appendix 1 (pages 6-7) of Appendix 1).

5. Next Steps

- 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 15 August 2022. Any further representations that are received will be tabled at the meeting for the attention of Members.

- 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.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer – Education and Learning

Date: 17 August 2022

Author: Ian Jackson, Education Officer

Appendices: Appendix 1: Report reviewing the Consultation Exercise
Appendix 2: Note of Public Meeting
Appendix 3: List of Responses to Consultation Exercise
Appendix 3i: Response from Mrs N Kipfmiller
Appendix 3ii: Response from Comann nam Pàrant
Appendix 3iii: Response from Bòrd na Gàidhlig
Appendix 4: Report from Education Scotland (in English)
Appendix 5: Report from Education Scotland (in Gaelic)
Appendix A: Original Proposal Paper issued for Consultation
Appendix B: Catchment map accompanying Proposal Paper



HIGHLAND COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND LEARNING SERVICE

REVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A GAELIC MEDIUM CATCHMENT AREA FOR GLENURQUHART PRIMARY SCHOOL

This report has been prepared following a review of the proposal to establish a Gaelic Medium (GM) catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School.

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period.
- Oral representations made to it (by any persons) at the public meeting held online on 8 December 2021.
- The report from Education Scotland.

This document has been issued by the Highland Council under the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

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Appendix 2 - Minute of public meeting held online on 8 December 2021

Appendix 3 - List of Respondents to Statutory Consultation

Appendix 3i-3iii – Copies of individual responses

Appendix 4 - Report from Education Scotland (English language version)

Appendix 5 - Report from Education Scotland (Gàidhlig language version)

Appendix A - The proposal document

Appendix B - Proposed GM catchment for Glenurquhart Primary School

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Highland Council's Education Committee, at its meeting on 17 November 2021, agreed that a statutory consultation be undertaken on the proposal to establish a Gaelic Medium catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School.
- 1.2 The Proposal Paper suggested that the new catchment will overlay the current English Medium (EM) catchments of Glenurquhart Primary School, Balnain Primary School, and Cannich Bridge Primary School. Particular arrangements would apply to school transport from the areas outwith the Glenurquhart PS catchment.
- 1.3 The Proposal Paper also suggested formalising the current arrangements relating to Gàidhlig Medium Education (GME) in Glenurquhart High School, under which the catchment area for Glenurquhart High School would apply to both Gàidhlig Medium and English Medium education.
- 1.4 **Appendix A** is the original consultative paper and provides full details of the above proposal. **Appendix B** is the appendix to the original proposal.

2.0 Consultation process

- 2.1 The formal consultation period ran from Monday 29 November 2021 to Friday 4 February 2022. Written representations on the proposal were sought from interested parties as defined within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended.
- 2.2 In accordance with statutory requirements, the following were consulted:
- (i) Parents of pupils attending Glenurquhart Primary School; including parents of pre-school pupils.
 - (ii) Parents of pupils attending Balnain Primary School; including parents of pre-school pupils.
 - (iii) Parents of pupils attending Cannich Bridge Primary School; including parents of pre-school pupils.
 - (iv) The Parent Councils of each of the above schools.
 - (v) Staff of the schools listed above.
 - (vi) Members of Parliament and Members of the Scottish Parliament for the area affected by the proposal.
 - (vii) Trade union representatives.
 - (viii) All Community Councils for the areas covered by the Proposal.
 - (ix) Bòrd na Gàidhlig.
 - (x) Comann nam Pàrant
 - (xi) Education Scotland.
- 2.3 The proposal document was advertised on the Highland Council website.
- 2.4 A public meeting was held online on 8 December 2021. The meeting was advertised in advance on the Highland Council website and in the *Inverness Courier*. The note of the meeting is at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.5 Following receipt of written representations received by Highland Council and consideration of oral representations made at the public meeting, officials reviewed the proposals.
- 2.6 The outcome of this review process is reflected in the response, conclusion and recommendations outlined below.

3.0 Responses received

- 3.1 A list of those who responded in writing during the public consultation is at **Appendix 3**. There were 3 written responses received during the consultation period. Copies of these responses can also be found at **Appendices 3i-3iii**. Two responses were submitted on behalf of organisations (Comann nam Pàrant, and Bòrd na Gàidhlig), and one from a parent.

4.0 Issues raised during public consultation

- 4.1 The issues raised in writing during the consultation exercise are summarised below, together with the responses from the Council.

Issue 1

Bòrd na Gàidhlig welcomes the recommendation that a catchment area will be established for Glenurquhart Primary School where there is GME provision.

Response 1

The Council notes and welcomes the response of Bòrd na Gàidhlig

Issue 2

Comann nam Pàrant welcomes the formalisation of a school catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education (GME) in the Glenurquhart area.

The proposal is in keeping with Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education which recommends that local authorities establish catchments with reasonable travelling distances, and with the potential to attract parents to GME.

The setting of a catchment area will provide clarification for parents on their entitlement to GME within the proposed catchment area. The travel distances are reasonable, although we appreciate that for some families from the Cannich Bridge Primary catchment there may be longer distances.

Response 2

The Council notes and welcomes the response of Comann nam Pàrant,

Issue 3

Consideration should be given to widening the catchment area to include surrounding villages such as Fort Augustus, Beauly, etc. - ones that don't otherwise have access to a Gaelic education.

This is for two reasons:

1. It will enable children who would otherwise miss out to learn Gaelic (or they'd have to travel to Inverness - which in most cases parents would be unable to accommodate due to travel times, logistics, expense, etc.)
2. It would have the potential to increase the number of children in the Gaelic stream, which, having spoken to a number of parents of current pupils, would be seen as a real positive by all. This would give stability to a small (and thus very fragile) group, which would in itself breed a growth in numbers.

I do appreciate that there are resultant complications from bringing children into our catchment area who would then potentially be entitled to stay for

their secondary education, but I am absolutely positive that we are not talking about huge quantities of children, so I don't think this should be enough of a hurdle to prevent it going ahead. Realistically, Glenurquhart would potentially gain half a dozen children per year, and probably fewer.

Response 3

Although Beaully is not yet part of any defined GM catchment, the Council has still to consult on GM catchments for Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhir Nis (BSGI) and for Dingwall Primary School. For English Medium purposes, Beaully is part of the Charleston Academy ASG. Several pupils from Beaully already attend BSGI and would qualify for school transport if Beaully is incorporated within the GM catchment for that school.

There is no GME provided within the Kilchuimen ASG, although provision exists for parents to seek the provision of GME locally, should there be a demand for it.

Given the distances and travel times from Fort Augustus to Drumnadrochit, any local demand for GME might best be pursued through a GMPE assessment for provision within Kilchuimen Primary.

It would be possible to amend the Glenurquhart GM catchment in the future, in the event that children from the Kilchuimen ASG sought to enrol in GME at Glenurquhart PS. An amendment to the catchment would however require a further statutory consultation.

- 4.2 The note of the public meeting is at Appendix 2. Only one substantive issue was raised during the meeting. It covered the same issue as was raised in the written responses and is addressed above.

5.0 Summary of the issues raised by Education Scotland

- 5.1 In line with legislative requirements, Education Scotland was invited to submit comments on the Council's proposals. An English language copy of the report from Education Scotland is at **Appendix 4**. A Gaelic language copy is at **Appendix 5**.
- 5.2 In their report, Education Scotland agree that the proposal has potential to result in educational benefits. However, Education Scotland also identified a few issues and concerns arising from the consultation that merit further consideration.
- 5.3 The issues raised by Education Scotland are addressed in Section 6 below.

6.0 Responses to the Issues raised by Education Scotland

Issue 4

In its final report, the council needs to confirm if they are increasing the catchment area as requested by consultees. Consultees are committed to growing Gaelic Medium Education. They view an increased catchment area as an important step towards growth. It would also be important to clarify concerns on the primary school's capacity to absorb an increase in pupil enrolments.

Response 4

The Council does not propose to expand the GM catchment to include the Kilchuimen ASG.

The travel time and distance from Kilchuimen Primary/Academy to Glenurquhart Primary/High School is around 19 miles/30 minutes (one way). The Kilchuimen catchment extends to Aberchalder Swing Bridge and to Glendoebeg, both of which are around 35 minutes' drive from Drumnadrochit. It is acknowledged that by Highland standards these distances are not excessive, but neither are they likely to be attractive to parents of P1 children. Historically there has been no demand from the Kilchuimen ASG to attend GME at Glenurquhart PS/HS.

Given that Kilchuimen Academy/Primary form their own ASG, any local demand for GME would best be pursued through a GMPE assessment for provision within Kilchuimen Primary.

The school presently has 7 rooms in its main building and 2 in a modular unit; 1 room is used as Gaelic Medium nursery, along with 1 GP and 1 ASN room. That leaves 6 classrooms (5 English Medium and 1 Gaelic Medium). This is sufficient for the anticipated roll during session 2022-23. In the short to medium term, the current GP room could be used if an additional classroom is required. The Council are currently looking into the feasibility of an additional modular classroom/small extension to the main building, with proposals to be drawn up by the end of the current session.

Issue 5

In its final report, the council needs to detail how parents make future requests for establishing further Gaelic Medium Education as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016. They should do so with a particular regard to rural areas.

Response 5

Advice on how parents can make requests for establishing further Gaelic Medium Education is available on the Highland Council website at

https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/878/schools/18/gaelic_medium_education/2

The Council will arrange to add to this advice with further Guidance on how new provision might be established in rural areas.

7.0 Effects on the Community

7.1 The Proposal will not have any impact on the wider community.

8.0 Effects on School Transport

8.1 Travel arrangements are already in place for journeys to the designated GM provision. The proposal will clarify entitlement to this travel.

9.0 Effects on Staff and School Management Arrangements

9.1 The proposal is not expected to have any impact on staff and school management arrangements.

10.0 Alleged omissions or inaccuracies

10.1 There were no alleged omissions or inaccuracies

11.0 Overall Review of Consultation Exercise

11.1 Only 3 written responses were received, two of which were in support of the Proposal.

11.2 The main suggestion to emerge from consultation was that the proposed catchment should be expanded to include the Kilchuimen ASG. This issue has been addressed in detail at Responses 3 and 4 above.

12.0 Legal issues

12.1 Throughout this statutory consultation Highland Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

13.0 Conclusion

13.1 The consultation process has complied fully with legislative requirements and has provided an opportunity for all parties to identify key issues of concern. These issues have been fully considered and the Council's response detailed in sections 4 and 6 above.

13.2 The Education Scotland Inspector met online with parents, pupils and staff at Glenurquhart Primary School, and gathered a range of views. Education

Scotland also had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document, all written responses, and the note of the public meeting.

- 13.3 On reviewing all of the submissions, the note of the meeting, and the Education Scotland report; officials conclude that the Proposal to create a GM catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School offers educational benefits and should be implemented.

14.0 Recommendation

- 14.1 It is therefore recommended that Highland Council proceeds with the course of action set out at Paragraph 13.3 above.

Nicky Grant

Executive Chief Officer, Education

15 August 2022

CONSULTATION MEETING – GAELIC MEDIUM CATCHMENT AREA FOR GLENURQUHART PRIMARY SCHOOL

ONLINE – 6.30PM, 8 DECEMBER 2021

MINUTES OF MEETING

Panel

Cllr. David Fraser – Chairperson
Ian Jackson, Education Officer, Resources
Fiona Shearer, Area Education Manager
Lena Walker, Gaelic Education Support Officer

Also Attending

Maggie Mulholland – HC Community Development Officer
Kerrie Laird – HT
Julie MacLeod – HT
Mina Johnstone – Teacher
Ewen Kelly – Teacher

Joan Esson - HMIE
Jim Whannel – BnaG
Christie MacLean – BnaG
Magaidh Wentworth – CnamP

Nikki Kipfmiller – Parent
Roz Matheson - Parent
Alan Speed – Parent
Michelle Scott - Parent

Chair Cllr David Fraser opened the meeting -

For those who haven't participated in a Teams meeting, could I ask that you keep your microphone muted if you aren't actually speaking, as that reduces feedback. You should see a microphone symbol on the bar on the top of your screen, which you can toggle on and off. Secondly, Teams has a system under which anyone who wants to ask a question or make a point should "raise their hand" to attract the Chair's attention. You do this by clicking on the hand symbol on the bar at the top of your screen. To keep the meeting manageable, could I ask that anyone who wants to ask a question alerts me by clicking on the "raise your hand" symbol, and by clicking it off once you have finished speaking.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the proposal to formally establish a Gaelic Medium catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School, as set out in the recommendation to the proposal Paper.

The Proposal has been issued as a result of statutory guidance on Gaelic Education, produced by Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

The Council officials present tonight are Fiona Shearer, Area Education Manager; Ian Jackson, Education Officer, (Resources); and Lena Walker, Gaelic Development Manager.

Ian Jackson will now describe the consultation process and the detailed reasons for issuing the Proposal.

Ian Jackson

As indicated by the Chairperson, the Council is required to introduce GM catchment areas under the terms of Statutory Guidance issued by BnaG. The setting up of a catchment area involves a statutory consultation, of which this meeting is part. We are currently in the initial phase of that consultation, which is due to end on Friday 4 February 2022, and I would urge anyone who wants to submit views in writing to do so by that date. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to gather views, and we will try to answer any questions that are raised.

The formal process has a number of stages and gives ample opportunity for views to be expressed to the Council before any final decision is made. Once the public consultation ends on 4 February 2022, Education Scotland becomes involved. They will look at the Proposal Paper, the note of the meeting tonight, and any written representations, and will form a view on the educational benefits of the proposal. Education Scotland will contact Glenurquhart Primary, and they will be keen to hear from any parents who wish to make their views known. The Council has to take account of Education Scotland's view on the educational benefits and respond to any points raised by their report, as well as any representations received as a result of the consultation process. Following the completion of that stage, the Council will prepare a Report reviewing the consultation exercise and present it to the Council's Education Committee. The Review Report will be published at least 3 weeks before it is submitted to Committee, and anyone who responded in writing to the initial consultation will be invited to make "further representations" during those 3 weeks. Any further representations that are made are submitted to the members of the Committee, either in advance or tabled on the day, so that members are fully informed of any issues that may have arisen. Members will also see copies of the original responses and the note of this meeting.

Because of the Statutory Guidance we mentioned earlier, the Council has to set up a Gaelic Medium catchment. What is up for debate is the extent of that catchment. The GM catchment we are proposing covers the catchments of Glenurquhart PS, Balnain PS and Cannich Bridge PS. Up to now there has been a "custom and practice" arrangement in respect of any children who wanted to attend Gaelic Medium education from outwith the Glenurquhart Primary catchment itself, and at the present time we do have children from outwith the catchment attending GME at

the school. To an extent this Proposal is simply formalising arrangements which have already been operating in practice.

In summary, the benefit of the Proposal is that we're giving clarity to parents in respect of GME, making clear where entitlement exists and where it doesn't exist, and that's an improvement on the existing arrangements based on custom and practice.

The Chair then invited Lena Walker to speak about the Gaelic educational issues set out in the Proposal Paper.

Mrs Walker

Gaelic Medium Education is about offering children the opportunity of bilingualism. Bilingualism is about a lot more than two languages. There are 3 main advantages we can speak to, Social, linguistic and cognitive. By giving families the choice of choosing a Gaelic Medium Education for their children, they are offering them new opportunities. Socially, children have access to two cultures which in turn leads to more tolerance to and more interest in other cultures. Linguistically, total immersion can lead to an earlier awareness of sounds and words with an enhanced language learning ability impacting on improved literacy skills. Cognitively, there are many benefits which are widely published and all 3 advantages are backed by research. Therefore, total immersion learning in Gaelic is a wonderful opportunity to provide children with the benefits of bilingualism. Bilingualism is essential to both enhancing Gaelic and for the survival of Gaelic in many of Highland's communities.

The Statutory Guidance recommends that Catchment Area be developed to provide clarity for parents about the entitlement to GME for their children and it is important to note that provision of GME in an area follows a demand lead by parental request. The Highland Council Gaelic Language Plan is a statutory document, following the requirements of the Gaelic Language Act, where Highland Council makes a clear commitment to increasing Gaelic useage, increasing the number of Gaelic speakers, enhancing the profile of Gaelic and generating a positive image of the language. For that reason, the Highland Council has a strong focus on Gaelic Medium Education

The Chair advised that Mrs Shearer, Mr Jackson and Mrs Walker were available to answer questions.

Q1 David Fraser

Pupils currently coming from the school, where do they currently come from?

A1 Ian Jackson

The GME class is small but growing. Most pupils are from the Glenurquhart catchment area. The entitlement to GME will expand to include Balnain and Cannich. For any pupils from further afield, a placement request would be required.

Q2 Nikki Kipfmiller

Has there been any thought to include Beaully and Fort Augustus in the GM catchment area?

A2 Ian Jackson

We did give that some thought. The Statutory Guidance recommends that a GM catchment should cover a geographical area in which travel distances are reasonable and the prospect of GME is attractive to parents. The proposal does not include the Kilchuimen ASG. There is no GME within that ASG. If you have a view that Fort Augustus should be included, we can take consider this.

Q3 (Follow-up)

I am a parent of a child in the class. I want to see numbers growing. If it is practical to expand the catchment area to keep numbers healthy, this would mean a bigger class and more opportunities for the children in the class.

A3 Ian Jackson

This consultation is about listening to views. It is good to get new points.

Q4 David Fraser

The catchment aligns with that of the High School. Correct?

A4 Ian Jackson

Yes, the 3 feeder primaries will be the catchment. Happy to take on views as variations to that.

There were no further questions.

Ian Jackson

If there are no further questions and Fiona and Lena have nothing further to add, I will hand you back to the Chair.

Cllr David Fraser

I will now bring this meeting to a conclusion. If questions do come afterwards, this is the start of the consultation process. Any representations should be sent to Ian Jackson.

Cllr David Fraser thanked everyone for coming and reminded everyone that representations should be sent to Ian Jackson, email Education.Consultations@highland.gov.uk (address circulated in the letter), or via the online form, to arrive **no later than Friday 4 February 2022**.

Cllr David Fraser advised that the record of the meeting will be made available at least 3 weeks before the meeting of the Education Committee where it is intended that the report of the meeting, plus any submissions/representations and the view of Education Scotland on the proposal, will be considered.

**List of Respondents to Statutory Consultation Exercise – Creation of a Gaelic
Medium Catchment Area for Glenurquhart Primary School**

1. Mrs Nikki Kipfmiller
2. Comann nam Pàrant
3. Bòrd na Ghàidhlig

From: [Education Consultations](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Gaelic catchment for Glen Urquhart
Date: 03 February 2022 11:11:00

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 January 2022 21:02
To: Education Consultations <Education.Consultations@highland.gov.uk>
Subject: Gaelic catchment for Glen Urquhart

CAUTION: This email was sent from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi there

I'm writing with respect to the catchment area for Glenurquhart's Gaelic stream. I think there should be consideration given to widening the catchment area to include surrounding villages such as Fort Augustus, Beaully, etc. - ones that don't otherwise have access to a Gaelic education.

This is for two reasons:

1. It will enable children who would otherwise miss out to learn Gaelic (or they'd have to travel to Inverness - which in most cases parents would be unable to accommodate due to travel times, logistics, expense, etc.)
2. It would have the potential to increase the number of children in the Gaelic stream, which, having spoken to a number of parents of current pupils, would be seen as a real positive by all. This would give stability to a small (and thus very fragile) group, which would in itself breed a growth in numbers.

I do appreciate that there are resultant complications from bringing children into our catchment area who would then potentially be entitled to stay for their secondary education, but I am absolutely positive that we are not talking about huge quantities of children, so I don't think this should be enough of a hurdle to prevent it going ahead. Realistically, we'd potentially gain half a dozen children per year, and probably fewer.

Please consider this - I am strongly of the opinion that it would be to everyone's benefit and I will be very disappointed if it is not given significant consideration.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

Appendix 3ii.

Gaelic Medium catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School and Glenurquhart High School

Comann nam Pàrant welcomes the formalisation of a school catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education (GME) for Glenurquhart Primary School and Glenurquhart High School.

The proposal is in keeping with Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education which recommends that local authorities establish catchments with reasonable travelling distances, and with the potential to attract parents to GME.

The setting of a catchment area will provide clarification for parents on their entitlement to GME within the proposed catchment area. The travel distances are reasonable, although we appreciate that for some families from the Cannich Bridge Primary catchment there may be longer distances.

There is potential for growth in GME numbers in Glenurquhart Primary, and with the setting of the catchment, and the commitment to make provision for GME pupils at Glenurquhart High School, parents should be encouraged to make the commitment to GME as a 3-18 educational journey for their children.

M. Wentworth
4 Gearran 2022

<p>Freagairt Bhòrd na Gàidhlig airson Co-chomhairleachadh air Sgìre-sgoile airson Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig ann an Gleann Urchadain aig Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd.</p> <p>4mh An Gearran 2022</p>	<p>Bòrd na Gàidhlig's Response on the Highland Council Consultation on GME Catchment Area for Glen Urquhart.</p> <p>4th February 2022</p>
<p>1. Ro-ràdh</p> <p>Tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig a' cur fàilte air an iomairt gus sgìre-sgoile a chur air bhonn airson Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig ann an sgìre Gleann Urchadain. Tha am Bòrd ag aithneachadh gu bheil Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd a' gluasad gu sgìrean-sgoile airson FtG a stèidheachadh air feadh sgìre na Comhairle.</p> <p>Tha Am Plana Cànan Nàiseanta Gàidhlig 2018-23 agus an Stiùireadh Reachdail airson Foghlam Gàidhlig mar bhunait airson na freagairt seo. San Stiùireadh Reachdail, far a bheil barrachd mìneachaidh air na ceumannan seo, 's e bunait na cùise gun bu chòir adhartas is fàs a bhith air Foghlam tron Ghàidhlig.</p>	<p>1. Introduction</p> <p>Bòrd na Gàidhlig welcomes the initiative to establish a school catchment area for Gaelic Medium Education (GME) in the Glen Urquhart area. The Bòrd recognises that Highland Council is moving to the establishment of catchment areas where there is existing GME provision in the Council's area.</p> <p>The Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education and the National Gaelic Language Plan 2018-23 form the basis for the Bòrd's response to this consultation. The Statutory Guidance, where there is further detail on the steps involved, has as its basis that GME should develop and grow.</p>
<p>2. Fiosrachadh sa Cho-chomhairleachadh</p> <p>Tha Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd ag ràdh gu bheil iad airson sgìre-sgoile a stèidheachadh airson nan adhbharan a leanas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tha an Stiùireadh Reachdail a' moladh gun tèid sin a chur air dòigh; • Tha mì-chinnt ann a thaobh sgìrean-sgoile airson FtG a tha a' ciallachadh nach eil pàrantan cinnteach am faigh iad FtG airson an cuid chloinne; agus • Tha cleachdadh aig a' Chomhairle gum bi iad a' lìbhrigeadh còmhaidh taobh a-staigh sgìre a tha reusanta agus gu h-àbhaisteach tha seo a' ciallachadh nas lugha de 15 mìltean airson 'turas gu sgoil'. 	<p>2. Consultation Information</p> <p>The Highland Council says they want to establish a catchment area for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Statutory Guidance recommends that one be developed; • There is lack of clarity for parents about the entitlement to GME for their children; and • The Council has used the practice of providing transport within a reasonable travelling distance and generally this has been understood to mean within 15 miles of the school.
<p>Moladh na Comhairle</p> <p>Tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig a' toirt fa-near gu bheil planaichean ann airson Foghlam tro Ghàidhlig a leasachadh aig Àrd-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain. Tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig a' cur taic ris an lèirsinn</p>	<p>3. Council Recommendation</p> <p>Bòrd notes that there are plans to develop Gaelic Medium Education at Glen Urquhart Secondary School. Bòrd na Gàidhlig supports</p>

<p>seo airson Foghlam tro Ghàidhlig an dà chuid aig ìre na h-àrd-sgoile agus bun-sgoile.</p> <p>Tha 3 bun-sgoiltean taobh a-staigh an ASG. ‘S e Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain an aon tè a tha a’ tabhann FtG aig an ìre seo.</p> <p>Tha am pàipear a’ mìneachadh nan amannan siubhail agus nam mìltean eadar gach sgoil agus Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain:</p> <p>BS Balnain – BS Ghleann Urchadain – 5.2 mìle, àm-siubhail 11 mionaidean</p> <p>BS Cannich Bridge – BS Ghleann Urchadain 13 mìle, àm-siubhail 22 mionaidean.</p> <p>Aig 8.1 tha a’ chomhairle ag ràdh nach eil iad an dùil gun toir an sgìre-sgoile buaidh air ullachaidhean còmhaidhail-sgoile:</p>	<p>this vision for Gaelic Medium at both primary and secondary stages</p> <p>There are 3 primary schools within the ASG. Glen Urquhart Primary is the only one to offer GME at the primary stage.</p> <p>The consultation paper lists the time and distance between each school and Glen Urquhart Primary School at 6.1:</p> <p><i>Balnain Primary – Glenurquhart Primary – 5.2 miles, 11 minutes travel time.</i></p> <p><i>Cannich Bridge Primary – Glenurquhart Primary – 13 miles, 22 minutes travel time</i></p> <p>At 8.1, the council states that they do not anticipate the proposed catchment area will impact school transport arrangements:</p> <p><i>The children attending GME at Glenurquhart PS from within the Glenurquhart PS catchment, who require school transport, utilise the same transport arrangements as those attending English Medium education. A parental transport contract exists for the one other pupil currently accessing GME. The Proposal is not expected to have any effects on these current transport arrangements</i></p>
<p>4. Stiùireadh Reachdail airson Foghlam Gàidhlig</p> <p>Tha an Stiùireadh Reachdail airson Foghlam Gàidhlig a’ moladh gun tèid sgìrean-sgoile a stèidheachadh airson sgoiltean far a bheil Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig (FtG) ri fhaighinn (Earrann 2.53 is 2.54).</p> <p>Sgìrean-sgoile FtG is Stiùireadh airson Àiteachan a Ghlèidheadh do Sgoilearan</p> <p>Bu chòir do dh’ùghdarrasan foghlaim sgìrean-sgoile a stèidheachadh airson FtG, agus dh’fhaodadh gum bu mhiann leotha beachdachadh air an iarrtas a th’ ann airson FtG nuair a bhios iad a’ stèidheachadh stiùireadh airson nan àiteachan a thèid a ghlèidheadh do sgoilearan ann am FtG.</p>	<p>4. Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education</p> <p>The Statutory Guidance on Gaelic Education recommends that catchment areas are established for schools where Gaelic-medium education (GME) is provided (Section 2.53 & 2.54).</p> <p>GME Catchment Areas and Placing Guidelines</p> <p>Education authorities should establish catchment areas for GME provision and may wish to consider demand for GME when setting guidelines for placing pupils in GME provision.</p> <p>2.54 states:</p> <p>A catchment area of GME provision should be an area in which the education authority thinks it is reasonable for pupils wishing to receive GME provision to travel to school and should have the</p>



A rèir 2.54:

Bu chòir do sgìre-sgoile airson sgoil le FtG a bhith na sgìre far a bheil an t-ùghdarras foghlaim den bheachd gu bheil e reusanta do chloinn san sgìre sin, a tha airson a dhol gu FtG, siubhal don sgoil, agus bu chòir coltas a bhith air an sgìre sin gun tèid pàrantan a thàladh gu bhith cur an cuid chloinne gu FtG.

Mar sin, tha Bòrd na Gàidhlig a' cur fàilte air a' mholadh gun tèid sgìre-sgoile a stèidheachadh airson Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain far a bheil solar FtG ann.

potential to attract parents to choose GME provision for their children.

Therefore, Bòrd na Gàidhlig welcomes the recommendation that a catchment area will be established for Glenurquhart Primary School where there is GME provision.



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Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by HM Inspectors of Education addressing educational aspects of the proposal by The Highland Council to establish a Gaelic Medium Education catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School. This new catchment will overlay the current English Medium catchments of Glenurquhart Primary School, Balnain Primary School, and Cannich Bridge Primary School.

The proposal also formalises the current arrangements relating to Gaelic Medium Education in Glenurquhart High School, under which the catchment area for Glenurquhart High School will apply to both Gaelic Medium and English Medium Education.

March 2022

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of The Highland Council's proposal to establish catchment areas for Gaelic Medium Education. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the 2010 Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the schools; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the council area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- attendance at the virtual public meeting held on 8 December 2021 in connection with the council's proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- virtual discussions with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 The Highland Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#). The formal consultation ran from 29 November 2021 to 4 February 2022. The proposal paper was distributed to a wide range of stakeholders. Interested parties were invited to respond to the statutory consultation by letter or electronically. Almost all of the responses were from those connected to Glenurquhart Primary School. There were three written responses. Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant supported the proposals. Children's views at the primary stages were sought. They articulated the potential benefits to their education from having more young people learn Gaelic. They felt that a larger catchment area may have the potential of increasing uptake for Gaelic Medium Education. In consultation discussions, the public meeting and in written responses, consultees expressed that the catchment area should be larger. In addition, consultees suggested that the catchment should not be restricted to that of Glenurquhart High School. They felt that the catchment areas should

enable as many children as possible, residing within a reasonable distance from the secondary school, to access Gaelic Medium Education.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The proposal from the council, if agreed, formalises the existing catchment area for Glenurquhart High School as also applying to Gaelic Medium Education. This catchment area would also apply to the Gaelic Medium provision at Glenurquhart Primary School. This helps the council meet the objectives of their Gaelic Language Plan. Consultees appreciate that the proposed catchment area offers 2-18 local provision through the medium of Gaelic. Currently, young people travel out with the local area to access secondary provision. The council has started to plan for Gaelic Medium Education to commence at Glenurquhart High School from August 2022. This is a well-received development that strengthens the educational benefits associated with the proposal. It was felt that local secondary provision assisted with the sustainability of Gaelic Medium Education within the catchment area. The council have consulted the headteacher of Glenurquhart High School on the proposal. They should also consult staff and young people.

3.2 Consultees felt that the proposals brought immediate clarity to how progressive Gaelic Medium Education is accessed by children and young people. A few longer term issues have been raised relating to future capacity at Glenurquhart Primary School. These are associated with a school roll that is increasing. A number of consultees are interested in discussing further with the council how a wider catchment area may help promote Gaelic Medium Education. The council expressed their willingness at the public meeting to engage in this discussion. This should now be taken forward.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors have considered The Highland Council's proposal to establish catchment areas for Gaelic Medium Education at Glenurquhart High School and Glenurquhart Primary School. HM Inspectors agree that the proposal has potential to result in educational benefits. In its final report, the council needs to confirm if they are increasing the catchment area as requested by consultees. Consultees are committed to growing Gaelic Medium Education. They view an increased catchment area as an important step towards growth. It would also be important to clarify concerns on the primary school's capacity to absorb an increase in pupil enrolments. In its final report, the council needs to detail how parents make future requests for establishing further Gaelic Medium Education as set out in the Education (Scotland) Act 2016. They should do so with a particular regard to rural areas.

HM Inspectors
March 2022

Achd Sgoiltean (Co-chomhairleachadh) (Alba) 2010

Aithisg le Luchd-sgrùdaidh Foghlaim na Banrigh a' dèiligeadh ri taobhan foghlaim den mholadh le Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd gus sgìre-foghlaim Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig a stèidheachadh airson Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain. Gabhaidh an sgìre-foghlaim ùr seo thairis na sgìrean-foghlaim tro mheadhan na Beurla airson Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain, Bun-sgoil Bhaile an Àthain agus Bun-sgoil Channaich.

Tha am moladh seo cuideachd a' foirmealachadh an sgìre-foghlaim a tha ann an-dràsta airson Àrd-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain far am bi an sgìre-foghlaim airson Àrd-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain a' buntainn ri Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig agus Beurla.

Am Màrt 2022

1. Ro-ràdh

1.1 Chaidh an aithisg seo bho Fhoghlam Alba ullachadh le Luchd-sgrùdaidh Foghlaim na Banrigh (Luchd-sgrùdaidh na Banrigh) ann an co-rèir le teirmichean [Achd Sgoiltean \(Co-chomhairleachadh\) \(Alba\) 2010](#) ("Achd 2010"). 'S e adhbhar na h-aithisg seo beachdachadh neo-eisimeileach agus neo-phàirteach a libhrigeadh air moladh Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd gus sgìrean-foghlaim a stèidheachadh airson Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig. Tha mion-fhiosrachadh goirid ann an Roinn 2 na h-aithisge air a' phròiseas chonaltraidh. Tha Roinn 3 na h-aithisge ag innse beachdachadh Luchd-sgrùdaidh na Banrigh air taobhan foghlaim a' mholaidh, a' gabhail a-steach beachdan cudromach aig luchd-comhairle. Tha Roinn 4 a' toirt geàrr-chunntas air àrd-shealladh Luchd-sgrùdaidh na Banrigh air a' mholadh. Nuair a gheibhear an aithisg seo, tha Achd 2010 ag òrdachadh gum bi a' chomhairle a' beachdachadh air agus an uair sin ag ullachadh aithisg co-chomhairleachaidh dheireannach. Bu chòir gum bi an aithisg seo an lùib aithisg co-chomhairleachaidh dheireannach na comhairle, còmhla ri mìneachadh air ciamar, ann an crìoch a chur air a' mholadh, a rinneadh ath-sgrùdadh air a' chiad mholadh, a' gabhail a-steach geàrr-chunntas air puingean a chaidh a thogail anns a' phròiseas chonaltraidh agus freagairt na comhairle riutha. Feumaidh a' chomhairle an aithisg co-chomhairleachaidh dheireannach aca fhoillseachadh trì seachdainean mus gabh iad an co-dhùnadh mu dheireadh.

1.2 Bheachdaich Luchd-sgrùdaidh na Banrigh air:

- na buaidhean a dh'fhaodadh a bhith aig a' mholadh air clann agus òganaich sna sgoiltean; agus luchd-cleachdaidh sam bith eile; clann a bhios nan sgoilearan taobh a-staigh dà bhliadhna bho chaidh am pàipear molaidh fhoillseachadh; agus clann agus òganaich eile ann an sgìre na comhairle;
- buaidhean coltach sam bith eile aig a' mholadh;
- ciamar a tha a' chomhairle an dùil buaidhean dona sam bith a dh'fhaodadh tighinn am bàrr bhon mholadh a lùghdachadh no a sheachnadh; agus
- na buannachdan foghlaim a tha a' chomhairle an dùil a thig bho thoirt gu buil a' mholaidh, agus adhbharan na comhairle airson nam beachdan seo a ruigsinn.

1.3 Ann a bhith ag ullachadh na h-aithisg seo, ghabh Luchd-sgrùdaidh na Banrigh na gnìomhan seo os làimh:

- làthaireachd aig a' choinneimh phoblaich bhiortual air a chumail air 8 Dùbhlachd 2022 a thaobh molaidhean na comhairle;
- beachdachadh air a h-uile sgrìobhainn iomchaidh a chaidh a sholarachadh leis a' chomhairle a thaobh a' mholaidh, gu sònraichte aithris nan sochairean foghlaim agus sgrìobhainnean co-chomhairleachaidh co-cheangailte, freagairtean sgrìobhte agus labhairteach bho phàrantan is eile; agus
- beachdachadh bhiortual le luchd-comhairleachaidh buntainneach.

2. Pròiseas Co-chomhairleachaidh

2.1 Ghabh Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd os làimh co-chomhairleachadh air a' mholadh/na molaidhean aca a thaobh [Achd Sgoiltean \(Co-chomhairleachadh\) \(Alba\) 2010](#). Ruith an co-chomhairleachadh foirmeil bho 29 Samhain 2021 gu 4 Gearran 2022. Chaidh am pàipear molaidh a sgaoileadh gu raon farsaing de luchd-ùidhe. Chaidh cuireadh a thoirt do luchd-compàirt freagairt a thoirt don cho-chomhairleachadh reachdail le litir no gu dealanach. Cha mhòr nach robh na freagairtean air fad bho dhaoine aig an robh ceangal ri Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain. Bha trì freagairtean sgrìobhte ann. Chuir Bòrd na Gàidhlig agus Comann nam Pàrant taic ris na

molaidhean. Chaidh beachdan cloinne aig ìre na bun-sgoile a shireadh. Mhìnich iad na buannachdan a dh'fhaodadh a bhith an lùib an cuid foghlaim nam biodh barrachd dhaoine òga ag ionnsachadh Gàidhlig. Bha iad a' faireachdainn gum faodadh sgìre-sgoile na bu mhotha an àireamh a bhiodh a' dèanamh Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig a leudachadh. Sna co-chonaltraidhean comhairleachaidh, aig a' choinneimh phoblaich agus ann am freagairtean sgrìobhte, thuirt an luchd-co-chomhairleachaidh gum bu chòir dhan sgìre-sgoile a bhith na bu mhotha. A thuilleadh air sin, mhol an luchd-co-chomhairleachaidh nach bu chòir an sgìre-sgoile a bhith air a cuingealachadh gu sgìre sgoile Àrd-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain. Bha iad dhen bheachd gum bu chòir dha na sgìrean-sgoile cothrom a thoirt do dh'àireamh cho mòr 's a ghabhadh de chlann, a bha a' fuireach aig astar reusanta bhon àrd-sgoil, cothrom a bhith aca air Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig.

3. Taobhan foghlaim a' mholaidh

3.1 Tha am moladh seo bhon chomhairle, ma thèid aontachadh ris, a' foirmealachadh na sgìre-foghlaim a tha ann an-dràsta airson Àrd-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain mar a bhith a' buntainn ri Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig cuideachd. Bhiodh an sgìre-sgoile seo cuideachd a' buntainn ris an t-solar Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig aig Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain. Tha seo a' cuideachadh na comhairle ann a bhith a' coinneachadh ri amasan am Plana Gàidhlig. Tha an luchd-co-chomhairleachaidh a' gabhail ris gu bheil an sgìre-sgoile a tha air a moladh, a' tabhann solar ionadail 2-18 tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig. Aig an àm a tha an làthair, tha daoine òga a' siubhal a-mach às an sgìre ionadail airson foghlam àrd-sgoile. Tha a' chomhairle air tòiseachadh a' planadh airson Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig a bhith ri fhaotainn ann an Àrd-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain bhon Lùnastal 2022. Is e leasachadh a tha seo a chaidh a ghabhail ris gu math agus tha e a' neartachadh nam buannachdan foghlaim a tha co-cheangailte ris a' mholadh. Bhathar a' faireachdainn gun robh an solar àrd-sgoile ionadail a' toirt taic do sheasmhachd Foghlam Mheadhan Gàidhlig san sgìre-sgoile. Tha a' chomhairle air co-chomhairleachadh a dhèanamh mun mholadh le ceannard Àrd-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain. Bu chòir dhaibh cuideachd co-chomhairleachadh a dhèanamh ris an luchd-obrach agus na daoine òga.

3.2 Bha an luchd-co-chomhairleachaidh a' faireachdainn gun robh na molaidhean a' toirt soilleireachd anns a' bhad mun dòigh sa bheil clann agus daoine òga a' faighinn cothrom air Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig adhartach. Tha beagan chùisean fad-ùine air a bhith air an togail co-cheangailte ri rùm gu leòr san àm ri teachd ann am Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain. Tha iad sin co-cheangailte ri meudachadh ann an àireamh nan sgoilearan. Tha ùidh aig àireamh de luchd-co-chomhairleachaidh ann an tuilleadh conaltraidh a dhèanamh ris a' chomhairle mu dheidhinn mar a chuidicheadh sgìre-sgoile na bu mhotha le Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig adhartachadh. Dh'innis a' chomhairle aig a' choinneimh phoblaich gun robh iad deònach a dhol an sàs sa chonaltradh seo. Bu chòir dhan seo a bhith air a thoirt air adhart a-nis.

4. Geàrr-chunntas

Tha Luchd-sgrùdaidh na Banrigh air beachdachadh air moladh Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd gus sgìrean sgoile foghlaim a stèidheachadh airson Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig aig Àrd-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain agus Bun-sgoil Ghleann Urchadain. Tha Luchd-sgrùdaidh na Banrigh ag aontachadh gu bheil comas aig a' mholadh buannachdan foghlaim a libhrigeadh. San aithisg dheireannaich aca, feumaidh a' chomhairle dearbhadh a bheil iad a' dol a mheudachadh na sgìre-sgoile mar a chaidh iarraidh leis an luchd-co-chomhairleachaidh. Tha an luchd-co-chomhairleachaidh dealasach mu bhith a' fàs Foghlam Meadhan Gàidhlig. Tha iad a' faicinn meudachadh san sgìre-sgoile mar cheum cudromach a dh'ionnsaigh fàs. Bhiodh e cuideachd cudromach soilleireachadh a dhèanamh air uallachaidhean mu chomas na bun-sgoile gabhail ri meudachadh ann an clàraidhean sgoilearan. Anns an aithisg dheireannaich aca, feumaidh a' chomhairle dèanamh soilleir ciamar a nì pàrantan iarrtasan san àm ri teachd airson solar Foghlam Meadhan

Gàidhlig a bharrachd a stèidheachadh, a rèir Achd an Fhoghlaim (Alba) 2016. Bu chòir dhaibh sin a dhèanamh le aire shònraichte do sgìrean dùthchail.

Luchd-sgrùdaidh na Banrigh
Màrt 2022

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The proposal is to establish a Gaelic Medium catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

THIS IS A PROPOSAL PAPER PREPARED IN TERMS OF THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY'S AGREED PROCEDURE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

INTRODUCTION

The Highland Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation process:

- To establish a Gàidhlig Medium (GM) catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School. The new catchment will overlay the current English Medium (EM) catchments of Glenurquhart Primary School, Balnain Primary School, and Cannich Bridge Primary School.
- To formalise the current arrangements relating to Gàidhlig Medium Education (GME) in Glenurquhart High School, under which the catchment area for Glenurquhart High School will apply to both Gàidhlig Medium and English Medium education.

Existing primary school catchments for the provision of English Medium education will be unaffected.

The proposed changes, if approved, will be implemented at the conclusion of the statutory consultation process.

If implemented as drafted, the proposed GM catchment for Glenurquhart Primary School will include all 3 of the primary school catchments within the Glenurquhart Associated School Group (ASG).

Any identified parental demand for local provision of GME from within the Balnain and Cannich Bridge catchments would be assessed in accordance with the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

SUMMARY OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Proposal Paper Published

The proposal paper will be available for inspection, free of charge, at:

- ☐ Glenurquhart Primary School
- ☐ Balnain Primary School
- ☐ Cannich Bridge Primary School
- ☐ Glenurquhart Public Library, Drumnadrochit

and published on the Highland Council website:

www.highland.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

Copies of this Proposal Paper are also available on request from:

Business Support Team
Care and Learning
Highland Council
Headquarters Building
Inverness

IV3 5NX

E-mail: Education.Consultations@highland.gov.uk

To request this information in an alternative format, e.g. large print, Braille, audio formats, or suitable language, please also contact the Business Support Team, Care and Learning, Highland Council Headquarters Building, Inverness IV3 5NX

E-mail: Education.Consultations@highland.gov.uk

Formal notice of the Proposal and relevant information will be given and be made available, free of charge, to the consultees listed as follows:

- (i) parents of pupils attending Glenurquhart Primary School; including parents of pre-school pupils;
- (ii) parents of pupils attending Balnain Primary School; including parents of pre-school pupils;
- (iii) parents of pupils attending Cannich Bridge Primary School; including parents of pre-school pupils;
- (iv) parents of pupils attending Glenurquhart High School;
- (v) the Parent Councils of each of the above schools;
- (vi) all staff of the schools listed above.
- (vii) Members of Parliament and Members of the Scottish Parliament for the area affected by the proposal;
- (viii) trade union representatives;
- (ix) all Community Councils for the areas covered by the Proposal;

- (x) Bòrd na Gàidhlig; and
- (xi) Education Scotland.

Advertisement in Local Media

A notice announcing the public meeting will be placed in the *Inverness Courier* and on the Highland Council's Facebook page.

Consultation Period

The consultation for this Proposal will run from 29 November 2021 and will end on 4 February 2022. This period allows for the statutory minimum of six weeks, including at least thirty school days.

Public Meeting

A public meeting will be held, the details of which are set out below:

6.30pm on 8 December 2021, online due to COVID conditions.

Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Council, will be chaired by a senior elected councillor, and will be addressed by officers of the Education Service.

The meeting will be an opportunity for the public to hear more about the proposal; to ask questions about the proposal; and to have the views of all stakeholders recorded so that they can be taken into account. A note will be taken at the meeting of questions asked and views expressed. This note will be published on the Council website. The meeting will also be recorded.

The note will be forwarded to Education Scotland, along with other submissions and comments received by the Council during the consultation process.

Responses to the Proposals

Interested parties are invited to respond to the Proposals by making written or electronic submissions on the Proposals to:

Ian Jackson
Education Officer (Resources)
Camaghael Hostel
Fort William
PH33 7NE
Email: Education.Consultations@highland.gov.uk

Or via an online form, a link to which can be found on

www.highland.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

When responding, you are invited to state your relationship with the school – for example, “pupil”, “parent”, “carer”, “relative”, “former pupil”, “teacher in school”, “member of the community” etc. However it is not compulsory to do so.

Those sending in a response, whether by letter or electronically should know that their response will be open to public scrutiny and may have to be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it. If they do not wish their response to be made publicly available, they should clearly write on the document: “I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Councillors and Council Officers of Highland Council”. Otherwise, it will be assumed that the person making the response agrees to it being made publicly available. All written responses must be received by the last day of the consultation period, 4 February 2022 at 5.00pm.

Involvement of Education Scotland

When the Proposal Document is published, a copy will also be sent to Education Scotland by the Council. Education Scotland will also be sent, by 28 February 2022, a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Council from any person during the consultation period. Education Scotland will also receive the summary note of the public meeting that and so far as is practicable a copy of any other relevant documentation. Education Scotland will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 18 March 2022. In preparing their report, Education Scotland may visit the affected schools and make such enquiries of people there as they consider appropriate.

Review of Consultation Exercise

Highland Council will review the proposal having regard to the Education Scotland Report, written representations that it has received, and oral representations made at the public meeting. It will then prepare a Consultation Report. This Report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be sent to anyone who submitted a written representation during consultation. It will be available on the Council website as well as at the affected school and local library, free of charge. The Report will include a summary of the written and oral representations made during consultation and a copy of the Education Scotland Report, together with the Council’s considered response to the issues raised. The Report will include details of any alleged inaccuracies and/or omissions and how these have been handled. The Consultation Report will be published at least 3 weeks prior to being submitted to the Council’s Education Committee, who will make a recommendation to the full Highland Council.

In publishing the report the Council will invite any person or party to make further representations to the Committee prior to its meeting. A notice to this effect will also be published on the Highland Council website.

The Council intends to publish its Report in August 2022, prior to submission to the Council’s Education Committee on in September 2022. However, this timescale may change depending on the nature of issues raised during consultation, and the need to give full consideration to those issues. In the latter event, the Report may not be submitted until a later Committee meeting.

Any proposal approved by the Education Committee would require to be confirmed by a subsequent meeting of the full Highland Council.

Note on Corrections

If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal paper, either by the Council or any other person, the Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or, if the paper contains an inaccuracy. The Council will then take appropriate action, which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of the Proposal or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period, if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and HMI will be advised.

PROPOSAL

Legislative Background

- 1.1 The proposal is advanced within the context of all applicable legislation. Amongst other duties, education authorities are required to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education (S.1 of the Education Act 1980); to publish or otherwise make available information as to their arrangements for the placing of children in schools under their management (S.28 of the 1980 Act) and to promote and support Gaelic Medium education and learning (S.15 of The Education (Scotland) Act 2016. Statutory Guidance issued by Bòrd na Gàidhlig early in 2017 specifies that local authorities should establish catchment areas for Gàidhlig Medium education. The Guidance goes on to say that a catchment area for GME provision should be an area in which the education authority thinks it is reasonable for pupils wishing to receive GME provision to travel to school, and should have the potential to attract parents to choose GME provision for their children. Catchment areas for GME provision will normally overlay a number of school catchment areas.
- 1.2 In common with all public bodies in Scotland, the Highland Council also has a duty to provide Best Value. This includes making arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost; and, in making those arrangements and securing that balance, to have regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities requirements and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Reason for the Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal is being advanced for the following reasons:
 - Highland Council has not previously specified catchment area for many of its schools offering GME. This has led to a lack of clarity for parents in respect of entitlement to GME, (see paragraph 2.2 below).
 - Bòrd na Gàidhlig has issued statutory guidance recommending that local authorities create catchment areas for GME.
- 2.2 The current criteria for providing transport to GME in Highland are not particularly well defined, and have evolved over time. The minimum distance and road safety criteria are the same as for English Medium education. The Council currently has an informal arrangement under which transport to GME can be provided “within reasonable travelling distance”. This has been generally interpreted as meaning up to 15 miles, but there are numerous variations.

Informal Consultation

- 3.1 Informal discussions have been held with local elected councillors of Highland Council and with the Head Teachers of (i) Glenurquhart, Balnain and Cannich Bridge Primary Schools, and (ii) Glenurquhart High School. The Parent Councils all of the local primary schools, and all of the local Community Councils, were also notified.

Current and Planned Provision of Gàidhlig Medium Education within the Glenurquhart ASG

- 4.1 There are 3 primary schools within the ASG. Glenurquhart Primary is the only one to offer GME at the primary stage.

Glenurquhart Primary School

- 5.1 Glenurquhart Primary is situated within the village of Drumnadrochit. The catchment extending southwards to Balbeg, westwards to Polmailly Wood, and northwards to just below the Clansman Hostel. At the time of writing there are expected to be 127 pupils in P1-7 during session 2021-22. Of these 14 are expected to be within GME. The school has excellent accommodation with well-sized classrooms, a large hall/theatre with bleacher seating, a dining room, medical room and designated nursery facility.
- 5.2 Of the 14 GM pupils, all but two are from within the Glenurquhart Primary catchment itself.

Proposed School Catchments for GME

- 6.1 There are 2 other primary schools within the Glenurquhart ASG. Approximate travel distances and times to Glenurquhart Primary from the other schools are set out below:

Balnain Primary – Glenurquhart Primary – 5.2 miles, 11 minutes travel time.

Cannich Bridge Primary – Glenurquhart Primary – 13 miles, 22 minutes travel time.

- 6.2 It should be noted though, that Cannich Bridge Primary has a wide catchment area, and travel from the furthest ends of that catchment will be considerably longer than the distances and times given above.
- 6.3 The statutory guidance specifies that a catchment area for GME provision should be an area in which the education authority thinks it is reasonable for pupils wishing to receive GME provision to travel to school, and should have the potential to attract parents to choose GME provision for their children.
- 6.4 The Council is sympathetic to the idea that Gàidhlig Medium Education should be accessible as many pupils Highland as possible, provided it is practical and reasonable to provide access.

- 6.5 Both Balnain and Cannich Bridge schools are within the informal 15-mile limit that has previously been applied in respect of transport to GME, and it is therefore proposed that both school catchments should be included within the proposed GM catchment.
- 6.6 The map at **Appendix B** shows the proposed GM catchment.
- 6.9 No changes are proposed for these catchments in respect of English Medium education.
- 6.10 For the purposes of GME, the Glenurquhart High School catchment will be the same as the school's existing catchment.
- 6.11 Historically, pupils from the Glenurquhart ASG who have accessed GME at secondary school level have done so by attending Inverness Royal Academy. The Council is of the view that provision of GME would be more attractive to local pupils if it were offered at Glenurquhart High School. Whilst recognising that the low numbers involved raise staffing issues, the Council is looking to introduce provision of GME at Glenurquhart High School. The expectation would be that, in time, the number of pupils attending GME at Glenurquhart High would increase, the teaching allocation for GME provision will increase accordingly.

Educational Benefits

- 7.1 The Proposal forms part of Highland Council's overall approach to the promotion of Gàidhlig medium education. Up to now, Highland Council's admission arrangements to GME have been informal and based on a "reasonable distance" (often applied as a 15-mile radius) from each school offering GME. In some locations these radii have overlapped, and the "15 mile" principle has not always been applied consistently. The creation of GM catchment areas, extended throughout Highland, will mean that admissions to GME will in future be more formal and robust.
- 7.2 The Proposal therefore helps to consolidate our existing provision of GME, and allows for the more efficient use of resources. It should be considered alongside other measures being undertaken to promote Gaelic and the benefits of bilingualism.
- 7.3 It is acknowledged that bilingualism has educational benefits as it provides the user with a better sense of the structure of language, and bilingual children often find it easier to pick up other languages. The continued availability of Gaelic medium education at Glenurquhart Primary School, as evidenced by the new catchment, will provide children with the opportunity to develop these skills for life.
- 7.4 The creation of a GM catchment area will demonstrate the Council's commitment to the long-term future of Gaelic Medium education. Evidence of this commitment may help with the known problem with "drop-out" from GME.

7.5 The Education section of the Council's Gaelic Language Plan sets out the following aims:

- That the Highland Council increases the percentage of pupils in GME from potential enrolment figures at key transition points.
- That the Highland Council increases the percentage of pupils undertaking Gaelic through the Primary Language Learning programme, based on the 1+2 Language Learning Approach and subsequently through secondary Gaelic Learner Education across The Highland Council area.
- That the Highland Council creates a Gaelic education transitions strategy for retaining children in 0–3/childcare to nursery, nursery to primary, primary to secondary 1, and the Broad General Education to senior phase.
- That the Highland Council develops a curriculum and workforce plan for the delivery of Gaelic education at all levels (0–3, nursery, primary and secondary) including clear signposting to www.teagasg.com and early year's recruitment via The Highland Council's website.
- That the Highland Council undertakes a Highland-wide survey of existing Gaelic education staff to identify career-long professional learning needs, particularly in relation to Gaelic language skills, and develops a programme of training and support.
- That the Highland Council ensures that Gaelic education is considered as part of the school estates capital development whenever possible.

7.6 The Proposal will raise the profile of Gaelic in the area and make it clear that the opportunity exists for children in the other primary school catchment to attend GME at Glenurquhart Primary School. It will therefore assist with our aim of increasing enrolments, and forms part of our Strategy of providing improved transitions that will help retain children within GME.

Effects on School Transport

8.1 The children attending GME at Glenurquhart PS from within the Glenurquhart PS catchment, who require school transport, utilise the same transport arrangements as those attending English Medium education. A parental transport contract exists for the one other pupil currently accessing GME. The Proposal is not expected to have any effects on these current transport arrangements.

Effects on Staff and School Management Arrangements

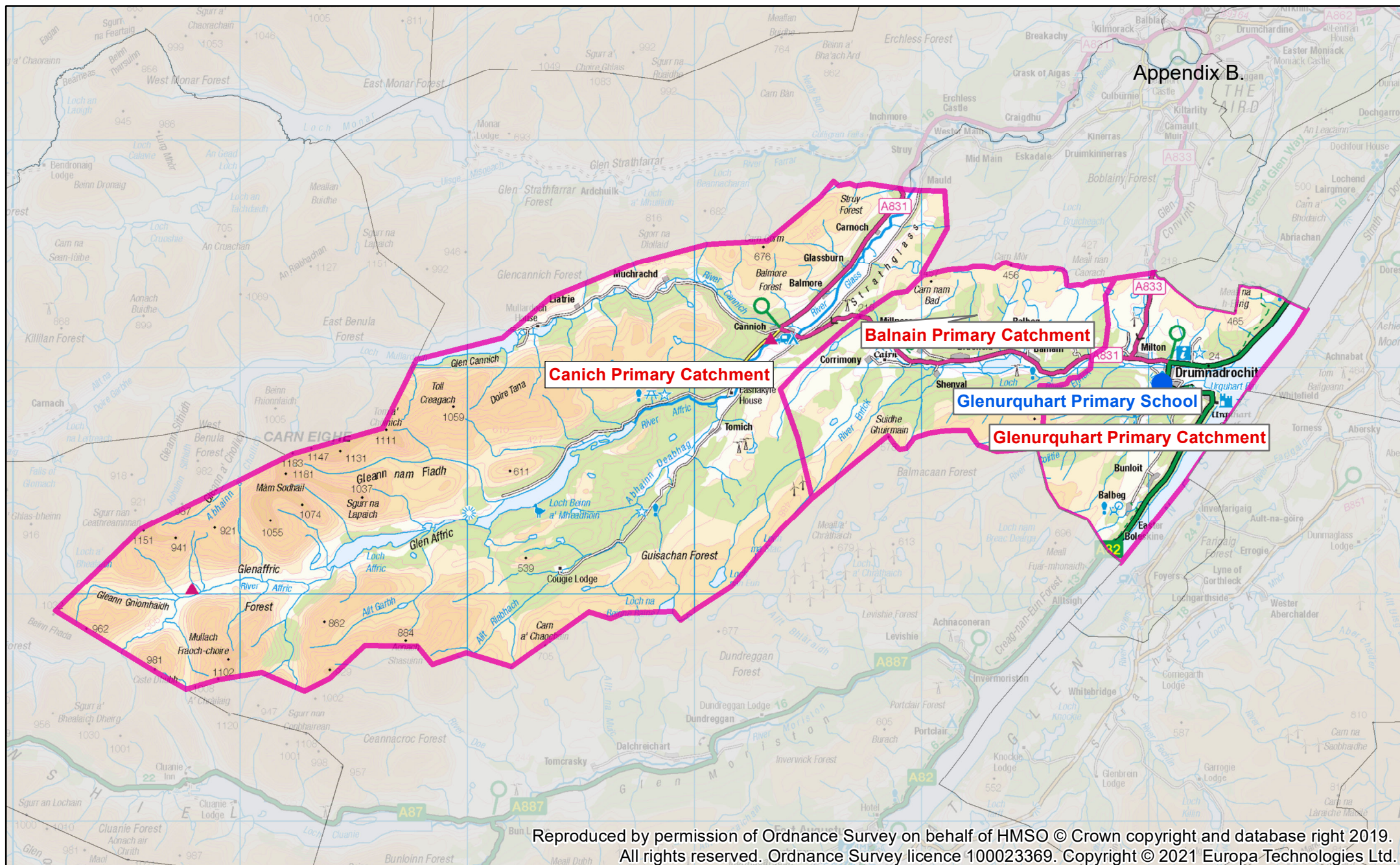
9.1 The Council does not expect any significant impact on local school rolls. Nor do we expect there to be any direct impact on staff within the schools of the Glenurquhart ASG.

Effect on the Local Communities

10.1 The proposal is not expected to have any impact on the wider local community.

Recommendation

- 11.1 Highland Council recommends the adoption of a Gàidhlig Medium catchment area for Glenurquhart Primary School, along the lines set out in this paper.
- 11.2 This consultation paper is issued in terms of the authority's procedures to meet the relevant statutory requirements. Following the consultation period, a report and submissions received will be presented to the Education Committee of the Highland Council.



Proposed Gaelic medium catchment Glenurquhart ASG

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Date: 09/08/2021

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