

Public Document Pack

Argyll and Bute Council

Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal Agus Bhòid

Executive Director: Douglas Hendry



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19 August 2022

NOTICE OF MEETING

A meeting of the **COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** will be held on a **HYBRID BASIS BY ATTENDANCE IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KILMORY, LOCHGILPHEAD OR REMOTELY BY MICROSOFT TEAMS** on **THURSDAY, 25 AUGUST 2022** at **10:00 AM**, which you are requested to attend.

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director

BUSINESS

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTE** (Pages 5 - 10)
Community Services Committee 10 March 2022
4. **THE ELECTION OF TEACHER REPRESENTATIVES TO THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE** (Pages 11 - 12)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
5. **EDUCATION CHANGE PROGRAMME - SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES** (Pages 13 - 204)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
6. **ARGYLL AND BUTE - EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-24 AND RECOVERY, RENEWAL AND PROGRESS REPORT 2021-22** (Pages 205 - 274)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
7. **SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL** (Pages 275 - 382)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
8. **SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - MINARD PRIMARY SCHOOL** (Pages 383 - 438)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education

9. **SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - LUING PRIMARY SCHOOL** (Pages 439 - 492)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
 10. **SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - ACHALEVEN PRIMARY SCHOOL** (Pages 493 - 496)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
 11. **SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - SOUTHEND PRIMARY SCHOOL** (Pages 497 - 500)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
 12. **SCHOOL HOLIDAY DATES - 2023-2026** (Pages 501 - 514)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
 13. **SQA SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2022** (Pages 515 - 524)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
 14. **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FQ4 2021/22 - EDUCATION SERVICE** (Pages 525 - 534)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
 15. **SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS 2021/22 - EDUCATION SERVICE** (Pages 535 - 554)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services
 16. **ARGYLL & BUTE LOCAL POLICING PLAN (2020-2023) - QUARTERLY REPORTS (QTR4 - 2021/22 & QTR1 - 2022/23)** (Pages 555 - 558)
Reports by Divisional Commander for Argyll and Bute, West Dunbartonshire Division, Police Scotland
 17. **SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - ARGYLL & BUTE PERFORMANCE REPORTS Q4 1 JANUARY - 31 MARCH 2022 & Q1 1 APRIL - 30 JUNE 2022** (Pages 559 - 578)
Reports by Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
 18. **ARGYLL & BUTE HSCP - PERFORMANCE REPORT MAY 2022** (Pages 579 - 590)
Report by Head of Strategic Planning, Performance and Technology, Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership
 19. **LIVE ARGYLL**
 - (a) Monitoring and Performance Reporting - Update Report (Pages 591 - 596)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services
 - (b) Live Argyll Annual Report 2021/22 (Pages 597 - 628)
Report by General Manager, Live Argyll
- REPORTS FOR NOTING**
20. **COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS** (Pages 629 - 640)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
 21. **CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE** (Pages 641 - 652)
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education
 22. **SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE** (Pages 653 - 668)

Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education

23. OUR CHILDREN, THEIR NURTURING EDUCATION (Pages 669 - 676)

Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education

24. EXTERNAL EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTION REPORT (Pages 677 - 682)

Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education

25. PERIOD PRODUCTS: LAUNCH EVENT PLAN (Pages 683 - 688)

Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services

26. GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN PROGRESS REPORT (Pages 689 - 712)

Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services

27. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2022/2023 (Pages 713 - 716)

28. LEARNING ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (LEIP) UPDATE - POTENTIAL BID FOR NEW MULL CAMPUS

(a) Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services and Education (Pages 717 - 724)

(b) Appendix A (Pages 725 - 726)

E1 (c) Appendix B (Pages 727 - 728)

(d) Appendix C (Pages 729 - 730)

The Committee will be asked to pass a resolution in terms of Section 50 (A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public for items of business with an "E" on the grounds that it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7a to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The appropriate paragraphs are:-

E1

Paragraph 8

The amount of any expenditure proposed to be incurred by the authority under any particular contract for the acquisition of property or the supply of goods or services.

Community Services Committee

Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor Math Campbell-Sturgess
Councillor Garret Corner	Councillor Audrey Forrest
Councillor Amanda Hampsey	Councillor Daniel Hampsey (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Graham Hardie	Councillor Andrew Kain
Councillor Paul Donald Kennedy	Councillor Liz McCabe
Councillor Dougie McFadzean	Councillor Julie McKenzie
Councillor Yvonne McNeilly (Chair)	Councillor Iain Paterson
Councillor Gemma Penfold	Councillor Douglas Philand
Margaret Anderson	Sandy MacPherson
Alison Palmer	Lorna Stewart

Contact: Fiona McCallum Tel: 01546 604392

MINUTES of MEETING of COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE held BY MICROSOFT TEAMS on THURSDAY, 10 MARCH 2022

Present: Councillor Yvonne McNeilly (Chair)

Councillor Jim Anderson	Councillor Iain Paterson
Councillor Gordon Blair	Councillor Gemma Penfold
Councillor Lorna Douglas	Councillor Alan Reid
Councillor Audrey Forrest	Councillor Elaine Robertson
Councillor Kieron Green	Margaret Anderson
Councillor Graham Hardie	Reverend Sandy MacPherson
Councillor Julie McKenzie	Alison Palmer
Councillor Liz McCabe	Lorna Stewart
Councillor Donald MacMillan BEM	

Also Present: Councillor Gary Mulvaney Councillor Donald Kelly

Attending: Douglas Hendry, Executive Director
 Wendy Brownlie, Head of Education: Learning and Teaching
 Stuart McLean, Committee Manager
 Chief Superintendent Lynn Ratcliff, Police Scotland
 Chief Inspector Emma Grimason, Police Scotland
 Chief Inspector Marlene Baillie, Police Scotland
 Group Commander Gregg McKearney, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
 Stephen Whiston, Head of Strategic Planning, Performance & Technology,
 Argyll & Bute HSCP

The Chair welcomed Wendy Brownlie to her first meeting of the Committee in her new role as Head of Education: Learning and Teaching.

The Chair then intimated that Wendy was nominated for, and subsequently awarded, the Excellence in Professional Learning Award.

This prestigious GTC Scotland Award recognises the central role that leadership at all levels plays in creating and sustaining professional learning environments where teacher professionalism can flourish and bring about sustained impact on learning and learners.

The work that Wendy has taken forward within Argyll and Bute, specifically enabling a culture of professional learning which is informed by the Professional Standards and what it means to become, be and grow as a teacher in Scotland, is being shared nationally as an example of excellent practice.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair congratulated Wendy on this magnificent achievement.

The Chair intimated that Councillor Donald Kelly, who was not a member of the Community Services Committee, had notified the Executive Director that he wished, in terms of Standing Order 22.1 to speak but not vote on item 10 of the Agenda. The Chair confirmed that she would exercise her discretion to allow Councillor Kelly to speak on item 10 of this Minute.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mary-Jean Devon.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Graham Hardie noted in relation to item 6 (Argyll & Bute HSCP – Performance Report January 2022) on the Agenda that he was appointed to the role of non-Executive Member of NHS Highland Board by the Council. Having taken note of the updated Standards Commission Guidance in relation to declarations (issued on 7 December 2021) with specific reference to section 5.4(c) he did not consider that he had a relevant connection and as such would remain the meeting and speak and vote on this report.

3. MINUTE

The Minute of the Community Services Committee held on 16 December 2021 was approved as a correct record.

4. ARGYLL & BUTE LOCAL POLICING PLAN (2020-2023) - QUARTERLY REPORT (QTR3 - 2021/22)

Chief Superintendent Lynn Ratcliff presented the Quarter 3 – 2021/22 update in relation to the Argyll and Bute Local Policing Plan 2020 – 2023 and she, along with Emma Grimason, Chief Inspector for Cowal, Bute and Helensburgh, and Marlene Baillie, Chief Inspector for Mid Argyll, Kintyre, Oban and Lorn, responded to a number of questions asked.

Decision

The Committee reviewed and noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report for Quarter 3 2021/22 by Divisional Commander for Argyll and West Dunbartonshire Division, Police Scotland, submitted)

5. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - ARGYLL & BUTE PERFORMANCE REPORT Q3 - 1 OCTOBER - 31 DECEMBER 2021

Group Commander Gregg McKearney presented a report highlighting Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's review of local performance within Argyll and Bute for Q3 2021-2022 and responded to a number of questions asked.

Decision

The Committee reviewed and noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Q3 2021-2022 Report by Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, submitted)

6. ARGYLL & BUTE HSCP - PERFORMANCE REPORT JANUARY 2022

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update on the impact of service performance with regards to the Covid-19 Pandemic and the progress made with regard to remobilising health and social care services in Argyll and Bute.

Decision

The Committee considered and noted the IJB Health and Social Care Partnership report presented to the IJB in January 2022.

(Reference: Report by Head of Strategic Planning, Performance & Technology, Argyll & Bute HSCP, submitted)

7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FQ3 2021/22 - EDUCATION SERVICE

A paper presenting the Committee with the FQ3 2021/22 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Education Service was considered.

Decision

The Committee reviewed and scrutinised the FQ3 2021/22 KPI Report as presented.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 24 January 2022, submitted)

8. KILCHRENAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

A report updating the Committee on the current situation of Kilchrenan Primary School and inviting Members to agree to the recommendations outlined was considered.

Decision

The Committee agreed that:

1. Kilchrenan Primary School be mothballed on a temporary basis and that the building be retained for two years on a care and maintenance basis;
2. Officers would prepare a review of the school's mothballing for the Committee's March 2023 meeting at which Members could decide on a continued period of mothballing or request Officers to begin a preliminary exercise with a view to starting the pre-consultation process to consider the future options for Kilchrenan Primary School; and
3. The community would have pre-arranged access to the building to promote community functions during the period of mothballing.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 10 March 2022, submitted)

9. NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR SCOTTISH EDUCATION

A paper providing an overview of the Argyll and Bute Primary achievement in Literacy and Numeracy for P1, P4 and P7 published by the Scottish Government on 14 December 2021 in Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) 2020/21, was considered along with an update on the Scottish Government's 2022 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education.

The paper also outlined Argyll and Bute Council Education Service's collaboration with the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative and detailed spending relating to the £600,000 of funding for Covid-19 recovery provided by Argyll and Bute Council.

Decision

The Committee:

1. considered the 2020/21 overview of the Primary and Secondary achievement in Literacy and Numeracy for P1, P4 and P7 within Argyll and Bute;
2. noted that ACEL achievement data was not collected in 2020 by Scottish Government due to the impact of Covid-19 and in 2021, the collection was limited to Literacy and Numeracy achievement in the Primary sector;
3. noted the update on the Scottish Government's 2022 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan for Scottish Education;
4. noted the level and nature of collaboration between Argyll and Bute Council Education Service and the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative; and
5. noted the spending in relation to the Council's £600,000 funding of Covid-19 recovery in Education.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated 15 February 2022, submitted)

10. SCHOOLS CONSULTATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - CAMPBELTOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Consideration was given to a recommendation from the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee meeting held on 1 December 2021, that the Committee exercise its functions of the Council as Education Authority, to request the Executive Director with responsibility for Education to prepare a report in respect to the potential for a proposal, in terms of the School (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 for a new Campbeltown Primary School which would replace the existing primaries of Dalintober and Castlehill and that this report be considered early in 2022.

Decision

The Committee:

1. noted the request from the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee;
2. further noted that, since 2017/18, the Council has delivered –
 - a) a new Campbeltown Grammar School, at a cost of c.£25million,
 - b) spent £1.312 million of capital and £246K of revenue on Campbeltown/South Kintyre primary schools; and has a further £843K of capital expenditure planned for the same schools in the three year period from 2022/23 to 2024/25;
3. further noted that this Committee, at their meeting on 25 August 2021 considered and agreed a report in relation to the Learning Estate Strategy which stated, at paragraph

4.15, under the heading 'Future Priorities' that 'longer term ambition would also be to review (the school) estate in Kintyre should future funding from Scottish Government become available'; and

4. agreed that the possibility of further school building in Kintyre, including a primary campus in Campbeltown, be kept under review through the Council's Learning Estate Strategy, and Learning Estates Investment Plan.

(Reference: Extract from Minute of Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Committee 1 December 2021, submitted)

11. EXTERNAL EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTION REPORT

A report providing details of all external education establishment inspection reports received across Argyll and Bute Education Service during the period September 2021 to December 2021 was before the Committee for information.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education dated February 2022, submitted)

12. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2021/2022

The Community Services Committee work plan for 2021 – 2022 was before the Committee for information.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the work plan.

(Reference: Community Services Committee Work Plan 2021-2022, submitted)

13. VALEDICTORY

The Chair acknowledged that this was the last meeting of this Committee in the lifetime of this Council. She thanked everyone for their participation, their concerned input, their scrutiny and their good humour over the years.

She also thanked the Executive Director, his support staff and the Education Team. Special thanks was extended to Councillor Kieron Green for his support as Vice Chair, to her fellow Ward Members, Councillor Gordon Blair and Councillor Alan Reid, and to Councillor Lorna Douglas in her role as Policy Lead for Education the Opposition.

She wished everyone hoping to come back every success at the ballot box and for those going off to do other things, she wished well for the future.

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****EDUCATION****25 AUGUST 2022**

THE ELECTION OF TEACHER REPRESENTATIVES TO THE COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee on the appointment of two non-voting teaching representatives to sit on the Community Services Committee to represent the teacher workforce.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Community Services Committee is asked to:
- a) Note the content of this report and endorse the appointments of Alison Palmer and Lorna Stewart as the representatives nominated as non-voting members of the Community Services Committee.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The constitution of the Council outlines that there should be two non-voting teachers elected by teaching staff employed in Local Authority schools in the Council's area to sit on the Committee where education matters are discussed.
- 3.2 Within Argyll and Bute Council the Community Services Committee has delegated authority to discharge the powers and duties as education authority.

4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Alison Palmer and Lorna Stewart have been nominated by teaching staff to represent them as non-voting members of the Community Services Committee for the duration of this Council.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Policy – This is in keeping with the Councils Constitution.
- 5.2 Financial – These posts are not remunerated.

- 5.3 Legal – None
- 5.4 HR – None.
- 5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty
 - 5.5.1 Equalities – None.
 - 5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – None.
 - 5.5.3 Islands – None.
- 5.6 Climate Change – None.
- 5.7 Risk – None.
- 5.8 Customer Service – None.

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly – Policy Lead for Education

For further information contact: Fiona Ferguson, Director Support Officer
Fiona.ferguson@argyll-bute.gov.uk

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****EDUCATION****25 AUGUST 2022**

EDUCATION CHANGE PROGRAMME - SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report has been prepared following the previous decision of the Community Services Committee on 10th June 2021 and details the programme of engagement which officers undertook with our communities, our staff, their representative bodies and the wider group of stakeholders in relation to the school leadership model proposals.
- 1.2 This report sets out the findings and outcomes of that consultation process and makes a number of recommendations in relation to the next steps for this element of the overall process.
- 1.3 The view of the Education Service is that the consultation exercise has highlighted that there are a number of risks that are being faced, and will continue to be faced, by the Service - specifically in relation to the current leadership model for education, the Service's ongoing work to deliver improvement, implications of national reform that the Service will require to address, key issues raised by stakeholders as part the consultation process, and other local and national challenges that the Service are encountering and will continue to encounter.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 In terms of the School Leadership consultation, the Community Services Committee are invited to:
- 2.1.1 Note the outcomes and analysis of the extensive engagement and consultation process, involving our communities, our staff and their representative bodies, our school pupils, and the wider group of stakeholders;
- 2.1.2 Agree that the consultation exercise provided valuable feedback from teachers, pupils and communities.
- 2.1.3 Recognise the commitment of the Education Service in striving to deliver the best possible outcomes for the children and young people of Argyll and Bute, in line with Members' ambitions;
- 2.1.4 Agree that the proposals as consulted on are not progressed;

- 2.1.5 Note the continued use of shared headships as a useful operational tool to address recruitment challenges;
- 2.1.6 Agree that the Education Service, working with Head Teachers, continue to work across all aspects of the Service to deliver improvement, to address the implications of national reform, to address the key issues raised in the consultation and other local and national challenges the Service is encountering, and will continue to encounter (such as those detailed in Sections 5 and 9.3 of this report and in Section 8 and Appendix 1 of this report).
- 2.2 In terms of the wider attainment gap and variations between schools, the Community Services Committee are invited to:
 - 2.2.1 Note the Audit Scotland findings that:
 - a) The poverty-related attainment gap remains wide and inequalities have been exacerbated by Covid-19. Progress on closing the gap has been limited and falls short of the Scottish Government's aims.
 - b) There is wide variation in education performance across councils, with evidence of worsening performance on some indicators in some councils.
 - 2.2.2 Agree that the Education Service continues to address the variation in performance within Argyll and Bute schools and work with Head Teachers at a local, and with partners at regional level, to improve outcomes for children and young people. Updates on progress would be reported to Committee within the current performance reports.

EDUCATION CHANGE PROGRAMME - SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The school leadership workstream, forming part of the wider Education Change Programme, was tasked with developing a strategy and models that could be implemented across our school estate in relation to the leadership and management of a collective of schools.
- 3.2 To meet the brief and most importantly the challenges of delivering excellent learning and teaching, empowered leaders and learners and best value across our learning estate we developed our own collective leadership model. Further details about this proposed model are set out in the 10th June 2021 Community Services Committee report on this issue. This model reflects the diversity of Argyll and Bute's schools and understands our learners, staff, parents and communities in their specific contexts. The main focus of the model centres upon the educational benefits for our learners.
- 3.3 The Argyll and Bute collective leadership model has been created with the input of Head Teachers and education professionals from across the authority. The model we have created is scalable, takes into account the needs of all sizes of school and reflects the rural nature and uniqueness of the delivery of education in our area.
- 3.4 There are a number of challenges in delivering education in an authority as diverse as our own. These challenges include the equality of educational opportunity, the experience and professional competence of school leaders and improving attainment for all. Effectively addressing these challenges will deliver educational benefits for both learners and school leaders.
- 3.5 For our learners the educational benefits include improved educational outcomes, improved curriculum development and learning and teaching meeting learners' needs, improved sharing of resources and improved partnership working with schools in a collective all resulting in positive and sustained destinations for our young people.
- 3.6 For our school leaders the educational benefits include empowerment of school leaders, career enhancement and progression, continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities and reducing the likelihood of failure to recruit to key posts.

- 3.7 This report sets out the findings and outcomes of a programme of engagement which was undertaken with our communities, our staff and their representative bodies, and the wider group of stakeholders in relation to the school leadership model proposal over the course of November 2021 – March 2022 following the previous decision of the Community Services Committee on 10th June 2021 directing this to be undertaken.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 In terms of the School Leadership consultation, the Community Services Committee are invited to:

4.1.1 Note the outcomes and analysis of the extensive engagement and consultation process, involving our communities, our staff and their representative bodies, our school pupils, and the wider group of stakeholders;

4.1.2 Agree that the consultation exercise provided valuable feedback from teachers, pupils and communities;

4.1.3 Recognise the commitment of the Education Service in striving to deliver the best possible outcomes for the children and young people of Argyll and Bute, in line with Members' ambitions;

4.1.4 Agree that the proposals as consulted on are not progressed;

4.1.5 Note the continued use of shared headships as a useful operational tool to address recruitment challenges;

4.1.6 Agree that the Education Service, working with Head Teachers, continue to work across all aspects of the Service to deliver improvement, to address the implications of national reform, to address the key issues raised in the consultation and other local and national challenges the Service is encountering, and will continue to encounter (such as those detailed in Sections 5 and 9.3 of this report and in Section 8 and Appendix 1 of this report).

- 4.2 In terms of the wider attainment gap and variations between schools, the Community Services Committee are invited to:

4.2.1 Note the Audit Scotland findings that:

- a) The poverty-related attainment gap remains wide and inequalities have been exacerbated by Covid-19. Progress on closing the gap has been limited and falls short of the Scottish Government's aims.
- b) There is wide variation in education performance across councils, with evidence of worsening performance on some indicators in some councils.

4.2.2 Agree that the Education Service continues to address the variation in performance within Argyll and Bute schools and work with Head Teachers at a local, and with partners at regional level, to improve outcomes for children and

young people. Updates on progress would be reported to Committee within the current performance reports.

5.0 BACKGROUND

5.1 The proposals which were the subject of the recent engagement and consultation exercise have been developed and prepared by senior education professionals from across the Authority, with a view to future proofing our education system against current and future challenges, and most importantly of all, to deliver equity and excellence in education provision for all our children and young people. The proposals have been developed having regard to impending national education reform and policy, in particular, “Putting Learners at the Centre – Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education – Professor Ken Muir” which will require changes to the status quo to deliver equity for children and young people:

[Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/putting-learners-centre-towards-future-vision-scottish-education/)

5.2 Some of the key sources of information currently available within the education system that have been used to inform the case for change and the proposal (this list is not exhaustive) are as follows:

- *OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) review of Scottish Education* – report published June 2021¹
- This was followed by a consultation on the reform of the SQA and Education Scotland led by Dr Ken Muir, which was announced at the end of September 2021 (final report published on 9th March 2022²) as well as a review of *Curriculum for Excellence – Implementation Framework* (published October 2021)³.
- The *Review of Additional Support for Learning Implementation (2020)* outlines a number of areas in which further focus is required by leaders and managers across the education system, in order to ensure that mainstreaming and inclusion, and the equitable allocation of resources is of priority. The proposed model creates the conditions to allow our schools to meet these expectations more fully. This review is known as the *Morgan Review*⁴.

¹ <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/improving-schools-in-scotland.htm>

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/putting-learners-centre-towards-future-vision-scottish-education/>

³ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2021/10/scotlands-curriculum-future-implementation-framework-oecds-2021-review-curriculum-excellence/documents/scotlands-curriculum-future-implementation-framework-oecds-2021-review-curriculum-excellence/scotlands-curriculum-future-implementation-framework-oecds-2021-review-curriculum-excellence/govscot%3Adocument/scotlands-curriculum-future-implementation-framework-oecds-2021-review-curriculum-excellence.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/review-additional-support-learning-implementation/>

- ICEA (International Council of Education Advisors) Report (2020) – this report places a focus on the importance of collaboration and partnership working within a '*networked learning system*' which links directly to the aspirations of the proposed model⁵.
- To deliver excellence and equity all schools and their partners must work together in a collaborative and collegiate way. The creation of collectives across Argyll and Bute will enhance and improve the cluster working that is already in place. Collectives that plan, grow, learn and work together ('*networked learning systems*') would enhance the potential for the local context of schools to have a stronger voice both within and across collectives to drive forward improved outcomes for our children and young people.
- The implementation of Regional Improvement Collaboratives (RICs) across Scotland in 2018 is evidence of the need to develop and embed real collaborative practice in order to facilitate empowerment and improvement across the education system. The recent Scottish Government RIC review, published on 16th December 2021, evidences early impact and the proposed model facilitates a replication of this need for collaborative potential in order to drive forward improved outcomes for all children and young people⁶
- *Scottish Government: Equity Audit* (January 2021)⁷
- *Scottish Government: Closing the poverty related attainment gap – progress report (2016-2021)*⁸
- *Audit Scotland – Improving Outcomes for Young People through School Education*⁹

5.3 Section 1 of the *Education (Scotland) Act* 1980 imposes a duty on all Education Authorities to secure for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education. The *Education (Scotland) Act* 2016 introduced the National Improvement Framework and the vision for excellence and equity of school education.

5.4 To deliver excellence and equity, we need sustainable schools of sustainable quality. Our schools need to be efficient and well managed, so that they can continue to be anchor institutions in their local communities.

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/international-council-education-advisers-report-2018-2020/documents/>

⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/review-regional-improvement-collaboratives/documents/>

⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/impact-assessment/2021/01/equity-audit-deepening-understanding-impact-covid-19-school-building-closures-children-socio-economically-disadvantaged-backgrounds-setting-clear-areas-focus-accelerating-recovery/documents/equity-audit/equity-audit/govscot%3Adocument/equity-audit.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/closing-poverty-related-attainment-gap-report-progress-2016-2021/>

⁹ <https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/publications/improving-outcomes-for-young-people-through-school-education>

- 5.5 Argyll and Bute's economic infrastructure requires a strong, sustainable school system. Without this the area cannot attract and retain people and skills. School rolls across the area are falling, putting the sustainability of some schools at risk. Some job vacancies in schools are becoming harder to fill, as the pool of skilled applicants is reduced.
- 5.6 The geography of Argyll and Bute raises further unique issues for education as the area's population is widely dispersed with many rural and island communities. A third of our schools have less than 30 pupils. The largest has over 1,200. Argyll and Bute spends more per pupil per head versus national spending per pupil per head with only 3 Local Authorities spending more (Shetland, Orkney and Eilean Siar). The table below indicates the increase in spend per pupil per head from 2016/17 to 2020/21:

Spending per pupil – 2020/2021*		
	Primary (£)	Secondary (£)
Scotland	5,916	7,657
Argyll and Bute	7,438	10,462
Spending per pupil – 2016/2017		
	Primary (£)	Secondary (£)
Scotland	5444	7,719
Argyll and Bute	6,500	9,553

* Source: Local Government Benchmarking Framework

- 5.7 The proposed leadership model is intended to increase leadership capacity in all of our schools. Its intention was to separate strategic and operational roles – empowering teachers to teach and leaders to lead. Further, the proposed model will enable collaboration, co-operation and sharing between nearby schools – thereby also improving and equalising access to resources. The proposed model also intends to support consistency of curriculum and teaching across a collective which in turn should increase career opportunities for school staff. Adding new roles at the top of the leadership structure, and also in middle leadership, increases opportunities for career progression. This enhances the overall recruitment offer, attracting higher calibre applicants for future roles.
- 5.8 No school closures are recommended as part of the proposal. It was always the intention that schools would keep their unique identities with only the leadership model changing.
- 5.9 The concept of shared headships is not a new one – neither nationally nor in Argyll and Bute. The following schools within Argyll and Bute are currently subject to joint/shared/executive headships, arising as a result of challenges recruiting qualified and competent Head Teachers, and so that the Education Authority can continue to fulfil its legislative duties in relation to these schools. Learning from the implementation of these joint/shared/executive headships, their successes and challenges was used to shape and influence the design of the collective leadership model:

- Achahoish and Clachan Primary Schools
- Inveraray and Furnace Primary Schools
- Arinagour and Kilninver Primary Schools
- Carradale, Castlehill and Drumlemble Primary Schools
- Glassary and Tayvallich Primary Schools
- Dalintober and Glenbarr Primary Schools
- Dunoon Grammar and Campbeltown Grammar Schools
- Easdale and Luing Primary Schools
- Innellan and Toward Primary Schools
- Keills and Small Isles Primary Schools
- Lochdonhead and Ulva Primary Schools
- Oban High School, Tiree Primary School and Tiree High School
- Rothesay Joint Campus and St Andrew's Primary School

Head Teachers of 3-18 schools have also been in place nationally for some time now. In Argyll and Bute we currently have five, 3-18 and Joint Campus schools. The Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative (RIC) consisting of eight local authorities (i.e. Shetland, Orkney, Highland, Moray, Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City, Argyll and Bute, and Eilean Siar (Western Isles) council areas) have shared headships where one Head Teacher has leadership responsibilities for two or more schools, with the exception of Aberdeen City. A Research Report from the University of Aberdeen was commissioned by the RIC into "*Shared Headships across the Northern Alliance*". The recommendations from this Report, when published, will be considered for our existing and future shared headships in Argyll and Bute.

- 5.10 Many other education authorities across Scotland have been looking at similar approaches due to experiencing similar issues and challenges as those currently being faced in Argyll and Bute, as set out above (e.g. Western Isles).
- 5.11 In November 2018 the Head Teacher Recruitment Working Group Report and Next Steps was published. This working group was established due to the apparent reduction in the number of applicants for Head Teacher posts across Scotland and to outline possible solutions to remedy the situation. This report included 13 recommendations and whilst progress was made towards the implementation of a number of the recommendations set out in the 2018 report, this work was paused as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The publication can be accessed using this link:

<https://www.gov.scot/groups/headteachers-recruitment-and-retention-working-group/>

Concerns continued to be raised by a number of stakeholders in relation to the recruitment and retention of Head Teachers, and in response to these concerns being shared at the Strategic Board for Teacher Education (SBTE), a commitment was made to convene a new refocused and revitalised Head Teacher Recruitment and Retention Working Group in order to drive forward further work to address improvements in this area through solution focussed actions. This working group met for the first time in January 2022 and its

purpose is to develop an action plan to help improve the recruitment and retention of Head Teachers in Scotland. The working group is engaging with school leaders to inform its work and will focus on the following four key themes: Attractiveness of the Head Teacher role (including workload and sustaining Head Teachers in post); Career journey; Data sharing; and System resilience. The action plan to be produced by this working group will be used to support the recruitment and retention of Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute.

- 5.12 The Covid-19 pandemic generated an increase in virtual education delivery during that period. However, it is proposed that this will continue to be developed and adopted as a new way of working moving forward given the increased use, feasibility and accessibility of digital learning to ensure equity of access to provision for children and young people regardless of place or context.

6.0 JUNE 2021 – COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE DECISION

- 6.1 At their meeting on 10th June 2021, the Community Services Committee considered a report pack setting out the key findings of ten workstreams which were undertaken as part of the Education Change Programme along with an update from the Executive Director with responsibility for Education who advised of representations received from members of the public regarding the proposals contained within the report pack.

- 6.2 Following consideration of the above, the Committee agreed to:

- a) Request that the Executive Director with responsibility for Education progresses with a programme of engagement with our communities, our staff and their representative bodies and the wider group of stakeholders in relation to the school leadership model.
- b) Request that the Executive Director with responsibility for Education reports back to a future meeting of the Committee on the outcomes from the engagement action, before progressing these elements of the Education Change Programme.
- c) Note that the remaining elements of the programme which require decisions from Members would be brought forward as part of the further report agreed in terms of recommendations 1 and 2 above.

- 6.3 In terms of Part (c) of the above decision, remaining parts of the Education Change Programme which require further consideration and decisions by Members will be brought before the Committee in the form of subsequent reports at the relevant times.

7. ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION EXERCISE

- 7.1 Following the June 2021 Committee decision (set out in Section 6, above), the Council commissioned external engagement specialists, Stand, to assist in the coordination and facilitation of the consultation and engagement exercise. Stand were procured in May 2021 via a competitive tendering process using the Scottish

Government's Creative Services Framework and have a client base that spans the public and private sector.

- 7.2 At the outset of the consultation exercise, a website¹⁰ was published that explained the proposal in a way that was accessible and easy to understand and provided clear ways for people to ask questions and have their say. It also provided the full engagement timetable. A document could be downloaded from the website describing the proposal in full. Variations on that document were created for consultation with specific groups, each tailored for its own audience (e.g. Head Teachers, or school pupils, etc.).
- 7.3 The Empowering Our Educators website was published on 29th November 2021 and the Council's social media channels were used to promote awareness to the general public.
- 7.4 Audience-specific documents were disseminated through the website to particular audiences:
- 29th November 2021 – Parent and Community Councils
 - 29th November 2021 – Elected Members
 - 3rd December 2021 – Head Teachers and school enquiries email addresses to disseminate to school staff (prior engagement on the proposal was conducted with Head Teachers in focus group scenarios).
- 7.5 All Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute were invited to a series of workshop sessions on 26th October – 2nd November 2021 with the Heads of Service for Education to explore the context and reasons for change. Following that, our Head Teachers were engaged in groups of three to six to review the proposal (11th – 25th November 2021). 94% of Head Teachers across the local authority took part in these sessions. The remainder, who were unavailable through illness, and/or recently appointed Head Teachers, attended sessions on 14th February and 4th March 2022.
- 7.6 Consultation with Head Teachers included a second round of engagement. With the opportunity once again for Head Teachers to come together in small groups to share their views. These sessions took place from 17th – 26th March 2022.
- 7.7 There was a dedicated area on the Empowering Our Educators website for school staff. Materials explaining the proposal and how it would affect them were shared with all school staff via direct email and general school enquiries emails, and also disseminated by their Head Teachers.
- 7.8 Three webinars for school staff took place on 15th February, 22nd February, and 14th March 2022 respectively. The webinars were led by the Education Heads of Service and the Education Manager (Transformation). Attendance and engagement at those sessions was high.

¹⁰ www.empoweringoureducators.co.uk

- 7.9 Education managers and officers in the Council's central Education Team participated in facilitated sessions during the week beginning 29th November 2021. Sessions were also held for the Educational Psychology, Inclusion and Equity, Early Years and School Support teams with an opportunity to find out more about the proposals and ask questions of the Heads of Service.
- 7.10 Consultation with the relevant Trade Unions and Professional Associations went on throughout the consultation period. On 29th and 30th November 2021, Trade Unions and professional association members were invited to an information and discussion session. Following on from this, the Heads of Education and Education Manager (Transformation) met with AHDS, SLS and EIS regional representatives to present the proposal and answer questions. A joint meeting of Trade Union Representatives was held on the 9th December 2021 with individual follow up meetings: EIS – 9th February 2022; AHDS - 9th February 2022 and 9th March 2022.
- 7.11 Engagement is ongoing with the Joint Services Committee, the four weekly meeting of Trade Union, professional associations, HR and the Education Service where the proposals and consultation are a standard agenda item.
- 7.12 Five Q&A sessions were hosted for chairpersons of Community Councils and Parent Councils between 21st and 28th January 2022. The Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) presented the proposal and answered questions from a total of 93 chairpersons from across Argyll and Bute at these sessions.
- 7.13 Thereafter, chairpersons were encouraged to share details of the proposal with their Community Councils and Parent Councils for discussion, and feedback in a structured fashion through the Empowering Our Educators website. The Council offered the support of an education professional from the Education Services team to attend their discussions and answer any questions. 37 Community Councils and Parent Councils took that offer up.
- 7.14 Elected members were invited to attend sessions, held between mid-December 2021 and mid-January 2022, with the Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) to explore the proposal, give feedback, and have their questions answered one-to-one. Twenty one Councillors engaged with the four sessions held.
- 7.15 A briefing was held for members of the local press and representatives of community newsletters on 25th January 2022. An interview was also arranged with the Times Education Supplement on 16th February 2022 attended by the Heads of Service, the Education Transformation Manager and the Business Improvement Manager.
- 7.16 All parents/carers of children and young people in Argyll and Bute schools received a summary of the proposal titled '*In a Nutshell*' via the Xpressions app/email on 4th February 2022. This was also shared with all school staff by email.

- 7.17 The Chief Executive, Executive Director with responsibility for Education, Education Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) met with Jenni Minto MSP and Jackie Baillie MSP to discuss the proposals on 15th February and 25th March 2022 respectively. A meeting was also attended by the Education Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) with Fearghal Kelly, Scottish Government representative, on the 28th March 2022 to discuss aspects of the proposed leadership model.
- 7.18 The facility was provided for any individual to book a one-to-one call with an education professional from the Council to personally discuss the proposal. This opportunity was promoted through local press and social media. 28 such calls were held during the consultation period.
- 7.19 Questions and feedback on the proposal continue to arrive through the website and via email to support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk. To date over 400 emails and enquiries have been received and responded to.
- 7.20 Three sets of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) have been collated, responded to and published. December questions were collated and responded to in FAQ 1, published through the website on 6th January 2022. January questions were collated and responded to in FAQ 2, published through the website on 4th February 2022. February questions were collated and responded to in FAQ 3, published through the website on 4th March 2022.
- 7.21 The Council met with representatives of Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Comann nam Pàrant on the 8th February 2022 to discuss the proposal and explore opportunities for promoting Gaelic culture and language in the proposed school collectives. This was followed up by consultation sessions offered specifically to parents of children and young people in Gaelic Medium Education on 22nd March 2022. A fourth set of FAQs was also published on 11th March 2022 specifically for Gaelic related questions – both in English and Gaelic.
- 7.22 The Executive Director, Policy Lead and Heads of Service met with Diocese and SCES representatives to discuss the proposal in relation to denominational education in Argyll and Bute on the 28th May 2021. The Education Manager (Transformation) held a follow up meeting on the 8th February 2022.
- 7.23 The proposals were shared with the Armed Forces and Community Partnership at their meeting on 25th February 2022.
- 7.24 Age and context appropriate materials explaining the proposal were provided to all Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute for them to share, supporting Pupil Council engagement in every school. These materials could also be viewed by the public on the website. Pupil Councils had their own section in the Empowering our Educators website, including presentations, videos and feedback forms. These were developed through focus groups with pupils and feedback from teachers and Head Teachers across the Authority.
- 7.25 The Education Service's Inclusion and Equity Team liaised with Head Teachers with regard to engagement with ASN pupils across the local authority, offering

additional support or further differentiated materials where there was a request for this.

- 7.26 The consultation was primarily conducted via the Empowering our Educators website. That contained clear guidance on how to submit feedback in a structured and meaningful manner. This also protected the integrity of the collected responses and ensured that nothing was missed – with all responses being stored securely and backed up.
- 7.27 However, feedback did also arrive through other channels. The Council agreed to accept feedback in whichever form it arrived. The Council committed to acknowledging every piece of feedback received, but could not guarantee receipt of feedback which was not submitted through the correct channels (i.e. the website or the support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk email address).
- 7.28 The consultation and engagement exercise was open for responses until 31st March 2022. The consultation period was extended twice – to 4th March 2022, and latterly to 31st March 2022 to allow more time for stakeholder engagement. The pupil consultation exercise remained open until 1st April 2022.

8. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS FROM CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

- 8.1 The raw feedback data from the consultation was collated and analysed. As per the Scottish Government’s Consultation Good Practice Guidance, the Council used an external agency, Stand, to ensure the integrity of the collected raw data. Stand collated and analysed the data and produced a report on this for consideration by the Education Service, which is attached at Appendix 1 for Members’ consideration.
- 8.2 Overall there were 804 responses to the consultation, with the majority (93%) of these being submitted via the dedicated response form on the Empowering our Educators online portal. The remaining responses were emailed in a variety of formats. Irrespective of how responses were made, all were considered and analysed in a consistent and equitable manner.
- 8.3 The response rate is very encouraging and illustrates the high level of engagement with this Argyll and Bute focussed consultation. To put this into perspective, there were 1,291 responses received for the recent Scotland wide consultation undertaken by the Scottish Government in respect of the National Care Service (NCS). One of the themes emerging from the findings is criticism of the consultation process, including concerns about a perceived lack of engagement and that the consultation period was not long enough. The Scottish Government consultation process was identified by some respondents as best practice and having regard to their approach, it can be argued that the consultation and engagement exercise undertaken by the Education Service was certainly no less extensive and inclusive, as set out in Section 7, above. For example, the Scottish Government facilitated 34 events as part of the national NCS consultation which ran over a 12 week period; whereas this

consultation ran for 17 weeks and facilitated in excess of 120 events across stakeholder groups (excludes sessions facilitated by school staff for pupils).

- 8.4 The findings of the consultation are set out within the report attached at Appendix 1, and Members are encouraged to read this in detail. The purpose of this covering report is to provide a general overview of the level of engagement and the responses received from the various stakeholders who took the time to engage in the process. It is also important to highlight some contextual factors which impacted upon and distorted the consultation process.
- 8.5 The promotion of misinformation, for example by lobbying bodies, and a campaign by the largest teaching union, was an issue from the outset, even prior to the proposals being issued to stakeholders and the consultation going live. This unfortunately led to stakeholders being misinformed in respect to key aspects of the proposals. For example, it was widely promoted that the proposals included plans to remove Head Teacher posts from schools, claims of illegality with regard to the creation of Executive Heads, risks of school closure, and reductions in pupil/teacher ratios and contact time. As the consultation process developed, the Education Service and wider project team spent an increasing amount of effort addressing questions and concerns around the misinformation in circulation, which was disruptive and detracted from the real focus of the consultation.
- 8.6 We made efforts to involve a wide range of stakeholders in order to hear individual, local area voices as much as possible. The analysis report indicates that individual voices may have been lost to a certain degree. For example, the lobbying activity resulted in evidence of very similar phrases/responses being submitted by a number of Parent Councils, and Community Councils, rather than responses distinct to and reflective of their different local areas. This is a concern as one of the key roles of Parent Councils is to represent and provide the views of all parents.
- 8.7 It is also evident that there continues to be a mistrust of the Council and Education Service in general, which has manifested itself via this exercise and, coupled with the promotion of misinformation, has resulted in a highly negative response to the proposals.
- 8.8 The findings report illustrates that a number of common themes have emerged from the consultation responses, with the majority of these being specific to the Education Service and the proposals. However, it is recognised that there are wider social and economic issues such as recruitment and housing, which could prevent the model from being implemented effectively, and that such challenges can be compounded within island communities. These are nationally recognised issues, which require a multi-agency approach across Argyll and Bute. Further reference to these wider challenges is made at Section 5, above, and within the Island Communities Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 2 of this report.
- 8.9 Furthermore, it is important to note that whilst the focus on this consultation was on the future direction of the Education Service, there are a wide range of

contextual factors which impact on the Council, and local government/the public sector as a whole. In addition to the aforementioned issues around recruitment and housing, other factors include the Resource Spending Review, national education reform, cost of living pressures, and the demographic challenges that Argyll and Bute faces - including a declining and ageing population. All of these complex issues contribute to the ever changing environment that councils operate within and the need to be proactive in order to continually adapt and be 'on the front foot'. In such circumstances the 'status quo' is not a suitable option.

8.9.1 As per the "COSLA – Respect our Communities" Report¹¹ – page 6 – "Councils have less flexibility in how they use funding. (Revenue) Funding dedicated to national policy initiatives, increased from £1 billion in 2019/20 to £1.5 billion in 2020/21, equating to 14.1 per cent of council funding from the Scottish Government."¹² According to the report, in 2020-21 there was £482m less general, undirected grant funding when compared to 2013/14. What appears as a cash increase is for new policies - Early Learning and Childcare, free personal care, health and social care integration - and commitments like teachers' pay and pensions, pupil/teacher ratio. This approach impacts how local authorities deliver sustainable services that can fully support communities.

8.10 Respondents to the consultation can be categorised as follows:-

8.10.1 Pupils

All Primary and Secondary School Pupil Councils were engaged as part of the consultation with age appropriate presentations and videos, which were developed through focus groups with pupils and feedback from Teachers/Head Teachers across the Authority. The consultation sessions were facilitated independently by their Teachers, with pupils being asked what they liked and disliked about the proposals. Overall, responses were received from 53 Pupil Councils.

Of all the respondents to the consultation as a whole, the feedback from our children and young people can be viewed as being the most balanced, with considered responses being given to the perceived positive and negative elements of the proposals. The responses also illustrated the kind and caring nature of pupils across Argyll and Bute, with many considering the potential impact of the proposals on their peers and teachers.

The key headlines emerging from the consultation and engagement with pupils can be located on pages 148-175 of the findings report.

8.10.2 School staff

For the purposes of the consultation this stakeholder group included Head Teachers, middle leadership (depute head, faculty head or Principal Teacher

¹¹ https://www.cosla.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/23010/Respect-our-communities-protect-our-funding-Jan-21.pdf

¹² Source: Audit Scotland Local Government in Scotland Overview 2020

role), Teachers, Early Years staff, non-teaching staff and classroom support staff. 169 responses were received, which represents an 8.2% response rate.

As set out in Section 7, above, this group of staff were engaged via a number of different methods - including group workshops, one to one sessions and email communications, with a dedicated area set up on the Empowering Our Educators website.

The main benefits of the model identified by school staff as a whole were (i) more collaboration between schools, (ii) giving Heads more time to lead schools, instead of having them teach as well, (iii) sharing specialisms with neighbouring schools, and (iv) more teachers in classrooms. However, when asked whether they felt the model will positively affect the future education of young people in Argyll and Bute 67% strongly disagreed or disagreed with this, 16.2% strongly agreed or agreed, and the remaining 16.8% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The key headlines emerging from the consultation and engagement with school staff can be located at pages 48-147 of the Report. One of the key recommendations arising from the findings report, based on the outcome of the consultation with Head Teachers, is that any further development of the model should be carried out exclusively with this stakeholder group to ensure that their needs are met.

8.10.3 Community bodies

One hundred and five responses were received from community bodies across Argyll and Bute, including Community Councils (27 responses), Parent Councils (76 responses) and 2 individual employers/organisations.

Representatives of these bodies were emailed on 29th November 2021 with audience specific materials detailing the proposals and how to engage with the process. Chairpersons were encouraged to share the proposals/toolkit with their respective bodies and arrange for all independent feedback to be collated, representing all views. The Education Service offered the support of educational professionals to attend their discussions and answer any questions. This offer was taken up by 37 Community Councils and Parent Councils. Five specific Q&A sessions were also held between 21st and 28th January 2022, hosting 93 Chairs/representatives of community groups. The one-to-one 20 minute sessions with an educational professional were also available to this group of stakeholders.

In general there was a reluctance from this group of stakeholders to use the dedicated response form. This was mainly based on the misunderstanding that the benefits section of the form was a mandatory field and required to be completed, which was not the case. On this basis, a large proportion of the responses from community groups were submitted outwith the Empowering Our Educators portal. It is concerning to note that the majority of responses from community groups appear to have been heavily influenced by misinformation promoted by a number of lobbyists. As a result, a significant proportion responded to the proposals with broad, non-school specific content.

One of the key roles of a Parent Council is to represent the views of the entire parent forum but unfortunately, it appears that only some voices are reflected - some parents expressed their concern about not being consulted or their positive views had not been captured in the overall response submitted.

The key headlines emerging from the consultation and engagement with community bodies can be located on Pages 176-201 of the findings Report.

8.10.4 Public bodies and community groups

Responses were received from the following public bodies and community groups:-

- Diocese of Argyll and the Isles
- Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- Comann nam Pàrant
- The Educational Institute of Scotland
- Association of Head Teachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS)
- School Leaders Scotland (SLS)
- Joint Union response – Oban High School
- Argyll and Bute Community Network for Carers of Care Experienced Children
- North West Mull Community Woodland Company
- Wise4All

As detailed in Section 7, above, the Education Service consulted with the relevant Trade Unions and Professional Associations throughout the consultation period, including AHDS, EIS, SLS and JSC representatives. Meetings were also held with the Diocese and representatives from SCES on several occasions to discuss the implications of the proposal for denominational education in Argyll and Bute.

The key headlines emerging from the consultation and engagement with this stakeholder group can be found on pages 202-215 of the findings report.

8.10.5 Public

A total of 478 responses were received from the public. For the purposes of this consultation exercise, that wider stakeholder group can be broken down as follows:-

Parents, guardians or carers – 387 responses
Residents of Argyll and Bute – 87 responses
Non-resident of Argyll and Bute – 2 responses
Primary pupil – 1 response
Secondary school pupil – 1 response

In addition to the engagement parents, guardians and carers should have had from their respective Parent Councils, they also received details of the

proposals directly from the Education Service via email or the Xpressions Application used to communicate with all parents of Argyll and Bute pupils. Local press and Social Media were also utilised to promote the consultation to the wider public.

In line with Community Groups, the public were reluctant to use the dedicated response form, based on the misunderstanding that the benefits section of the form was a mandatory field and required to be completed, which was not the case. It is apparent that the responses from the public were heavily influenced by the wide range of misinformation which was promoted by a few lobbying activists.

The main benefits of the model identified by this stakeholder group as a whole were (i) sharing specialisms with neighbouring schools, (ii) more collaboration between schools, and (iii) more equality between schools with resources better shared. This is comparative to the responses received from community groups. However, when asked whether they felt the model will positively affect the future education of young people in Argyll and Bute 82% strongly disagreed or disagreed, 11% strongly agreed/agreed and the remaining 7% neither agreed nor disagreed.

The key headlines emerging from the consultation and engagement with this stakeholder group can be found on pages 216-245 of the findings report.

- 8.11 The preceding paragraphs provide a flavour of the feedback that has been received from each stakeholder group. Members are asked to consider this commentary, alongside the full report, produced at Appendix 1. In addition a copy of the raw data/responses can be found on the Empowering Our Educators website [here](#). It should be noted that personal data has been redacted in line with the requirements of data protection legislation.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The view of the Education Service is that the consultation exercise has highlighted that there are a number of risks that are being faced, and will continue to be faced, by the Service - specifically in relation to the current leadership model for education, the Service's ongoing work to deliver improvement, implications of national reform that the Service will require to address, key issues raised by stakeholders as part the consultation process, and other local and national challenges that the Service are encountering and will continue to encounter.
- 9.2 If the above challenges cannot be effectively addressed and the 'status quo' remains, there are a number of risks associated with this for the Council as Education Authority, including becoming reactive to changes in the educational landscape at a local and national level:
- a) A prosperous and inclusive economy lies at the heart of council priorities notwithstanding the challenges that we face e.g. demographic and housing challenges. Our Education Service faces population challenges and these

are evidenced by our school roll projections which vary across our geographical areas but are declining overall. School roll projections can be found in Appendix 4.

- b) While there are some areas within Argyll and Bute where populations are growing, these are exceptions to the wider trends across the area. Our total population is falling, and the age profile is changing. In short, we are getting older.

This is a trend that can be traced back over several decades. According to the mid-year estimates for 2020 (published by NRS), just under 16,000 (16% of our population) people in Argyll and Bute were aged between 0 and 19 years of age. This compares to just over 21,000 (23%) in 2000. This can be compared to the proportion of the population aged 45 and over in both years and who, on the basis of their age, are unlikely to have additional children. In 2000, there were just over 40,900 (45% of the population) aged 45 and over. In 2020, there were just under 48,000 people (56% of the population) in this age group.

Numbers of births each year have been falling in Argyll and Bute over time. In 2000, 792 births were recorded in our area. In 2020, the number of births was 592, a decrease of 25%. Although, post-COVID, people may be looking to relocate to rural areas, it is too early to say what the impact of these moves may be. However, it is unlikely that they will be enough to offset the wider demographic challenges our area faces.

- c) Council spending on primary and secondary education across Scotland increased by 5.1 per cent in real terms between 2013/14 and 2018/19, from £4.1 billion to £4.3 billion. Most of the real-terms increase in spend can be attributed to the Attainment Scotland Fund, which the Scottish Government set up in 2015/16 to close the poverty-related attainment gap. When this is excluded, real-terms spending increased by 0.7 per cent during the period, to just over £4.1 billion. The Scottish Government had put over £200 million of extra money into Covid-19 mitigation measures and education recovery by early January 2021¹³. This includes:

- £80m to recruit teachers and support staff over 2 years.
- £50m for costs associated with health measures, enhanced cleaning and other logistics.
- £25m to provide digital devices and internet connections to schools.
- £1.5m capital funding for school transport.
- An additional £45m in January 2021 for recruiting additional staff, additional digital devices and providing additional family support.

The Scottish Government has indicated that it expects councils to be able to retain the additional teacher posts in future by funding them through other teachers retiring and leaving the profession. COSLA has highlighted potential risks with this approach if teachers do not leave at the rate

¹³ Source: *Audit Scotland – Improving Outcomes for Young People through School Education*

expected which will cause a shortfall in funding for councils and be a pressure on education budgets. In addition, councils have reported that they do not expect the £50m for logistics to be sufficient to meet the additional costs of Covid-19 measures placing pressure on education budgets.

- d) Future funding for the Education Service is unknown and a flexible approach may be required with the reorientation of resource a key aspect of meeting future challenges.
- e) The Standard for Headship qualification became a prerequisite for teachers taking up their first permanent Head Teacher post in local authority and grant-aided schools in Scotland on 1st August 2020. In circumstances where the Education Service appoint a candidate without the Standard for Headship qualification, and this is not achieved within the specified 30 month period, there is a risk that this post will then become vacant again. A loss of staff expertise as a result of recruitment or retention issues will negatively impact the delivery of excellence and equity to our children and young people.
- f) There are variations in outcomes achieved by young people across Argyll and Bute. This reflects the national picture across the 32 Local Authorities (Appendix 5). One of the key recommendations in the Audit Scotland Report by the ICEA (International Council of Education Advisors) is of *“a theory of change and leadership approaches that emphasise distributed responsibility and engagement, professional judgment and agency, robust collaborative professionalism, and local energy and ownership”*. It was the intention, through the leadership proposal consulted on, that the Executive Head Teachers would support us to make better use of data to focus and work with their Head Teacher colleagues to drive improvement activity at school and local level making informed choices and decisions. In turn, Executive Head Teachers would work with central Officers to drive improvement activity at regional and national level to deliver excellence and equity for all of our children and young people regardless of place or context.

Data reflective of both the national and local picture of outcomes for children and young people can be found in Appendix 5. Further analysis of outcomes for our children and young people of Argyll and Bute can be found in our Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024, which is detailed at Agenda Item 6 of this Community Services Committee pack.

- g) There is scope for further improvement to our school inspection outcomes and to consistency of grading at Very Good and above. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, there were no graded inspections conducted by Education Scotland during April 2020 - August 2022, with Inspection Report publications ending in June 2020. During Covid-19, Education Scotland engaged with schools on recovery visits. Argyll and Bute school engagement can be accessed at Agenda item 25 of this Community Services Committee pack.

The table below provides an overview of inspection outcomes from January 2019 - June 2020 at national, regional and local levels. A total of 544 school inspections were conducted nationally, 124 of these were conducted

regionally (Northern Alliance partners) and 23 of these were conducted locally within Argyll and Bute. It evidences that the majority of Argyll and Bute school outcomes are graded at Good and Satisfactory whilst nationally the majority of outcomes are graded at Very good and Good. We must ensure that the time to focus and collaborate on leadership of change and strategic priorities to deliver excellence in learning and teaching both within and across our geographical areas is available to our Head Teachers.

Quality Indicator (QI) - Grading January 2019 – June 2020			
QI 1.3 – Leadership of Change	National	Regional	Local
Number of Schools Inspected	397	124	23
Excellent	3	0	0
Very Good	47	3	0
Good	93	23	5
Satisfactory	63	30	5
Weak	12	11	2
Unsatisfactory	3	0	0
QI 2.3 – Learning, Teaching and Assessment			
Number of Schools Inspected	397	124	23
Excellent	0	3	0
Very Good	56	4	0
Good	198	50	9
Satisfactory	124	52	13
Weak	19	15	1
Unsatisfactory	0	0	0
QI 3.2 – Raising Attainment and Achievement			
Number of Schools Inspected	397	124	23
Excellent	3	2	0
Very Good	59	8	0
Good	194	49	13
Satisfactory	117	51	7
Weak	24	13	3
Unsatisfactory	0	1	0
QI 3.1 – Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion			
Number of Schools Inspected	221	67	12
Excellent	3	0	0
Very Good	57	8	1
Good	102	36	4
Satisfactory	50	15	7
Weak	7	8	0
Unsatisfactory	2	0	0

As Education Scotland resume school inspections in September 2022 using their existing models of both short and long inspections we will continue to work with them to evaluate and improve the performance of our schools. Inspection data is contained in Appendix 6.

- h) From 2017-22 there has been an overall fall in school rolls by geographical area, with the exception of Oban, Lorn and the Isles, as illustrated below:

Geographical Area	Overall % change in Primary and Secondary Roll over 5 years¹ (2017/18 to 2021/22)
Bute and Cowal	-2.31%
Helensburgh and Lomond	-5.34%
Mid Argyll and Kintyre	-0.29%
Oban, Lorn and the Isles	+0.75%
Overall % Change	-1.97%

The table below indicates the overall % change in roll over 5 years by sector:

Geographical Area	Primary		Secondary	
	Overall % change in Roll over 5 years¹	Increase/Decrease #pupils	Overall % change in Roll over 5 years¹	Increase/Decrease #pupils
Bute and Cowal	-10.82%	-140	9.19%	88
Helensburgh and Lomond	-7.77%	-136	-2.54%	-32
Mid Argyll and Kintyre	0.75%	10	-1.51%	-17
Oban, Lorn and the Isles	-5.60%	-83	9.73%	102
% Change	-5.96%	-349	3.21%	141

Pupil Projections for Scotland and Local Authorities 2022-2027 indicate a further drop in overall Primary roll from 5,500 pupils to 4,600 pupils in 2027. As our school rolls fall, there is likely to be impact on the leadership structure of a school as per local and national SNCT agreements. Currently we have 7 primary schools where the leadership post of DHT has been lost or is at risk. This is and will continue to negatively impact middle leadership roles that support a Head Teacher when leading change and improvement. Given the significant amount of national education reform to take place this is a risk to the delivery of excellence and equity. School roll data can be found in Appendix 4.

- i) Scottish Education is undergoing a significant period of national education reform. Within Argyll and Bute, the Education Service must respond to both the policy and legislative requirements from the Scottish Parliament. The status quo is not an option and creative and innovative solutions will be required to deliver the future

vision for Scottish Education as reported on by Professor Ken Muir - "*Putting Learners at the Centre*".

- j) Implementing reform requires leaders to have increased time to focus on strategy rather than operational matters. Every Head Teacher speaks of the pressure of their current workload throughout their feedback. They currently report an upward trend in working hours that is difficult to manage and, without change to our current leadership model, an increase in working hours is likely. This could lead to a reduction in staff morale, wellbeing and commitment with the implementation of national education reform which would only add to their workload.
- k) If we retain the status quo of teaching heads then time to enhance their focus on ensuring high quality learning and teaching and increased collaboration among practitioners, as recommended by national education reform, will not be available.
- l) Staff cover requirements can impact a Head Teacher's ability to concentrate on their core work and impact on their time to lead teaching and learning. Without reorientation of resource to recruit additional teachers to remove or significantly reduce cover requirements, Head Teachers will continue to support cover in classrooms.
- m) If there are insufficient opportunities for Head Teachers to actively engage in national education reform due to current and increasing workload this may lead to increasing uncertainty for them.
- n) Implementing national education reform at a local level will require sufficient resource and capacity for that change to be delivered within the existing remits and responsibilities of our Head Teachers. Without reorientation of resource, additional funding may be required.
- o) The inability to recruit Head Teachers to schools of low numbers as a result of the salary arising from the national job sizing toolkit. This is likely to have a particular impact on our rural and island schools and the sustainability of the delivery of education in some areas. For example, the salary for a Head Teacher or Depute Head Teacher on scale point 1 (SCP1) is £52,350. Using the national job sizing toolkit our schools with the lowest roll numbers tend to result in the salary for a Head Teacher of £53,964. A Depute Head Teacher in a school with a larger roll placed on SCP3 would receive a salary of £55,740. This can prevent Depute Head Teachers from applying for Head Teacher posts and undertaking the additional responsibilities of that post.
- p) It is imperative that we continue to strive for excellence and equity for our children and young people across Argyll and Bute, regardless of place or context. Adapting our current leadership model in light of the above risks that are being, or are about to be, experienced by our schools will ensure that we are able to implement national education reform as it unfolds and can respond agilely to it. Changing our leadership model in light of national education reform will support us to sustain our small schools in their local communities, raise attainment and develop our future leaders. The status quo is not an option. The Education

Service continues its commitment in striving to deliver the best possible outcomes for the children and young people of Argyll and Bute, in line with Members' ambitions and the changing national landscape of education.

10.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Policy: The recommendations as set out in this report fit with both national and local education policy.
- 10.2 Financial: Projected costs and other financial information is as set out in the above report.
- 10.3 Legal: The Education Authority are examining the issues and challenges as set out in this report. Adopting the report's recommendations will ensure that the Authority continues to fulfil its statutory duties.
- 10.4 HR: Full and detailed consultation has taken place, and will continue to take place, with Trade Unions.
- 10.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out in relation to the proposal which is attached as **Appendix 3**.
 - 10.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics
 - 10.5.2 Socio-economic Duty
 - 10.5.3 Islands: An Islands Communities Impact Assessment has been carried out in relation to the proposal and is attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 10.6 Climate Change: None
- 10.7 Risk: Every effort will be taken to mitigate risks if and when officers are directed to progress with the recommendations as set out in this report.
- 10.8 Customer Service: Delivering an improved Education Service for the benefit of our children, young people, and all other school users is the paramount consideration of this report.

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Policy Lead: Councillor Yvonne McNeilly

12th August 2022

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Stand Consultation Findings Report

Appendix 2: Island Community Impact Assessment (ICIA)

Appendix 3: Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (EQSEIA)

Appendix 4: School Roll Data

Appendix 5: Attainment Data

Appendix 6: Inspection Data

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STAND

Argyll and Bute Council
School leadership transformation

Consultation findings

August 2022



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Argyll and Bute Council have proposed transformative change to school leadership in the authority to address the challenges its schools face due to their unique breadth of different settings.

The proposal is based around collective leadership, grouping schools into small collectives, each with a shared collective leadership team.

The proposal has been under public and professional consultation for 11 months, to present the benefits and rationale for the school leadership transformation and capture concerns and feedback.

We facilitated a comprehensive, inclusive and transparent consultation process to inform every interested person in Argyll and Bute about the proposals and provide them with a clear pathway to input and respond.

Understanding gleaned will be used by The Education Transformation Board to inform and drive their recommendations, before its presentation to Argyll and Bute Council for decision.



Respondents and responses

Argyll and Bute has an active, engaged community both in and out of its schools. Staff, pupils and Pupil Councils were especially keen to be involved in the discussion.

Overall there were 804 individual responses to the consultation.* The majority of these (93%) were consultation form responses which were received through the Empowering our Educators online portal (748).

In addition, there were 60 email submissions that did not follow the consultation form structure. These responses ranged in length from individuals writing an email through to organisations producing a report.

Finally, there was direct engagement with 68 Head Teachers through group workshop sessions.

The response to the proposal was overwhelmingly negative, especially from Community Councils and Parent Councils. That should be balanced with the knowledge that those audiences were open to heavy influence from pressure/campaign groups.

Respondents communicated mistrust in the Council and thus in the proposal. The consultation itself was heavily criticised, with almost all respondents voicing concern that not enough detail on the proposal was being provided.

Head Teachers are the key group for engagement, and having spent more time working with them, they have a deeper understanding of the proposal and as a group they are more positive about it. Most Head Teachers ultimately believe the proposal is flawed, but has potential. They are open to further discussions.

* Calculated by every single response, including anyone who responded more than once that came in via the dedicated website forms and emails to support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk

Comments on the consultation process

There are two distinct strands of criticism on the consultation process.

Firstly, the lack of detail in the proposal. Respondents wanted to know about individual school collectives (which have not yet been decided), to see detailed remits for new roles (which have not yet been written) and to see alternative proposals (which do not exist).

Secondly, a perceived positive spin on the way the proposal has been shared. By focusing on the projected benefits of the proposal, the proposal has appeared one-sided to many respondents.

Failing to clearly set out current shortcomings in Argyll and Bute's schools has led to respondents questioning the need for any change at all, making the proposal seem like a waste of time and money.

Combined with deep-rooted mistrust of the Council, this leaves a gap for people to insert their own theories on why change is proposed. For most respondents, that means Council cost-cutting and defunding of education.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of findings

Recruitment challenges and education reform are not resonating with any of our audiences as reasons for change. For most respondents, they certainly don't make the case for a significant change to the way we run our schools.

Most respondents (except Head Teachers) believe the current system 'isn't broken'. Any perceived issues with schools are blamed on funding and resources - not on school leadership, workloads, or individual remits.

There is considerable mistrust in the proposal, with a commonly held view that this is a budget cutting exercise. The lack of evidence or workings shared alongside the proposal allowed space for respondents to question the rigour of its modelling.

All respondents, from Head Teachers to pupils to communities, are asking for much more detail - the sort of detail they can only get when actual collectives are planned and shared.

Almost all respondents are extremely strongly against removing or changing the 'Head Teacher' title. There is no specific dislike of 'Head of School', but rather there is a complete dismissal of any title that is not 'Head Teacher'.

Many respondents believe that the existence of the Executive Head Teacher role will inevitably lead to the homogenisation of schools and dilution of their individual identities.

However, both primary and secondary pupils were very positive about the idea of collectives, shared resources and collaboration between schools. But they worry about losing local identities - every pupil feels their own school is unique and special.



Conclusions

The response from both professionals and public has shown that consulting on a 'theoretical' model results in a high level of distrust. It has also shown that reasons for change are unconvincing if they are not supported by clear evidence.

Until the Council is able to present a compelling case for change and a tangible model with fully described roles and clear information on what individual school collectives would look like, further engagement with public/community stakeholders is not recommended.

Our firm recommendation is to work exclusively with Head Teachers at the next stage, to shape a tangible model. Only then should this be taken back to wider audiences for consideration.

Head Teachers appreciate the challenges of their own positions and the wider education system. They can help co-develop the model to best fit their needs and ensure their individual contexts are considered. Head Teachers need to see a clear reason for their change of title, and they need to be meaningfully engaged in the next stage of development.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

In June 2021 a paper for educational change was submitted for Council approval, consisting of cluster working proposals for Argyll and Bute's schools beginning with the development of three pilot clusters.

Significant negative press coverage and pushback from action groups resulted in a decision from the Council to conduct community consultation on the proposal before making a decision.

The consultation process was initially set for 12 weeks beginning 29th November 2021. This was extended to 1st March 2021, and then finally to 31st March 2022, to allow a greater level of understanding to be delivered by educational leaders directly to school staff and community groups.



THE PROPOSAL

Argyll and Bute schools face a number of challenges due to their unique breadth of different settings.

A high percentage of smaller schools, Head Teachers with heavy teaching commitments, falling school rolls, and difficulties in recruitment - particularly in school leadership.

Argyll and Bute Council have proposed transformative change to school leadership in the authority as one way to address these challenges.

The proposal is based around collective leadership, which would be achieved by grouping schools in small collectives, each with a shared collective leadership team.

Head Teachers would become Heads of School with each collective team of Heads led by one Executive Head Teacher. The Heads of School would each take on a specialism, with responsibility for leading knowledge on that subject within their team. School leaders would be non-teaching, freeing up their time for collaborative working. (Heads of the very smallest schools would retain a reduced teaching commitment.)

The proposal was under public consultation for four months. Stand has facilitated consultation across Argyll and Bute with both the education profession and the general public.

THE CONSULTATION

THE CONSULTATION

This public and professional consultation was conducted to gather feedback and input on the existing drafts of the leadership change proposal.

The Education Transformation Board will act on these findings from Head Teachers, education professionals and the public when shaping its recommendations, which will then be presented to Argyll and Bute Council for decision on what will happen next.



THE CONSULTATION

METHODOLOGY

Consultation was split into engagement with education professionals, particularly Head Teachers, and engagement with the public.

Presentations (in slideshow and video formats) were prepared that explained the reasons for change, shared the proposal, and posed questions to help frame responses. The presentations were tailored to appropriate levels of detail for each audience or stakeholder group.

A website (Empowering our Educators) was published on 29th November 2021, where information and presentations could be accessed. The website provided clear ways for people to have their say, and included the full engagement timetable.

Audience-specific documents were disseminated through the website to:

- 29 November 2021: Parent and Community Councils;
- 29 November 2021: Elected Members;
- 3 December 2021: Head Teachers and school enquiries email to disseminate to school staff (prior engagement on the proposals was conducted with Head Teachers in focus groups)

The Empowering our Educators website included a questionnaire to enable our stakeholders to respond with their opinions on the proposal, positive or negative. Two open-ended questions enabled this input. A short list of the benefits which the authority believe the model delivers was provided for consultees to either agree, or disagree with. And finally an overall 'highly agree' or 'highly disagree' indication.

The website also enabled individuals to schedule 'one-to-one' sessions online with education professionals and ask questions directly. Finally, it provided a Frequently Asked Questions area which was regularly updated.

Argyll and Bute Council's social media channels were used to promote awareness of the website, as well as direct email addressed to the Council's existing education mailing lists.

Independent groups (eg. Community Councils, Parent Councils) were provided with a toolkit to facilitate their own engagement meetings, curate learnings and feed back through the Empowering our Educators website.

Education professionals

We received 169 responses from respondents who self-identified as teachers or school staff. 99.4% of those responses were made through the Empowering our Educators website and one response was submitted by email.

All Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute were invited to a series of workshop sessions on 26th October–2nd November 2021 with the Heads of Service to explore the context and reasons for change. Following that, Head Teachers were engaged in groups of three to six to review the proposal (11–25th November 2021). 68 Head Teachers across the local authority took part in these sessions. The remainder, who were unavailable through illness or were only recently appointed Head Teachers, attended sessions on 14th February and 4th March 2022.

Consultation with Head Teachers included a second round of engagement, with the opportunity once again for Head Teachers to come together in small groups to share their views. These sessions took place from 17th to 26th March 2022.

There was a dedicated area on the Empowering our Educators website for school staff. Materials explaining the proposal and how it would affect them were shared with all school staff via direct email and general school enquiries email, and also disseminated by their Head Teachers.

Three webinars for school staff took place, on 15th, 22nd February and 14th March 2022, led by the Heads of Service and the Education Manager (Transformation).

Education managers and officers in the Education Service central team participated in facilitated sessions during the week beginning 29th November 2021. Sessions were also held for the Educational Psychology, Inclusion and Equity, Early Years and School Support teams with an opportunity to find out more about the proposals and ask questions of the Heads of Service.

Consultation with the relevant Trade Unions and Professional Associations has been ongoing throughout the consultation period. On 29th and 30th November 2021 Trade Unions and professional association members were invited to an information and discussion session. Following on from this the Heads of Education and Education Manager (Transformation) have met with AHDS, SLS and EIS regional representatives to present the proposal and answer questions.

Engagement is ongoing with the Joint Services Committee, the four weekly meeting of Trade Union, professional associations, HR and the Education Service where the proposals and consultation are a standard agenda item.

THE CONSULTATION

METHODOLOGY

Public bodies

Argyll and Bute Council met with representatives of Bord na gadhlig and Comann nam Pàrant to discuss the proposal and explore opportunities for sharing Gaelic culture and language in the proposed school collectives. This was followed up by consultation sessions offered to parents of children and young people in Gaelic Medium Education on 22nd March 2022. We also published a fourth set of FAQ documents specifically for Gaelic related questions – both in English and Gaelic.

The Education Manager (Transformation) met, and will continue to meet with, diocese and representatives from SCES to discuss the implications of the proposal for denominational education in Argyll and Bute. The most recent of these meetings took place on 8th February 2022.

The proposals were shared with the Armed Forces and Community Partnership at their meeting on 25th February.

School pupils

Age and context appropriate materials explaining the proposal were provided to all Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute for them to share, supporting Pupil Council engagement in every school. These materials were able to be viewed by the public on the website. Pupil Councils had their own section of the Empowering our Educators website, including presentations, videos and feedback forms. These were developed through focus groups with pupils and feedback from teachers and Head Teachers across the local authority. All Pupil Council feedback was returned for collation by the end of the school term.

The Education Service's Inclusion and Equity Team liaised with Head Teachers with regard to engagement with ASN pupils across the local authority, offering additional support or further differentiated materials where requested.

The public

We received 477 responses where respondents self-identified as either parent/guardian or Argyll and Bute resident. 95.8% of responses were made through the Empowering our Educators portal and 4.2% were submitted by email or post. It was clear from some organisational responses that they had undertaken surveys or other engagement activities and were therefore representing the views of a number of people.

Five Q&A sessions were hosted for chairpersons of Community Councils and Parent Councils. The Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) presented the proposal and answered questions from a total of 93 chairpersons from across Argyll and Bute at these sessions.

Chairpersons were encouraged to share the proposal with their Community Councils and Parent Councils for discussion, and feed back in a structured fashion through the Empowering our Educators website. Argyll and Bute Council offered the support of an education professional from the Education Services team to attend their discussions and answer any questions. 37 Community Councils and Parent Councils took up that offer.

Elected members were invited to attend sessions, held between mid-December 2021 and mid-January 2022, with the Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) to explore the proposal, give feedback and have their questions answered one-to-one.

A briefing was held for members of the local press and representatives of community newsletters on 25th January 2022. An interview was arranged with the Times Education Supplement on 16th February 2022.

All parents of children and young people in Argyll and Bute schools received a summary of the proposal titled 'In a Nutshell' via the Xpressions app (which is regularly used to share notifications from schools with parents). This was also shared with all school staff by email.

The leadership of Argyll and Bute Council and Education Heads of Service met with both Jenni Minto MSP and Jackie Baillie MSP to discuss the proposals.

The facility was provided for any individual to book a one-to-one call with an education professional from Argyll and Bute Council to personally discuss the proposal. This opportunity was promoted through local press and social media. 28 such calls were held.

Questions and feedback on the proposal arrived through the website and via email to support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk. Over 400 emails and enquiries were received and responded to.

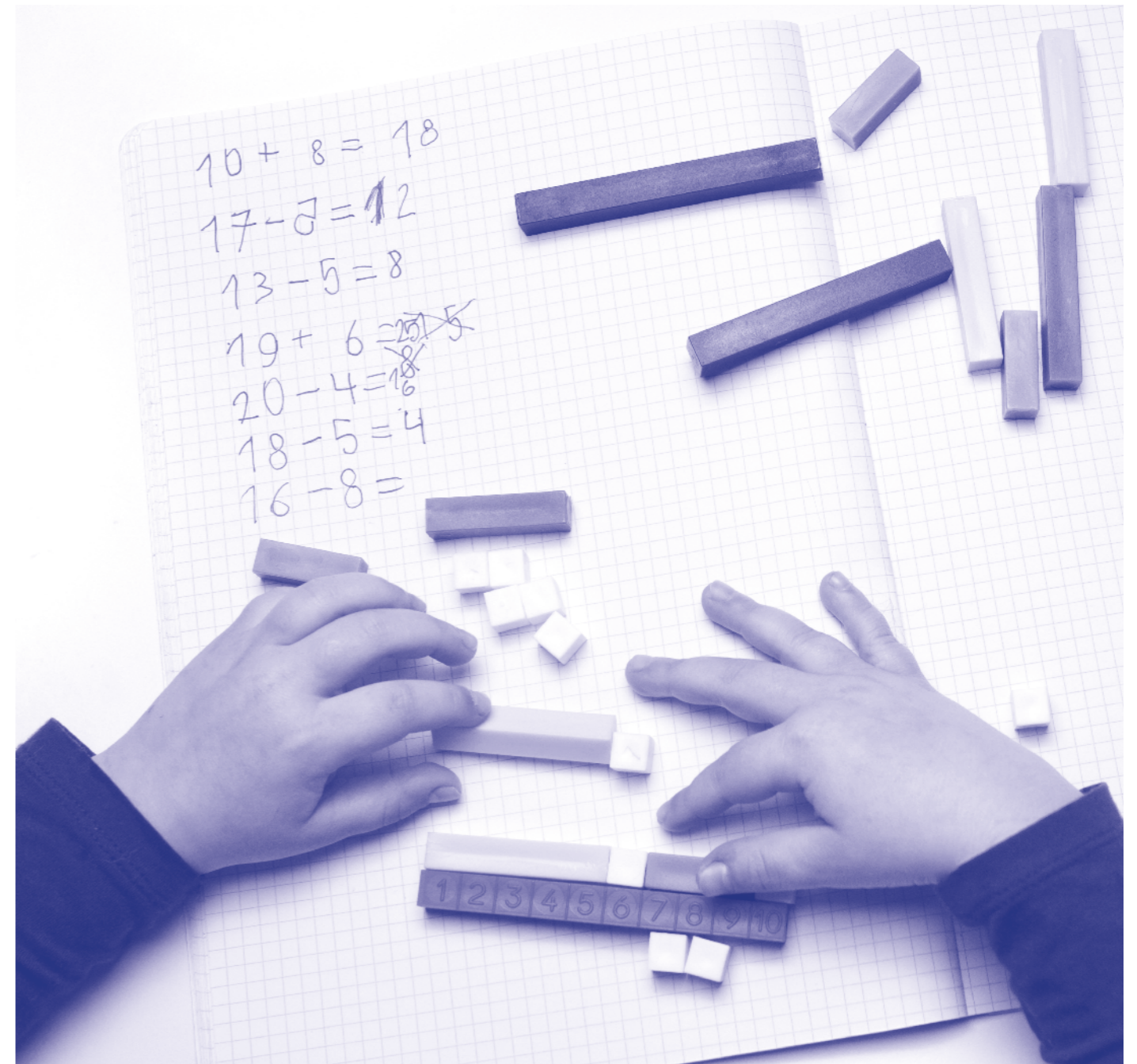
Three sets of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were collated, responded to and published to date. December questions were collated and responded to in FAQ 1, published through the website on 6th January 2022. January questions were collated and responded to in FAQ 2, published through the website on 4th February 2022. February questions were collated and responded to in FAQ 3, published through the website on 4th March 2022.

* Respondents were parents/guardians, residents/non-residents, individual school pupils and public bodies/organisations.

THE CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

Engagement programme, as published October 2021

Dates	Audience	Method
Oct 2021	Teaching unions and professional associations	Workshop sessions to consult on and explore proposals
Oct–Nov 2021	All Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute	Workshop sessions to consult on and explore proposals
Dec 2021 –Jan 2022	School staff	Head Teachers engage with their school staff
Oct 2021 –Mar 2022	Elected members	Ongoing one-to-one engagement
Nov 2021	Higher/Further Education bodies in Argyll & Bute	Workshop sessions to consult on and explore proposals
Nov 2021 –Jan 2022	Parent, Community & Pupil Councils	Toolkit supplied to allow self-led sessions and feedback on proposals
Jan 2022 (2 weeks)	Open consultation	One-to-one virtual drop-in sessions held online
Nov 2021 –Jan 2022	Businesses, diocese, Bòrd na Gàidhlig & other public bodies	Toolkit supplied to allow self-led sessions and feedback on proposals
Nov 2021 –Mar 2022	All	Ongoing engagement and updates via dedicated social media channels





THE CONSULTATION CONTEXT

Argyll and Bute's schools were still dealing with the effects of Covid-19. Pandemic restrictions and a spike in cases locally resulted in significant staff absences across schools, particularly in March 2022.

Local elections were taking place in May 2022, straight after the consultation period ended. The school leadership proposal was a hot topic for residents.

EIS, Scotland's largest teaching union, actively campaigned against the proposal, even before the consultation was live, and promoted their opinion on the proposal to Parent Councils during the consultation. Their survey of members did not take place until the final two weeks of the consultation. The survey did not require sign-in to vote, any individual could vote, and any individual could vote multiple times. The 52% response they recorded is therefore not robust and reliable.

Wise4All, a local lobbying group, rallied Parent Councils and local press, driving their agenda on the validity of the consultation and promoting a message that the proposal was driven by budget cuts.

Press coverage across the authority led on cuts to Head Teachers. This headline remained constant during the consultation period.

THE CONSULTATION

A THEORETICAL MODEL

The purpose of this consultation was to gather input and ideas from communities to help shape the proposed changes to school leadership.

Many respondents misinterpreted the process as a request to either approve or reject the proposal immediately - instead of an opportunity to co-create and improve it.

In some cases, especially with Community and Parent Councils, this common misconception was further fuelled by lobbying groups promoting rejection of the proposal.

In the proposal, the reasons for change centred around falling school rolls, recruitment challenges and national educational reforms.

The proposal did not discuss the potential consequences of not moving to the proposed new delivery model.

At this stage in the process many areas of information were not yet decided/defined:

- The criteria or method for how school collectives would be determined.
- The financial challenges the authority faces in delivering the service.
- The workings on how the theoretical model and example collectives were costed.
- Clear job descriptions for the Executive Head Teacher and Head of School roles.
- A recruitment strategy for increasing the number of classroom teachers.

For many respondents, this lack of information was a significant barrier to exploring the model from a wider perspective.





THE CONSULTATION OBSERVATIONS

This consultation attracted significant levels of negative feedback across two related key areas: lack of evidence presented, and general mistrust of the reasons given for change.

Lobbying bodies and the EIS teaching union ran a consolidated campaign to disrupt the consultation process with mistrust, accusations of budget cuts, and headlines on schools without Head Teachers. This shows in the high levels of misinterpretation in comments received through the feedback.

Outwith these recurring themes, there were relatively few comments that challenged the basic premise of the proposed school leadership model.

There were few comments from parents about non-teaching Heads, nor the value of Heads of Schools working together - two of the core elements of the model. Specialisms were rarely acknowledged, nor was the value of having this expertise on hand when required. There were very rarely comments on whether our schools would benefit from shared resources. There was no recognition of consistency and quality of education across all schools.

School pupils were one audience who saw immediate value in the proposal. Pupil Councils voiced an understanding that the model would provide broader access to their peers, and to a wider teaching base.

Our qualitative research, working with Head Teachers to understand their concerns and also their hopes for change, was more balanced. All Head Teachers were willing to engage and to share their own experiences. And without exception, they were willing to be involved in shaping change proposals.

RESPONDENTS AND RESPONSES

RESPONDENTS TO THE CONSULTATION

Argyll and Bute has an active, engaged community both in and out of its schools. School staff, pupils and Parent Councils were particularly keen to to understand and be heard.

Overall there were 804 responses to the consultation.* The majority of these (93%) were consultation form responses which were received through the Empowering our Educators online portal (748).

In addition, there were 60 email submissions that did not follow the consultation form structure. These responses ranged in length from individuals writing several paragraphs in an email through to organisations producing a report and submitting their consultation surveys. Of these additional submissions, the vast majority (24, 40%) were from Parent Councils.

In line with the Scottish Government's approach to analysing consultation responses and for the purposes of this analysis, each response was treated as equal in weight. For example, if an organisational response indicated that they had consulted with their members in order to respond to the consultation and therefore representing a large number of people, this was treated as a single response.

Respondents to the consultation stated their 'audience type' as part of the response. In line with standard practice for the analysis of Scottish Government consultations, these self-selections have been accepted on face value and have formed the basis of our analysis.

* Calculated by every single response, including anyone who responded more than once - minus test responses - that came in via the dedicated website forms and emails to support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk

Audience groups

The list on the right breaks down the responses received by audience group. The categories are those provided to respondents in the questionnaire and have been used as the basis of the analysis.

It was possible for a respondent to submit their feedback in several categories eg as a parent, and as a teaching professional. For the purposes of this analysis, where this has happened, the self-selection has been respected.

School staff

- Head Teachers
- Middle leadership
- Teachers
- Early years
- Non-teaching staff
- Classroom support staff

Pupils

- Primary pupils
- Secondary pupils

Community bodies

- Community Councils
- Parent Councils
- The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS)
- Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS)
- School Leaders Scotland (SLS)
- Diocese of Argyll and the Isles
- Argyll and Bute Community Network for Carers of Care Experienced Children
- North West Mull Community Woodland Company
- Wise4All

Public

- Parents, guardians or carers
- Argyll and Bute residents

RESPONDENTS AND RESPONSES

FEEDBACK ON THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

There were a significant number of criticisms of the consultation process, particularly from Parent Council and Community Council respondents.

Many Parent Council and Community Council respondents felt the consultation was biased in its delivery of the proposal and that the questionnaire was designed to generate positive responses.

These criticisms arrived in all formats of submission, including the Empowering our Educators website, the offline submissions and the 34 Parent/Community Council engagement events held with stakeholders throughout the course of the consultation.

There were substantially less comments on the consultation process from any of the other audience types, across all forms of response.



This criticism of the consultation process included:

- The consultation document was promoting only a positive picture of the proposal.
- The proposal did not give more options.
- Concerns were raised about the lack of detail in the proposal and the need for more information.
- The consultation period was thought to be not long enough and that the Parent/Community Council chairs felt under-informed to support this exercise.
- There were questions around the timing of the consultation in relation to the pandemic, the current stresses on the workforce.
- There was misunderstanding that they were being asked to vote for or against the proposals. And a concern that the proposals would be pushed through as a result of this consultation process (the purpose of the consultation which was to engage and gather opinion before the decision to proceed to the next stage of a process would be made by the Council in the Autumn of 2022).

- Concerns were raised about a perceived lack of engagement with Head Teachers and school staff. There was a view that there needs to be more public engagement and more involvement from Parent Councils specifically.
- There was a view that the assumptions in the document were not evidence-based and an impact assessment needed to be delivered, particularly in relation to the Islands.
- The questionnaire was considered to be biased to a positive response.
- Respondents also thought that the model was already being treated as a 'done deal'.
- Some respondents also thought that the proposal did not reflect the reality of current structure and did not make a clear argument for why change is needed.
- Several raised the issue of a perceived lack of a link to the wider education reform.

In separate email contribution between Parent/Community Councils and the authority, issues raised regarding the short consultation period included a concern that Parent Councils were not equipped to support this consultation on behalf of the authority. And that it did not fall within their remit.

RESPONDENTS AND RESPONSES

ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

Consultation was primarily conducted via the Empowering our Educators website, in the form of a questionnaire.

The questionnaire was supported by clear guidance on how to submit feedback in a structured manner.

The portal protected the integrity of the responses and ensured that all submissions were recorded, stored securely and backed up. Argyll and Bute Council agreed to accept feedback through other channels. Each submission was acknowledged when received.

All responses that were received offline were read in full and mapped against the two open-ended questions. These responses were then integrated into the final analysis and reporting in relation to each question and were also scanned for themes using keyword searches.

Quotes have been included for illustrative purposes but these are not intended to be representative, given the broad range of audiences that responded to the consultation. In some instances, these quotes have been shortened for conciseness of the overall report.

All consultation responses, including the detailed contributions of the 804 individual responses and individuals that provided written submissions to the consultation, are available alongside this report and must therefore be considered in conjunction with this report to reach a full understanding of the breadth of the debate.

Feedback is segmented by audience group and geographic area. Island responses have been supplied to the Council to facilitate an Island Communities Impact Assessment. Equality impact assessments were prepared.

Quantitative analysis

The quantitative analysis presents the numbers and percentages for each relevant closed question in the Empowering our Educators format, by audience type alongside the total number of responses for each question.

Please note however, that the benefits resonating with each of the target audiences is illustrative rather than definitive - giving the authority a sense-check on what areas of the model were recognised by the respondents as a positive output from the proposal.

As noted above, in relation to the responses that were received via email, not all respondents indicated the benefits in the structure provided by the Empowering our Educators website.

Qualitative analysis

Given the basis of the consultation on gathering opinions through two open-ended text questions, the focus has therefore been on a thematic analysis of recurring issues. These comments were collated in audience sets, and sub-sets, geography area and type, colour coded in relation to positive, neutral, or negative response. All format of submission received via either the portal or by email were coded in this way.

All responses that were received offline were read in full and mapped against the open-ended questions where possible. These responses were then integrated into the final analysis.

Quotes have been included for illustrative purposes but these are not intended to be representative. In some instances, these quotes have been shortened for conciseness of the overall report.

All consultation responses and written submissions to the consultation are available alongside this report and must therefore be considered in conjunction with this report to reach a full understanding of the breadth of the debate.

As with all consultations it is important to bear in mind that the views of those who have responded are not representative of the views of the wider population. Individuals (and organisations) who have a keen interest in a topic – and the capacity to respond – are more likely to participate in a consultation than those who do not. This self-selection means that the views of consultation participants cannot be generalised to the wider population.

It is important to note that some of the responses to this consultation contain a significant level of misunderstanding, and distrust of the proposal. It is not possible in a report such as this to fully reflect the level of detail included in these submissions. It is difficult to reflect all the nuances of all the responses in a single report. This document is therefore a qualitative summary of the main themes coming through from the consultation.

We therefore strongly recommend that interested parties consult the responses that have been published alongside this report for further detail. For the same reason, we would suggest that, while we have provided high level summaries of each chapter, the full content of the chapter should be considered in order to assess the balance of views.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

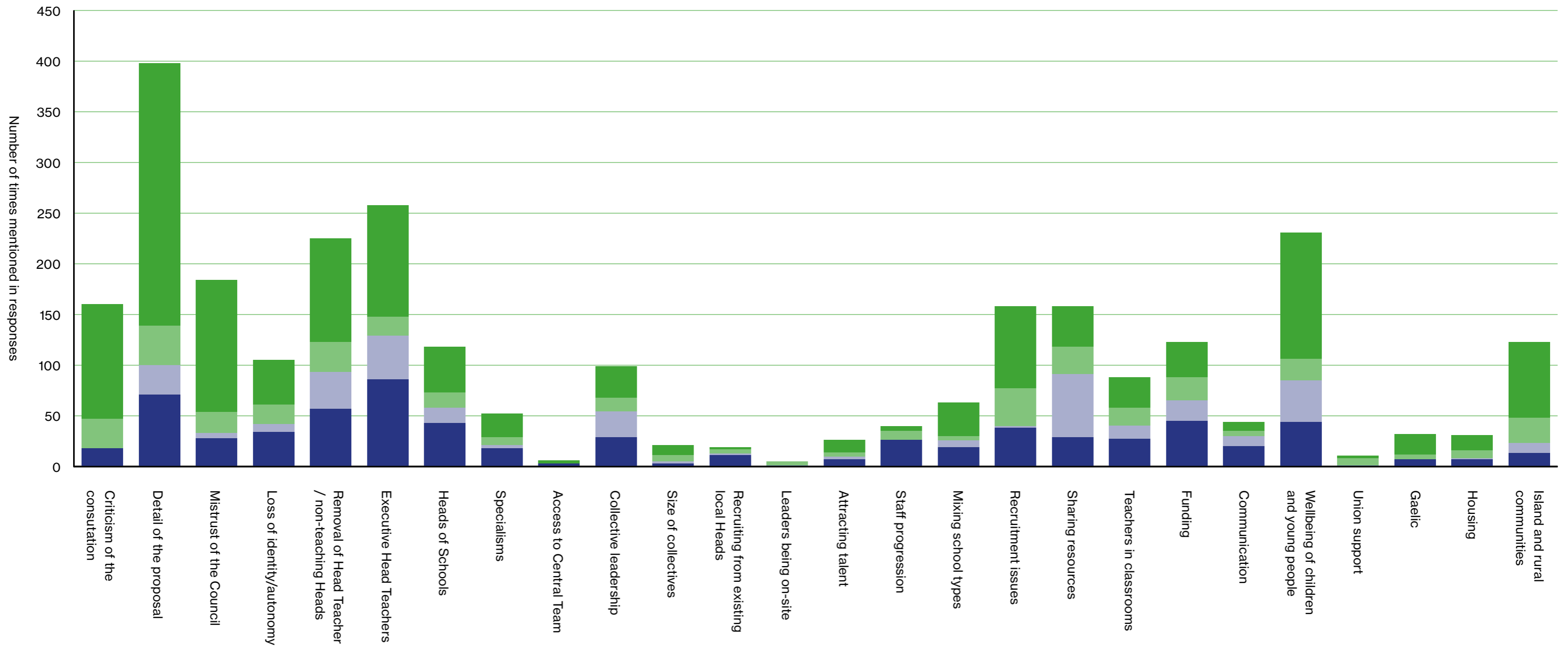
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

MOST COMMON THEMES

26 common themes were identified across public consultation responses. This chart shows how many times each was mentioned in a response, to highlight the most frequently raised areas of interest or concern.

Stakeholder groups

- School staff
- Pupils (primary & secondary)
- Community bodies
- Public



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

MOST COMMON THEMES

The tables below highlight the themes raised most often by each group of respondents. This gives a clear indication of what each group is most interested in or concerned about.

Common themes among ALL RESPONDENTS	Number of mentions
Detail of the proposal	380
Executive Head Teachers	254
Wellbeing of children and young people	225
Removal of Head Teacher / non-teaching Heads	218
Mistrust of the Council	177

Common themes among SCHOOL STAFF	Number of mentions
Executive Head Teachers	86
Detail of the proposal	71
Removal of Head Teacher / non-teaching Heads	57
Funding	45
Wellbeing of children and young people	44

Common themes among PRIMARY PUPILS	Number of mentions
Sharing resources	58
Executive Head Teachers	39
Wellbeing of children and young people	38
Removal of Head Teacher / non-teaching Heads	32
Detail of the proposal	26

Common themes among PUBLIC	Number of mentions
Detail of the proposal	259
Mistrust of the Council	130
Wellbeing of children and young people	125
Criticism of the consultation	113
Executive Head Teachers	110

Common themes among COMMUNITY BODIES	Number of mentions
Detail of the proposal	39
Recruitment issues	37
Removal of Head Teacher / non-teaching Heads	30
Criticism of the consultation	29
Sharing resources	27

Common themes among SECONDARY PUPILS	Number of mentions
Sharing resources	4
Executive Head Teachers	4
Removal of Head Teacher / non-teaching Heads	4
Detail of the proposal	3
Wellbeing of children and young people	3



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

OVERVIEW

Most respondents said their schools are doing fine - change isn't necessary. But Head Teachers told a different story, of overload and stress.



Reasons for change

Recruitment challenges and education reform are not resonating as reasons for change. For most respondents, they certainly don't make the case for a significant change to the way we run our schools.

There was little confidence that the model could help create a more sustainable system, fit for future education delivery.

Equity of provision for all children and young people is not the primary concern for most respondents. From parents to Head Teachers, their focus is primarily on what this means for their own child or their own school.

Most respondents (except Head Teachers) believe the current system 'isn't broken'. Any perceived issues with schools are blamed on funding and resources - not on school leadership, workloads, or individual remits.

Head Teachers tell us that they are struggling with workload, stress and daily demands, in a role that is only getting more demanding (this is a national issue). The challenging nature of their current role was not noted by other respondents.

Lack of trust

There is considerable mistrust in the proposal, with a commonly held view that this is a budget cutting exercise.

The lack of evidence or workings shared alongside the proposal allowed space for respondents to question the rigour of its modelling.

The consultation process was criticised as biased, vague, and lacking in transparency. This was despite education service leaders being highly visible and available throughout the consultation, making every effort to engage with respondents on their own terms and help them understand the proposal.

Teaching unions campaigned and lobbied Parent Councils with their rejection of the proposals. As a result, the union voice was quoted more by non-educational audiences than it was by school staff respondents.

The consultation was disrupted by a few loud campaigning voices with an unclear agenda. This is expected as part of any consultation process but was seen to be exceptionally effective here.

School collectives

Respondents repeatedly said that no two schools in Argyll and Bute are the same. Small schools, large schools, urban, rural, island, 2-18, early years, primary, secondary, denominational, Gaelic Medium, etc. There is a commonly-held belief that people with experience of one school type cannot understand the intricacies of another.

All respondents, from Head Teachers to pupils to communities, are asking for much more detail - the sort of detail they can only get when actual collectives are planned and shared. Without this information, the majority of audiences are not able or willing to engage meaningfully with the proposal.

Most respondents share a concern that the collective model would risk the unique identities of schools. One young respondent's analogy of their schools becoming 'like McDonald's' described this fear perfectly. A sense of place and belonging is highly valued.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

OVERVIEW

The title of 'Head Teacher' holds emotional weight. Changing it will never be popular, and proposing to do so has hampered consultation.

Hheads of Schools

Almost all respondents are very strongly against removing or changing the 'Head Teacher' title. There is no specific dislike of 'Head of School', but rather there is a complete dismissal of any title that is not 'Head Teacher'.

The proposed change of job title has disrupted the whole consultation and distracted from rest of the story, providing a platform for negative press and lobbying headlines - encouraging a misconception that Head Teachers would be removed from schools.

Most respondents struggled to see the proposed Head of School role as having parity with existing Head Teachers. Partly because of an assumption that the Executive Head Teacher would be taking on the 'bigger' parts of the leadership role.

No group of respondents has been able to see past the change of title, and communicating the model has been made significantly more difficult because of this one element.

Executive Head Teachers

Few respondents see the Executive Head Teacher role as necessary for the proposed model to succeed. Many see it purely as added bureaucracy - a waste of money which could otherwise be spent directly in schools and classrooms.

Including the words 'Head Teacher' in the title allowed misunderstanding to take root, with many respondents believing the Executive Head Teacher would be the only 'real' Head Teacher left in each collective after 'demoting' others to Head of School.

Many respondents believe that the existence of the Executive Head Teacher role will inevitably lead to the homogenisation of schools and dilution of their individual identities.

Many Head Teachers see the role as an unnecessary layer of scrutiny that challenges their leadership status and autonomy. Some interpret it as a very similar role to the past remit of Education Officers or Education Managers and question why those are not being reintroduced instead.

Pupils

Pupil Councils, with the support of their teachers, engaged fully with the proposal and provided valuable, articulate insight, with consideration for their peers in other schools and for their teachers.

Both primary and secondary pupils were very positive about the idea of collectives, shared resources and collaboration between schools. They saw wider opportunities (both educational and social) and greater equity as the main benefits of the proposal.

Pupils are concerned for the wellbeing of their teachers and think the model could improve their working lives - but they also see where it might bring challenges, particularly in ensuring parity between schools. And they worry about losing local identities - every pupil feels their own school is unique and special.

They also acknowledged how challenging change can be for many - a point which adult respondents missed.



THE RESPONSES

SCHOOL STAFF

Argyll and Bute's Head Teachers are the key opinion-shapers, as leaders of their staff teams. They want an active, participatory role in the final shaping of the model.

68 of Argyll and Bute's Head Teachers participated in group workshop sessions. The candid nature of their responses demonstrates real commitment to their schools and to building a system that positions them for the future.

Head Teachers are struggling with expanding remits, overwhelming workloads and a severe shortage of supply teachers.

There is suspicion of Argyll and Bute Council's motives and school staff at all levels assume this proposal is about cutting costs.

There is widespread misunderstanding among teachers that Head Teachers will be 'lost' from schools, leaving no leader on-site.

"My biggest challenge is our enormous, relentless workload. Being Head Teacher is a life of sacrifice."

"You spend a lot of your day covering things that should really be done by somebody else, then begin your actual job as Head at eight o'clock at night."

"I strongly feel that Heads should not have a teaching commitment."

"I worry that the formal collective groups may not work as well as the informal groups that have already formed."

"If this model were to go ahead ... I think Heads would have to have their input, to be invested in it."

"We are a suspicious and highly unionised profession, and the job title change makes us very concerned. It feels like a trick is being pulled."

"What will happen to my Principal Teacher job?"

"This proposal strikes me as yet another long term money saving exercise. I believe the educational justification is very weak."

"I think it's a mistake not having a hands-on, available, Head Teacher for the children, parents and staff."

"Head Teachers are needed in schools, not out of schools."

If the big driver is to free up the Head Teachers to lead rather than teach, surely employing more class teachers would be a better use of resources?"

"Although this may be appropriate in some more rural areas of Argyll and Bute, in more populated areas the benefits seem minimal."

SCHOOL STAFF

Quantitative research methodology

An email was sent to all teachers and school staff in Argyll and Bute, with a personalised link to an online survey (hosted on the Empowering our Educators website).

If there was more than one response from the same email address, both were analysed and counted.

There were some misunderstandings on how the response form worked. The multiple choice question of “What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?” was not mandatory, and users could choose to select none. However, many responders selected “Other (please explain below)” and used this opportunity to express, in their view, there were no benefits. Therefore, any selection of “Other (please explain below)” was not quantified and counted as a benefit.

For open-ended questions in the response form (“Other Benefits”, “What are your main reservations about the proposal?” and “Is there anything else you would like to share?”) and any responses received via the *support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk* email address, responses were categorised under 26 wide-ranging themes. For example, if one respondent mentioned the “Consultation process”, “Detail of the proposal” and “Mistrust of the council” within their question responses, then this would be counted against all three themes. This was to give a broad overview of the most common points of discussion.

Those submissions received outwith the portal (to the *support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk* email address) did not answer the multiple choice questions - therefore these responses are not quantified in: “Which of these best describes you?”, “What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?” and “Having engaged with the proposal, do you believe the School Collective Leadership model will positively affect the future education of young people in Argyll and Bute”.

Responses

Total number of responses	168
Duplicates omitted	N/A

Respondents' roles (Selected from list)	Number
In a teaching role	81
Head Teacher	16
In a deputy head, faculty Head or Principal Teacher role (middle leadership)	31
In a support role in the classroom	16
In a non-teaching role in a school	18
In an early years setting	6

There are 2,042 staff across education in Argyll and Bute (excluding casual posts). Therefore, this represents an **8.2% response rate** (2,042/167), including 16 of our Head Teachers. However, all of our Head Teachers contributed directly in online sessions.

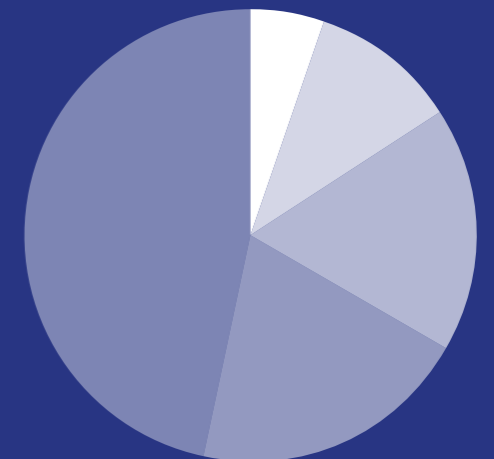
Q. What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?

Benefits (Selected from list*)	Positive responses
More teachers in classrooms	34
Sharing specialists (like science teachers) with neighbouring schools	35
Giving Heads more time to lead schools, instead of having them teach as well	49
More equality between schools, with resources better shared	29
Expert specialists in local schools (like assessment specialists, or early years specialists)	28
More collaboration between schools	56
Improved progression for pupils between primary classes and when moving to secondary	30
An Executive Head Teacher whose job is to drive improvement across all the local schools	21

* Respondents were able to select multiple or no answers.

Q. Having engaged with the proposal, do you believe the collective leadership model will positively affect the future education of young people in Argyll and Bute?

Answer (Selected from list)	Number of responses
Strongly Agree	9
Agree	18
Neither agree nor disagree	29
Disagree	34
Strongly disagree	78



SCHOOL STAFF

HEAD TEACHERS

94% of Argyll and Bute’s Head Teachers were engaged in mixed groups of between one and seven participants. Schools of all sizes and contexts were represented.

Methodology

The key principles behind the school leadership proposal were shared and open questions were posed around each. This enabled free discussion between the Head Teachers as peers. This approach focussed conversation on the reasons for change and the goals of the proposal, rather than theoretical details of how it might be delivered.

61 of 67* Head Teachers attended the first set of two-hour sessions in November 2021 and 54 of 65* attended the second set in March 2022. All actively engaged in a professional manner and helped ensure the individual context of each school was considered.

Given the scope of the engagement, it is difficult to reflect all the nuances of all the responses in a single report. This document is therefore a qualitative summary of the main themes of the consultation. High level summaries of each topic are provided, but the full content of the comments selected for this document should be considered in order to assess the balance of views.

* Refers to total number of Head Teachers in post across Argyll and Bute at each time - 67 in November 2021 and 65 in March 2022.

Context

These engagement sessions ran at the end of an intensive five months’ authority-wide consultation period. Head Teachers had been the first group engaged with at the beginning of those five months.

Head Teachers had also received two separate briefing sessions with the Heads of Service. They were often present at engagement sessions with their Parent Councils, where support from an education professional was also offered. Finally, one-to-one sessions were also conducted with some Head Teachers who took the opportunity during general drop-in sessions, or by contacting their Heads of Service individually.

These engagement sessions took place during the final two-week period prior to the Spring break, and during a period when the schools were experiencing high levels of staff absence due to Covid-19 (Argyll and Bute had a spike at this time).

There was no shortage of input. The candid nature of the comments received from Head Teachers demonstrates real commitment to their schools and to building a better system (regardless of their feelings about this model).

Observations

Head Teachers across Argyll and Bute operate in very different scenarios. Schools that look similar on paper often operate in significantly different situations.

The proposal talks about Argyll and Bute’s falling school rolls, recruitment challenges and educational reforms. The proposal does not talk about sustainability of our schools, the equity in quality of education delivered across our schools, or the potential consequences of not moving to a new delivery model.

At this stage in the proposed model’s development many areas of information were unavailable to Head Teachers:

- How the collectives would be determined.
- The financial challenges the authority faces in delivering the service.
- The workings on how the model was costed.
- Clear job descriptions for the Executive Head Teacher and Head of School roles.
- A recruitment strategy for increasing the number of classroom teachers.

We acknowledged the gaps in detail in the proposal at the start of each session and then discussed the fundamental parts of the proposed model one by one to engage Head Teachers in the thinking that underpins it. This helped each Head Teacher consider the proposal in their own school context.

These sessions were rich in conversations. Head Teachers are open to knowing more and want to be closely involved in co-creating and shaping the model as it develops.

This creates a powerful opportunity to include Argyll and Bute’s Head Teachers in the next stage of development if the proposal goes forward. Doing so could build strong relationships between the authority’s education leadership and their most senior school management. It would demonstrate trust and respect, and show that you value their experience. Co-creation and collaborative problem solving would ultimately provide the best results.

Helensburgh and Lomond Co-operative (HALCO) is an area that may need to be considered separately. They believe that the challenges described in the proposal do not apply to their local area. They especially do not see the benefit of the Executive Head Teacher role. Although we heard various statements to the contrary, most HALCO Head Teachers do not recognise a lack of equity of voice in their cluster.

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Head Teachers are struggling with expanding remits and overwhelming workloads.

Admin and HR paperwork is taking over their time. They often need to cover classes because there is a severe shortage of supply teachers.

Head Teachers concern themselves primarily with what's good for their own school.

The 'siloed' way that schools operate in the current system encourages this mindset.

There is a huge lack of trust and Head Teachers assume this proposal is about cutting costs. This is largely because of the model's lack of detail at its current stage.

Everybody supports collaborative leadership in principle, but many Heads believe they already collaborate well enough and resist any change.

Most Heads welcome the idea of non-teaching roles, but some - especially in smaller schools - simply enjoy teaching classes and don't want to stop. However, being non-teaching is seen as a pipe dream - something which never happens in reality, despite the best of intentions.

There is huge attachment to the 'Head Teacher' title and suspicion around why it would be changed. Heads are concerned about having their remits added to with specialisms and about salaries being reduced.

The Executive Head Teacher role is, by far, the most controversial element of the model for Head Teachers.

There is no real understanding of what specialisms would be, how they would be implemented and how they would work day-to-day.

Some Heads think the proposed model offers more support to previously daunting roles, which may help with recruitment and progression. But most feel it fails to offer anything new to ambitious teaching staff.

Heads of larger schools, especially in the HALCO cluster, are more likely to feel the proposal does not offer any new benefits over the leadership structures they already have.

Many of the barriers to recruitment are outwith the control of the education service - like housing availability and affordability. There are concerns that continuing recruitment difficulties will prevent the proposed model from being implemented effectively.



SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

BEING A HEAD TEACHER IN 2022

Head Teachers are struggling with expanding remits and overwhelming workloads.

Admin and HR paperwork is taking over their time.

They often need to cover classes because there are few supply teachers.



“I am a non-teaching Head of a medium sized school, and the best part of my role is being that figurehead - leading the school and getting to know all the children, not just your own class as you do in a classroom. It’s a different relationship. It’s about knowing them holistically - their parents, their circumstance. I know more about their lives than a classroom teacher does. It’s a richer relationship and I thoroughly enjoy it.”

“I see the impact of my leadership. We become leaders for a reason - for me because I think I have something to contribute and an impact to have across the school.”

“My biggest challenge is the breadth of the job. We all need to mop up sick sometimes, we are leaders and we have to do the things we ask our staff to do. Everything from essentially being a social worker for my school down to those HR processes. The breadth is the biggest challenge but also the greatest pleasure.”

“I’d like to do more of the strategic leadership of my school. Sometimes that’s the thing that gets put aside because operational, immediate things need quick responses. The strategy stuff can fall off the end of your desk.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

BEING A HEAD TEACHER IN 2022

Revisiting the discussion with 54 Head Teachers in March 2022 we heard more on the same themes.

“My biggest challenge is our enormous, relentless workload. Being Head Teacher is a life of sacrifice. You work way beyond your hours every day to keep your head above water. It shouldn't be what you sign up for, but it is. I am a non-teaching Head and the workload is relentless.”

“Education Scotland keeps me up at night. The scrutiny. Staffing ... loads of things.”

“My to-do lists have their own to-do lists. I can never switch off from the school. I'm always thinking and planning about my school. It's a lot. You can never switch off. You worry about everything. Always.”

“My biggest challenge is keeping all the plates spinning. Putting together things like holiday assurance calendars - who holiday assures me? I'd like more time to think strategically about the school.”

“We are always fighting for the support which is the child's right. I think the reality is that as Head you are the ASN, you're doing lunch duty, you're taking phone calls, and that's going to get worse. We already tell our Education Officers what we need, we already don't get it, and I don't see that the new model will change that.”

“Our biggest challenge, even before Covid, is workload. Strategic work is done in our own time. I'd like more thinking time, with my senior leadership team - to drive my school forward. We're reactive rather than proactive at the moment.”

“I work 80 hours a week, and that hasn't changed because of Covid. I can never have a week where I'm not the janitor, cook the lunch, run a nursery and a one class school at the same time. Be the classroom teacher and be at a meeting. My typical week is to be two or three people most of the time. Biggest challenge is to keep my workload into a reasonable limit. Keeping focus is so hard. I applied to be a Head Teacher. And I want to be a teaching Head Teacher. A proper teaching Head Teacher. A proper funding model that works for our size of school.”

“It's not that we don't welcome parent voices, but I don't think there is any profession under as much scrutiny as ours. It's very difficult to manage parent expectations and voices, especially in this day and age.”

“Sometimes we feel we can't do right for doing wrong. We're walking a tightrope between being the managers and experts we are and sometimes having to apologise for rubbing people the wrong way. I overthink a lot, and the what if scenarios run around my head all night. You can feel very vulnerable as a Head.”

“Even before Covid I was being called in to cover lessons, and also cover playtimes and lunchtimes. My hourly rate to sit and watch kids eat is not a good use of resource. You spend a lot of your day covering things that should really be done by somebody else, then begin your actual job as Head at eight o'clock at night. We have a huge recruitment problem at all levels. Typically we get one applicant per each interviewable post.”

“Carrying the heavy weight of so much responsibility. Knowing whether you've taken the right decision, what the consequences might be, etc. masses of us are awake in the middle of the night, feeling stressed about the job. It's worrying about the things you haven't managed to do yet.”





SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

ADMIN AND HR RESPONSIBILITIES

Admin work is a significant issue.
EVERY Head Teacher mentioned this.

“I’d love to deal with less of the repetitive bureaucratic processes. It’s so frustrating and it’s the bit we’ve had the least training for. Nobody has ever told me how to fill in a critical response report. I’ve never had feedback on whether I’m doing it well or poorly.”

“I’d love to do less HR stuff. Return to work interviews etc take up so much time. It impacts me being able to be strategic. Through Covid our remit as Head has grown so wide. It needs refocusing.”

“If the Executive Head Teacher took all of the HR and parent complaints I would say go for it.”

“Biggest challenge is the admin and business side - dealing with HR. I appreciate there’s been cuts. Every time I need to do an attendance review or back to work review I spend my entire day doing them. Then there’s clearing purchases with procurement. Dealing with buildings. But they NEED done. And people call you up if they’re not done.”

“I want to do less paper time and less covering for others. In a slimmed down teaching service I don’t want to be the Argyll and Bute Council HR team (or other teams that have been shrunk down).”

“I would love some support for the business and management side of things, so that I could get back to strategy and classrooms.”

“Paperwork is the bane of every teacher’s life but in my setting ... I might have to stop what I’m doing to help de-escalate a situation with a child, deal with injuries from other children or staff, complete notes on the event, fill in paperwork, exclude the child and complete further paperwork, make time to meet with the parents, be available to discuss with my staff, etc. There is so much repetition this paperwork. With children like in our school, it’s unbelievable what I have to do in the case of even just one incident. I didn’t come into teaching to do paperwork.”

“I would like more trust and less paperwork - less being asked to prove it, prove it, and prove it. A bit more trust.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

SILO ATTITUDES

Head Teachers tend to operate independently in their schools, working in single-school 'silos' which encourage a mindset that they know what's best for their own school in their own community.

But they also describe being 'isolated' in their roles with little day-to-day opportunity to see how other schools deliver the curriculum, or find solutions for common challenges.



The current leadership model and resulting lack of capacity do not encourage collaborative working or even peer support between Head Teachers. They simply don't have the time.

Head Teachers from smaller schools believe that their voice will be lost in a collective with bigger schools. Even some of the Head Teachers in larger schools feel the same way - that their voice and their school could suffer beside more experienced peers, or primary schools could suffer beside secondaries.

"I do work with my peers in our cluster and share improvement plans and resources, but if that impacts on my school, it's a problem. I won't allow anything to take away from the education of my children."

"We don't have people in our area reluctant to progress. We have too many applicants for each role available, too many people trained and ready to progress."

"I am a non-teaching Head, so there isn't much advantage visible for me. I do think being a teaching Head is a really difficult job. There is no carrot being dangled for big schools - we don't teach anyway."

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

WORKING AS COLLECTIVES

Every Head Teacher agrees that collaboration is a good thing. However, many do not see why it needs to be formalised, nor the need for an Executive Head Teacher.

Head Teachers all see the theoretical benefits of working together but many believe such collaboration is already in place under the current leadership structure.

Those who like the existing system tell us that they enjoy the ability to be selective in when and what they collaborate on.

Informal collaboration works best for those who have capacity/time to be involved. In existing school clusters, larger schools are more positive about the status quo and less positive about the idea of introducing an Executive Head Teacher role.

“We do have a very well organised collaborative system in HALCO. As Head Teachers we have the freedom to opt in and out of things - collaborate in smaller groups when an idea works for certain schools. Our collaboration doesn’t have to be one size fits all. We retain the independence and freedom to decide what our individual priorities are and are not. I’d be concerned about the new model imposing things at a cluster level that might take our time and independence away.”

“I think we absolutely do have elements of team working already across our clusters. For me this model builds it into the system. Just now it feels like an add-on... it’s hard to find the time to get together around our other commitments. It’s hard to get everybody’s voice heard. So for me this is about taking the cluster model and refining it. Some of our clusters are too unwieldy - it’s hard to get 10/12 Heads around one table. Having collective working at a more manageable size and embedded within the model would help. I think we all agree that collaboration has been successful. The new model secures that within the system and helps make it more manageable and achievable.”

“In principle having support from other schools is great. The formal time for meeting and actually working together would be essential - so that people can’t retreat back to their own school and not engage. Coming from an island school, that parity is essential. Larger schools are not better, they cannot have a larger voice. Staffing, recruitment, etc need a very different approach in different schools. So there must be that very clear understanding of the contexts of the different schools. We need equity.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

WORKING AS COLLECTIVES

“This is what we do already, working in clusters. Yes it is a good idea but I don’t see how it’s any different to what we already do. In any context, working together is always a good idea.”

“Joint working exists and is effective, when people are on board. Collaboration relies on everybody being on board, and maybe being formalised - I think the new formal structure would be able to raise the agenda of working together.”

“Collective working is a good idea. Historically it has depended on where you are and who your colleagues are. In the past I have seen some great examples of collaborative work, but not every area is like that. You will get some schools who want to opt out. In my view collective working will need to be structured and formalised. Mandated. There can be a diversity of School types, but there needs to be parity of esteem. And there needs to be honesty. Different schools have very different needs. But I think collective working is a very good idea and should be happening.”

“I was Head of an extremely small school, which is a lonely job. But we had developed an informal collective of five schools. Sports days together, moderation activities together, etc. For us it really worked. Until two of the schools were mothballed. We chose our own collective - we were similar schools, we understood each other’s issues - and that’s how our collective worked well. I think any collectives going forward have to be developed with an understanding of context. And I think that’s really difficult. Schools will need an understanding of how each other work and what they each face. The collective may not have to be all one size or type of school, but they do need to really deeply understand each other.”

“We need to think more globally across Argyll and Bute. The authority can feel very disjointed. We don’t have recruitment problems in HALCO, so it’s hard for us to accept that aspect of the reasons for change. But look at Campbeltown, and how different it can be. The Council feels disjointed. So from an Executive Head Teacher perspective, this model might be an opportunity for a more strategic, thought through piece of planning that everybody gets on board with. You hear about other authorities where a new strategy is shared across every school, whereas Argyll and Bute just isn’t like that.”

“I think Head Teacher personalities are important here. We’re all used to be bosses of our own worlds. HALCO is pretty competitive, Islay is more collaborative, etc. Politics are a reality. The context of each collective is really important. One Head Teacher can destroy the whole thing.”



SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

CRITERIA AROUND COLLECTIVES

Head Teachers are critical of the proposed model's lack of detail. Every Head wants to know what their own school's collective will look like - but at this stage of the process collectives have not yet been defined.



“I don’t know whether this would be a collective of rural schools, or small schools, or nearby schools. Each of those collectives would look very different and impact my school in a very different way. When I’m asked to think about this new model in principle, I get concerned. I need specifics. I need to know who would be my collective.”

“Working together is excellent and we need to do more of it, but it’s hard to know how these new smaller collectives will be formed - and might they restrict the types of schools we can work with?”

“I worry that the formal collective groups may not work as well as the informal groups that have already formed. I can see they might look and say these two schools have both got Gaelic so shove them together, when that isn’t the right pairing.”

“I can see the benefits across the whole authority. The biggest stumbling block for me is that for HALCO is that it’s hard to see how this job would fit in our area. You’re going to have to know the detail, how this would work for us, before we can discuss it. If we look back to the originally suggested early adopters, you saw collectives that didn’t even total the pupil numbers of one of our schools here in HALCO. If we tried it here, the staff and pupil numbers would be huge. It may be that HALCO does not fit the rationale behind the proposals - maybe when we look into the next stage of consultation we see that HALCO is an exception.”

“Knowing the HALCO cluster has good collaborative procedures in place already ... I think all clusters need to be working together. All schools need to be strong, together. For me, the HALCO cluster is too large to work this way. It will not work well for our area because of the sheer numbers of staff and pupils involved. We already have a model that works and need to enhance. An Executive Head coming in would not support the collective way we work, it would undermine it. We are already collective leaders. We’re already doing it and this model just puts barriers and limits in place.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

NON-TEACHING HEADS

Non-teaching roles would be welcomed but are seen as unrealistic.

Each session had a mix of teaching and non-teaching Heads - both sharing their perspectives. Heads who currently teach were particularly resistant to the concept.

However, teaching Heads all described the challenges of dividing their time - being in the classroom when other responsibilities demand their attention. Even those who most value the teaching elements of their roles acknowledged the inherent challenges - for example limited capacity for the strategic side of their jobs.

There was no comment however on whether having different kinds of Head Teacher role (teaching and non-teaching) helps or hinders equity of education delivery for children and young people.



“I feel the role of a Head is to lead. We’re the lead practitioner. I’m not a class teacher but I can choose to spend time in classes. I use that time to look at pupil voice, pupil experience, etc. I spend time with my children, but with a leadership focus rather than a teaching focus. I find that changes your leadership and the quality of your leadership. It’s about self evaluation and listening to the pupil voice. I think being non teaching is a good idea, but Heads still need to be in classrooms.”

“I strongly feel that Heads should not have a teaching commitment. I did it for seven years and loved it, but I felt I was doing two jobs badly instead of one job well. I do understand that in smaller schools some people are attracted to the job for its mix of teaching and non. I do teach, when I can I choose to do it strategically - I teach to cover a teacher when they are leading on a project. I use my time to free up theirs. I think Heads should have the autonomy to do that sort of thing - strategically use their time. I think we need to be careful not to conflate non teaching with never teaching.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

NON-TEACHING HEADS

Comments from
teaching Heads.

“Interruptions during class times are difficult too - having to answer important phone calls when I should be in the middle of a class. I would like to be pulled in less directions. And less unnecessary emails - important things end up lost in the list, especially on teaching days when emails stack up. I have to spend evenings dealing with those instead of planning lessons.”

“I like that being a teaching Head lets me know exactly where every child is in their learning at any point. The community nature of small schools is great, but equally challenging. It can be suffocating when things go wrong. Even trying to find time when people want to speak to you is hard. It would be nice to have more time to look at developing my school without constantly being pulled away to teach or cover a gap.”

“I felt like I have two full time jobs and not enough time to do either of them well. It feels now like there is always something else and something else. It's unrealistic being a teaching head, but with a specialism coming in to fill that time anyway, will it just make you even less in touch with the job in front of you - your school?”

“I teach 70% of the week and I love that. But there's a never ending list of things to do. Return to work interviews, cover for staff, child's plans. They're all important, but it's trying to juggle everything. I like to be able to look forward and plan how we can improve - but we're stuck in the day to day. I feel like I'm not doing the best I can do. The biggest challenge is time. But I don't want to reduce the time teaching. I enjoy it. It's important that I know the children and build relationships. I don't think I could be a good Head Teacher without it.”

“Obviously a lot of senior leadership staff in smaller schools are more used to teaching. I do love doing it, but I am teaching too much at the moment and it is impacting on my strategic work. Our community like to see the Head teaching, because they see it as a direct link with the pupils. I believe I can get that direct relationship in other ways, but the community can be very single-minded about it.”

Comments from
non-teaching Heads.

“In the new model you could still cover classes, or take classes to let your teachers have time to develop professionally and do training. I think it's vital that any leader is visible and seen - I don't have the day to day with a class, but I have the ability to be in all of my settings, from nursery to classrooms and meet all my staff regularly.”

“Teaching as a Head must be difficult, to do both things well. But I do enjoy going into the classes - without teaching. But I do have to cover sometimes. It's not cut and dried, especially where we have no cover teachers.”

“I've been in roles before with really heavy teaching commitment and it was extremely challenging, but I want to keep some of it. I'd like to see teaching commitments reduced rather than removed. I have worked with Heads before who stayed totally out of classrooms - who never took a class - and did not find it to be a good thing.”

“Being able to go to meetings and not say 'I'm sorry, I'm teaching today' is amazing.”

“I know how overwhelmed I feel watching my emails coming in - how can a teaching Head look at that inbox after a full day of teaching?”

“I'm non-teaching and I'm still working 60 hours a week. I'm concerned about adding a specialism to that and me ending up with 65 hours a week. Taking us out of the classroom may not be enough. Something needs to change on the balance of our whole working week before I would consider taking on anything new”

Suggestions.

“I'm very lucky to be a non-teaching Head already. I know how difficult a teaching commitment can be to juggle with taking your school forward. My worry is that we set out with these good intentions and then the supply situation blows it all up. One person being off long-term could destroy all our plans. Maybe we need a permanent cluster supply teacher, or some other innovative solution to permanently solve our supply problem.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

This is, by far, the most controversial element of the model for Head Teachers. The role is not fully defined or understood and there are fears that it is largely about reducing the autonomy of existing Heads.

Heads are concerned about who might fill the Executive Teacher role in their own collective. It is rightly seen by many as a critical role, and we heard common concerns about whether the experience/quality is present in existing local cohorts to enable recruitment from within.

Secondly, the Executive Head Teacher is seen by many as providing scrutiny and accountability for our Head Teachers. For many, the concern is having their daily performance and decision-making closely examined. Head Teachers are worried that their decisions may be overruled or undermined.

The lack of buy-in to the Executive Head Teacher role is evident in conversations about Education Officers and Education Managers. When considering that the new role might provide similar support for Head Teachers, but on a more dedicated, school-based level, it was often still dismissed as “just another level of management” - despite EOs and EMs having been highly valued.

“There are always going to be personalities involved. Any micromanagement over Head Teachers is always disastrous. Any Executive Head Teacher has to be capable of trusting and allowing their team to run with ideas. They will need very good leadership skills. The appointment has to be done sensitively, with cognisance of who is in the collective. Head Teachers come with a vast raft of experience and that profile needs to be recognised.”

“I know there is good cluster working in some parts of Argyll and Bute, but not all parts. All it takes is for one person to leave, or move on, and the whole collaboration grinds to a halt. So many projects lose momentum. Having a person there to make sure things do come to fruition, would help. I do believe the Executive Head Teacher role is important.”

“I agree that we would need an Executive Head Teacher, to oversee all the specialist remits of the Heads and pull it all together. I’m seeing the collective as a huge school - you need someone responsible for keeping it all going. We have Education Managers but we have lost Education Officers, and I feel the EM role is too much now. We need somebody closer, who knows the schools. I see this Executive Head Teacher as being like an EO.”

“If this model were to go ahead I think schools within a collective should have some input on who is chosen - to make it work. I think the Heads of School would have to have their input, to be invested in it.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Comments against the role.

“We all say we like the strategic part of our roles, so why would we want an Executive Head Teacher to take that part of our job away? I don’t think we need to be removed from being Head Teachers. The money from Executive Head Teachers should be spent instead on supporting us as Heads with more staff in our schools. We don’t need to be led.”

“What if the Executive Head Teacher doesn’t agree with my feelings and needs on my school’s direction? Would my voice ever be heard?”

“Executive Head Teachers exist already in a few instances - I haven’t seen a body of evidence anywhere that shows Executive Head Teachers drive actual improvement for children.”

“Education Officers work well because they are an outside role. As individual schools we all felt listened to and supported well, when we had more Education Officers. I feel strongly that Education Officers are a better choice than Executive Head Teachers.”

“I don’t want to be an Executive Head Teacher, but I also don’t want a poor Executive Head Teacher brought in over me.”

“Whilst I don’t want to be an Executive Head Teacher I am very cautious about who might be that person. We all have our own opinions as Heads.”

“What if you got the wrong person in the Executive Head Teacher role? I’ve been there before.”

“I need someone who sits alongside me at my level, not above me. It can be a lonely job. I need someone who is beside me, who understands the context of the school. Not above me.”

“When Heads become Heads of School, I think the things being taken away from the role are dangerous. PRDs for example, I have a peer process which works really well - it’s empowering and challenging and is already in place. My Education Manager is well placed to do things like my PRD. There is a better system already in place without changing and upheaval of our whole system.”

“We have Education Managers, and I don’t know how much the Executive Head Teachers might work together. They might be too insular, too inward looking. When I need advice, I want someone who is in charge of and has experience of more schools, not just a few schools in a collective. That broad experience is invaluable.”

Comments in favour of the role.

“The Executive Head Teacher would be about having oversight. Not needing an Executive Head Teacher in a collective is like saying that I have teachers leading their classes well, so why would they need me as a Head to lead them? I equate the Executive Head Teacher role to that model. Heads of school lead their schools, but someone with oversight across a few schools would have the remit to help them work together. It would build coherence and facilitate communication. Cluster working works organically, but by building this collaboration in and making it a person’s responsibility we would ensure it permanently and consistently.”

“I equate this Executive Head Teacher role for a collective with my own role as Head Teacher within a school. The benefit for me is also where it sits within the hierarchy. It’s like having an Education Manager on hand focusing on our small area and our few schools. I think it’s a huge benefit.”

“I do think what could be beneficial is to have support and scrutiny. Small schools are sometimes left to just get on with things. I would enjoy having someone more experienced to tell me what has worked in other schools etc. I might be constantly reinventing the wheel unnecessarily here in my school. Also with resources and budgets. We’ve had money left over in our budget thanks to recruitment struggles, so I would like to have been able to share that amongst my cluster and put it where it’s needed - as a way of helping with equity. If the Executive Head Teacher can help us do that, it would be really positive.”

“If this model were to go ahead I think schools within a collective should have some input on who is chosen - to make it work. I think the Heads of School would have to have their input, to be invested in it.”

“I think we had a great experience with a past Quality Assurance Officer, but I know other clusters had less helpful Officers. We had monthly visits that were challenging, rigorous, and motivating. A positive experience. And that worked for us. It helped me feel confident that our school was heading in the right direction. That was already in place. If you have an Executive Head Teacher who be like that, it could be great.”

“I know people who have been developed into potential leaders but look at the demanding Head Teacher role and say ‘no thanks’. Leaders need more support and I think the collective model would provide that. Head Teacher can be quite a lonely role, sitting at the head of the school.”

“I think the Executive Head Teacher role can work, but it needs a strong leader. You have to delegate and allow people to run their own areas - and trust them to do so.”

“The Executive Head Teacher role is required. We need that overview of the team of Heads. The parity will be essential. There is a concern that the bigger schools will always hold sway over the smaller schools. We will need the Executive Head Teacher to be able to get to all of their schools, on a practical level.”

“We need to have someone to keep the big picture. I see the Executive Head Teacher being like the Education Officer role, which we recently lost. Someone to deal with the national picture, and to deal with the authority so that we don’t have to. Someone to keep the collective moving forward. My concern is for that person to listen to everybody’s voice and keep equity in mind. As a smaller school. You can lose confidence - focus on your teaching commitment, your challenges, and keep your voice on the bigger stage quiet. This Executive Head Teacher will need to be very people-smart and parent smart.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Head Teachers are not yet sure what the Executive Head Teacher's remit will be, or how they would work with the central team.

"I want to know what the role actually entails. I worked under an Executive Head Teacher in a previous role. It was really positive. I want to know what happens to the existing central system. In my past role, the remit of a Head was supposed to change and eventually we realised the roles didn't actually change at all - so we reverted to the title of Head Teacher after three years."

"With the Executive Head Teacher being brought in what are the central team actually going to do? Nothing?"

"A remit of this role would be more helpful. It's very important that each school keeps its own identity. I think the central team is far too big. Depending on what area you are in affects what support you get. The Executive Head Teacher brings a local context that you don't get from the central team. Looking at ASN allocation as a collective would be so powerful. We speak about pathways, numeracy pathways etc as a cluster- and then we go back to their school and get caught up in the day to day. I think this would keep it front of mind."

"I need to see remits. We are used to being our own leaders. I didn't apply to be a Head of School and to be managed by someone else. Until we get a Head of School role and Executive Head Teacher role with strong remit, I can't make an informed decision."



"There does need to be a person with an overall vision, so other people in the collective team know someone has the strategic overview. I think the next stage will have to be going over scenarios and examples, to work out the practical reality of how this structure would work. I think the Executive Head Teacher role could be quite lonely."

"Having an Education Manager and a good relationship with them - and highly experienced Heads in our area - it seems the Executive Head Teacher could have a tricky working relationship, having less experience than the Heads they are supposed to manage. What will the Executive Head Teacher bring to the job? Their own personal skills and specialities - and will those be matched to the collective's needs? We do have our Education Manager already but my fear is that our time might be consumed with meetings with the Executive Head Teacher. We're all here to learn and if the Executive Head Teacher can add string new to our conversations and collaborations, then great. But it's not clear for us yet what that would look like."

"I'm not a teaching head, but technically I do have a small teaching commitment - I manage to avoid that by staffing well. I do believe non-teaching roles are a good idea but I do feel we should still have Head Teachers as we do now, but with less teaching commitment. I don't see why we need Executive Heads etc to achieve that."

"I would like to be able to engage in more professional learning - I just don't have time. And I'm non-teaching. The model doesn't offer me any more capacity. An Executive Head Teacher wouldn't have the depth of knowledge to help with any of my tasks."

"I love the autonomy and empowerment I have to lead change within my own setting. Being able to drive change, make decisions of my own is the best part of being a Head for me."

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS**SPECIALISMS FOR HEADS OF SCHOOLS**

Specialisms, as an idea, are polarising. Head Teachers do recognise the value of specialist resource in the collective model but there is no clarity at the current stage on how the specialisms would be assigned, and how they would work day-to-day.

Many Head Teachers are struggling to see where the capacity will come from. At its simplest, they see teaching time being replaced by a specialism.

“My day is full as a non-teaching head. I don’t get a lunch break, let alone time to manage a specialism. So what has to change in order for me to have time to do this? I see the benefit of specialisms, but I need to know how it would work practically.”



SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

SPECIALISMS FOR HEADS OF SCHOOLS

“I like the idea of it being linked to the national improvement plan. Each school could be developing one area on behalf of the whole cluster - in that way it could be really good.”

“I think the specialisms are a good idea. I think they would be formed true to the needs of the collective and its improvement needs. It’s important that it doesn’t need to be specialisms on pedagogy like numeracy - they could be parental engagement, or ASN, etc. It can be about the direction on education in Scotland and an opportunity to lead/contribute to that and raise improvement across the collective. These specialisms would be about bringing in different skills to our team. I don’t like the word specialism, but I like the idea. And when that feeds down to the day to day is through the improvement agenda of each school. I don’t see it working terms of calling another Head up for advice on a specific issue - but about sharing support when there is a persistent, ongoing problem. Sharing best practice etc and examples of how another school outwith our collective has tackled the issue successfully.”

“My day is full as a non-teaching head. I don’t get a lunch break, let alone time to manage a specialism. So what has to change in order for me to have time to do this? I see the benefit of specialisms, but I need to know how it would work practically.”

“I have members of staff who would be much more skilled in some specialist areas than I am, and I want to encourage them. I wouldn’t want to shoehorn anyone into a specialism to which they were not suited - that could be very dangerous indeed.”

“I would like to be able to use the specialisms I have which I’m using in this small community - I feel I can contribute on a wider scale and it would be nice to work with other people, collaborative, empowering leaders at all levels - like working with our PTs and building capacity in every role.”

“What if specialism is being led by someone who doesn’t match my pedagogical experience? Do I need to change/reduce to fit into the collective.”

“It does sound interesting. But on the operational side. How long would the specialism last, how many specialisms? What if we all want the same specialism? If we don’t like the post of Head of School, and we move out of the LA? You put all the capacity into that person to become that specialist, then you lose them? You have to be training up the next layer of specialists.”

“I think specialisms are a great idea. Getting your teeth into some professional development. But some specialisms may be bigger than others. We need to watch that individuals are not overloaded, taking on way more than others. So workload and balance are my concerns. I think balancing the amount of work in a specialism is key.”

“We used to have PT days for secondary Heads of department. All the maths PTs would come together, and so on. I can see specialist meetings like that for all the specialists an area to meet, then bring learnings back to their collective. Maybe it’s more of a cluster remit? We can all adapt and learn new things and new specialisms. I think these specialisms could help to build stronger links with other schools and stronger links to the Northern Alliance.”

“This proposed structure only adds pressure to the Heads of bigger schools - and adds a tokenistic ‘specialism’ that is not thoroughly applied. In bigger schools we don’t need to fix a model that is not broken. Our PTs and Deputes specialise in the things we want them to, and we as Head Teachers are actively strategically working with them on a day to day basis.”

“I don’t think it needs to be the Heads who hold these specialisms. We have newly appointed Head Teachers - some of them have risen straight from being a teacher - they won’t necessarily have the knowledge that someone like me has built up over years. Firstly a specialist would need to have a genuine enthusiasm for their subject area, secondly they would need a realistic level of experience. I think our specialists can be at any professional level.”

“I’d like to know how these specialisms or responsibilities would actually work day to day. Is the head’s email inbox going to be flooded every day? I have responsibility for two schools already, then there will be the collective responsibilities, where might this fit in on top? I worry about the burden on individual Heads of Schools - how much work will this specialism be?”

“Specialisms might give the opportunity to get your teeth into something a bit more - one big task instead of lots of bitty things. I imagine the specialists doing things like leading an in service day, giving presentations about their specialism, etc. Not the idea of someone phoning me for advice any time and any moment.”

“In theory specialisms are a great idea, giving expertise across a collective. But again I question the time management side of things. Guaranteeing that time is protected would be essential.”

Suggestions

“I would like a very clear remit of what these specialisms are and how they would be used. Maybe instead of an Executive Head Teacher above me I would like extra time from my PTs, or scope workload of teachers to be looked at, giving them time to be developed into curricular leaders. It would be great to say to a teacher that we value them enough to give them the skills to develop, freeing my PTs up, and in turn me.”

“I feel we are all trying to be jacks of all trades. I don’t see this as being that people will phone you up and interrupt you for advice. I think you’ll get emails and you’ll organise meetings. We’re all looking at improvement and self evaluation within our own schools - having someone looking at that strategically, as a specialism across a whole cluster would lighten the load. In career terms you don’t want a specialist to get stuck in one area, I think we need to build in flexibility.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

A MORE ATTRACTIVE OFFER

“The new model is a refresh. It does offer different opportunities for everybody. We do all have unique skills, and a level of expertise that is maybe being held within individual schools but could do more collectively. I remember being told that a good teacher is a good teacher - it’s about using that ability. I’m really excited about the prospect of a collective covering the whole remit from early years to secondary. Preventing people from being bogged down in one role forever.”

“I try to encourage staff on and encourage them to apply for things. But when opportunities come up a lot of staff say ‘I don’t like it if the buck stops with me’. I hope the collective model might encourage a few more people to look at promotions. I think this model maybe offers people some more confidence.”

“In the new model I would be really interested in having a shot at Executive Head. It looks like a different kind of challenge. I can also imagine myself as a Head of school, taking on a specialism, and thriving. I think the Education Officer role has changed now - this Executive Head Teacher model sounds much more achievable than how the EO role used to work. I can’t compare with how it works now.”

“I’ll be retired in five years. Looking around Argyll and Bute at Head Teachers meetings, it did used to feel that our profession was ageing fast. I think collective leadership can help really develop the up and coming younger workforce. I think it might help for the specialisms to be devolved to Deputes and PTs at some point, to help develop future leaders.”

“I think people are hesitant (myself included) about the whole thing is down to how ‘McCrone’ was brought in. Everyone was doing the extra hours and we felt that by accepting McCrone proposals we would be paid for them. Unfortunately what happened was that teachers had to account for the hours, have increased CPD, increased improvement planning ... the list goes on.”



SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL ROLE

The change of title from Head Teacher to Head of School is causing distrust in the whole proposal. This remains a major barrier to open discussion with Head Teachers.

“We are a suspicious and highly unionised profession, and the job title change makes us very concerned. It feels like a trick is being pulled.”

“I think it’s unfortunate to take the Head Teacher title away from Heads, especially without it being officially job sized. Don’t take that away from me. It’s obviously meant to be lesser, with less pay and less conditions.”

“I’m a Head Teacher not a Head of School. I don’t know what a Head of School is.”

“When people talk about how they love being Head Teacher, it’s not the title. A doctor is a doctor, and we are Head Teachers. It’s our occupation, not just a title.”

“If we took everything else out, is collective leadership a good idea? Yes. It brings great benefits. But I don’t know why Head Teachers need to lose their position.”

“In my past experience working in a similar model we were called Head of School. This changed back to the Head Teacher title because at NVQH meetings, Heads felt like lesser mortals compared to Head Teachers from other areas.”

“I think the very fact I am going to be demoted from Head Teacher tells you everything you need to know.”

“The only concern for me might be around Head of School vs Head Teacher roles. This specialism enhances the strategic role of these people, so why change their name?”

“The Head role is being enhanced - added to - but then why is the title changing? I don’t see a substantive change which requires changing the name.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

ISLAND SCHOOLS

Heads of island schools face the same challenges as others, but some of those challenges are made more complex by their island context.

“Our biggest challenges are staffing and recruitment. It’s hard for anyone to find a home here on the island on a part-time teaching salary.”

“Sometimes there is a perception that just because you’re a small school you have less paperwork - but the paperwork and management side is still there. And it can be very challenging.”

“Any collectives have to be developed with an understanding of context. The collective may not have to be all one size or type of school, but they do need to really deeply understand each other.”

“Coming from an island school, parity is essential. Larger schools are not better, they cannot have a larger voice.”



SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

SMALLER/RURAL SCHOOLS

Heads of smaller schools worry about losing their schools' unique identities in a collective, but see the advantages of formalised collaboration.

“Outwith Scotland I have worked under an Executive Head model and the identities of different schools seems to go. It makes for a homogeneous group and the small schools lose out.”

“Small schools are sometimes left to just get on with things. I would enjoy having an Executive Head Teacher - someone more experienced to tell me what has worked in other schools etc.”

“Being a teaching Head in a small school means I have to handle everything. I would like to be pulled in less directions.”

“The Head Teacher role, as it stands - I know every single child in my school and I know their families. Parents want that. I don't believe an Executive Head Teacher will be able to do that to the same depth across five schools.”



“I think this does have the potential to help people progress. In a small school, staff can become quite isolated and set in their ways, and the collective could open things up for them.”

SCHOOL STAFF: HEAD TEACHERS

LARGER/URBAN SCHOOLS

Bigger schools already have staff structures in place that deliver some of the benefits promised by the new model.

“You hear about other authorities where a new strategy is shared across every school, whereas Argyll and Bute just isn’t like that. The authority can feel very disjointed.”

“I believe there is no way of really protecting people’s time.”



“I’m non-teaching, but I chose to teach one period a week. I think it’s important to muck in and show the troops you can still do it.”

“There may be a lot of travelling for an EHT to do, so we need to think about the practicalities of that. Look at Oban/Tiree or Dunoon/Cambeltown, with a three hour drive or a ferry to catch between schools.”

“Specialisms couldn’t be applied to bigger schools who already have their own structured management teams in place internally. Our Principal Teachers and Deputes specialise in the things we want them to. In bigger schools we don’t need to fix a model that is not broken.”

SCHOOL STAFF

MIDDLE LEADERSHIP

Middle leaders are concerned about their own place in schools under the proposed model. They have concerns about working under a Head of School, whose role is not currently clear.

Methodology

The Empowering our Educators website included a dedicated area for school staff, with tailored information relevant to them.

Materials were shared with all school staff via direct email and also disseminated by their Head Teachers, many of whom self-organised discussions within their schools.

Two webinars for school staff took place, led by the Heads of Service and the Education Manager (Transformation).

School staff were directed back to the Empowering our Educators website to have their say and input into the ongoing development of the proposal. At this point they were able to indicate their role, allowing us to segment the middle leadership data.

Responses were received from 31 middle leadership respondents, of 245 total* employed across Argyll and Bute's schools at the time.

* Argyll and Bute has 49 Depute Head Teachers, one Faculty Head, and 195 Principal Teachers in its schools as of April 2022.

Observations

Middle leaders like Depute Head Teachers, Faculty Leaders and Principal Teachers do not know what might happen to their roles under the proposed model. The proposal that existing school staff and support remains as-is has not been made clear enough.

They do not think the Head of School role is attractive or aspirational - partly because of the title. They view it as a lesser role than Head Teacher.

Middle leaders in particular would like to see a pilot scheme built in to the plans if the proposals move forward. Test, assess, report and develop accordingly.



SCHOOL STAFF: MIDDLE LEADERSHIP

WHAT ABOUT ME?

Middle leaders like Depute Head Teachers, Faculty Leaders and Principal Teachers do not know what might happen to their roles under the proposed model.



“What will happen to my Principal Teacher job? If I am no longer a PT who will run the school when the Head Teacher is absent or out of school completing their job across the collective? Am I to do this anyway, despite not being a PT? Basically for free? I think staff will leave as a result of this. Why would I stay and do the same work for less pay if I am no longer a Principal Teacher?”

“I know we need to be looking at the bigger picture but I feel that a lot of staff, in these insecure and worrying times, will look at how it will affect them directly. I would argue that what affects us directly affects the pupils and I am wary of increased workload for middle leaders here, taking away time we could be improving learning experiences and departmental developments.”

“Will this proposal reduce the prospect of promoted posts in the area? As someone in a promoted post who has completed Into Headship, although does not want to be in a Headship role at present, will there still be opportunities for promoted posts - Depute Head - or will these be reduced due to the restructuring?”

“I am deeply concerned that the role I currently fulfill and which is vital to the running of the small school will disappear. My post has been held as temporary in spite of my representations made to management to change the status to permanent. My fear is that the additional responsibilities I fulfill will remain with me, but that my salary will revert to that of class teacher.”

SCHOOL STAFF: MIDDLE LEADERSHIP

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL ROLE

Middle leaders do not think the Head of School role is attractive or aspirational. The title leads to it being seen as ‘lesser’ than a Head Teacher.

“For me the lack of career progression is my main concern. Further to this, the approach is not equitable across Scotland. Heads of Schools/Senior Depute Head Teachers - would everyone understand what this means in other local authorities?”

“If there is a recruitment crisis for Head Teachers in primary schools it will be due to the significant challenges of the role already. Making that position within the school a ‘Head of School’ makes the position less attractive.”



“It is my aspiration to one day be a permanent Head Teacher. I want to be able to lead my school community both in terms of the operational aspects of school improvement and also the strategic. Unless I was to be appointed as an Executive Head Teacher, the strategic element of things has, it seems, been removed from the position of Senior Depute or Head of School and in all honesty, neither of these roles are what I desire to be because it will not be me who has the overall influence. It will be the Executive Head Teacher in terms of influencing the direction of the school, albeit in consultation and collaboration with colleagues. The chances of one day becoming an Executive Head Teacher myself are also limited as those who will move into this role are likely to be in them for quite some time if this was a route I wanted to pursue.”

“Will ‘Heads of School’ really have more time to run the schools if they are still part of the strategic team with their own designated specialism?”

“The proposal has said Heads of Schools will have specialist areas, how will this be decided? Do they need to have an additional qualification or just an interest in a particular area?”

“Having an effective leader who is in the school is vital. Staff need support of a Head Teacher who is in the building.”

“A lack of team autonomy would discourage an environment of trust and personal responsibility; it would discourage leadership qualities, stifle opportunities for creativity and ultimately lead to an increase in employee turnover.”

SCHOOL STAFF: MIDDLE LEADERSHIP

PILOT SCHEMES

Middle leaders in particular would like to see a pilot scheme built in to the plans if the proposals move forward. Test, assess, report and develop accordingly.



“I truly think there needs to be pilots conducted. We have a model in terms of Joint Head Teachers of primaries and secondaries. If an opportunity presented itself, are we able to do so with a secondary and primary collective model?”

“More definitive information please. The authority could simply create more shared Headship roles as existing Head Teachers retire to address the issue of recruitment. I would be happier once a pilot was run to see the impact and hear the views of those involved.”

“There is not enough information about the proposal. There is no detail. It is very hard to understand how this will work and how it will affect my job or school without the detail!”

SCHOOL STAFF

TEACHERS

There is a critical lack of trust in the Council, and by extension the proposal, among teaching staff, and misunderstanding around a perceived ‘loss’ of Head Teacher roles from schools.

Methodology

The Empowering our Educators website included a dedicated area for school staff, with tailored information relevant to them.

Materials were shared with Head Teachers via email and general school contacts via email, to then be disseminated to all school staff. Many of whom self-organised discussions within their schools.

Two webinars for school staff took place, led by the Heads of Service and the Education Manager (Transformation).

School staff were directed back to the Empowering our Educators website to have their say and input into the ongoing development of the proposal. At this point they were able to indicate their role, allowing us to segment the classroom teachers data.

Responses were received from 81 teachers, of 680 total across Argyll and Bute’s schools as of April 2022.



Observations

Teachers demonstrate a mistrust of management or authority in general and the Council specifically. This manifested in mistrust of the proposal, with many concluding it must be primarily a cost-cutting exercise.

Teachers do not understand how the new Head of School role differs from the existing role of Head Teacher. Because of that they don’t see why the change is proposed - again surmising it must therefore really be about cost-cutting.

Many teachers mistakenly think their Head Teacher would be removed, leaving nobody on-site to run the school. This is a huge worry and a barrier to engagement with the rest of the proposal.

Most teachers see the Executive Head Teacher as another level of management in an already top-heavy model.

With a lack of clarity on how schools will run day-to-day under the proposed model, teachers make assumptions that methods like remote teaching may be relied upon.

Teachers feel the proposal could work for smaller schools banding together, but not larger schools. And it could work for rural schools, but not urban. Most (but not all) feel that primary and secondary schools are simply too different to work well together.

Teachers understandably feel personally invested in and attached to their own schools. They worry about intangible ‘school identity’ being lost in the collective model, but struggle to articulate what they actually mean by ‘school identity’ on a practical level.

SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

LACK OF TRUST

Teachers responses make clear that they do not trust authority in general and the Council specifically. They do not trust the proposal, and conclude it must be primarily a cost-cutting exercise.

“This proposal strikes me as yet another long term money saving exercise. I believe the educational justification is very weak.”

“After listening to and reflecting on discussions from colleagues and Parent Councils, a key challenge is the lack of trust, for many reasons both evidenced and anecdotal, between school-based staff and parents, and council wide leadership. This needs addressed before significant changes are proposed. We need an education system built on mutual trust, cooperation and highly effective communication.”

“The ‘Executive Head Teachers’ are being handed a great deal of power and influence over our local communities - how democratic, open and transparent will their appointments be?”

“I would be concerned that this lack of ‘seniority’ could have a knock on effect on pay and also on wider reputation.”

“Until this authority addresses the way it treats its employees and values them equally as it should, we will continue to have this recruitment problem regardless of the structure we are working within. I work with teachers in Argyll and Bute do not want to become Head Teachers or take on promoted posts because they witness daily the lack of support Head Teachers receive and the immense work load of promoted posts. I don’t think anything about this will change under this new structure.”

“Here is what schools need:

- more classroom assistants!
- more in person training on specific subjects to island communities,
- less cutting of clerical and ASN hours,
- more support for children with ASN needs,
- easier access to additional staff, no more jumping through hoops for children who are not aggressive but with severe needs impacting their and their classes learning,
- better mental health support for teachers,
- another inservice day for teachers to get jobs done not about SIP,
- teachers to get a day out each term to plan, mark, track etc,
- reduction in the guilt all teachers feel for not being 100% there at all times for all children.”

“Yet another cost cutting exercise. Specifically budget driven. Therefore, no support in place to encourage teachers into leadership roles, with training and days for seminars, this would be a long-term plan. There is really no long-term plan to put individually skilled teachers into leadership with a view to Headship. The proposal is too homogeneous. There is no real change in education here. This proposal is the cheapest proposal available this is obvious. This proposal is copying the management structure in the health sector. Which does not focus on skilled delivery but on budget management. This proposal demands managers, not teachers with teaching skills who have developed management skills specifically for education through the Standard for Headship qualification, as this has not been encouraged as a goal at all levels in the teaching profession. A Head Teacher with one specialist skill with no evidence in an understanding of teaching in a classroom? I do not believe that this proposal will employ more class teachers. There must be more thought for improving the pupils’ educational experience in this proposal.”

SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL ROLE

Teachers do not understand how the new Head of School role differs from the existing role of Head Teacher. Because of that they don't see why the change is proposed.

“The lack of a dedicated, committed Head Teacher, with detailed knowledge of their school, will have an immediate negative effect on many aspects of school life.”

“I think it's a mistake not having a hands-on, available, Head Teacher for the children, parents and staff.”

“Not having a Head for every school would be a problem. With having one Head for various schools I feel like pupils will be at a major disadvantage - a lack of positive relationships between Head and pupils.”

“If the Executive Head Teacher is not on site or the Head of School is not on site, there will be a loss of visible management structure in school.”

“I feel that the idea in theory to have someone overseeing the entirety of educational experience of our young people is a good thing, but I worry that taking experienced Head Teachers out of schools and into a more bureaucratic system will not be effective.”

“The idea of each Head of School being responsible for a specialism across the collective does not sound practical and may lead to having less time to commit to the school of which they are head. How can this allow them to focus on getting to properly know and meet the immediate needs of the pupils in their own school?”

Many teachers mistakenly think their Head Teacher would be removed, leaving nobody on-site to run the school.

“I do not believe it is necessary to reduce the number of Head Teachers so drastically in order to make improvements in how we share resources or ensure a seamless curriculum from primary to secondary.”

“I fear that if there is not a Head of School within the building due to shared Head of School then the responsibility of day to day running may fall on the teachers. This will increase anxiety and stress on top of an already stretched workload leading to poor mental health. I understand that this responsibility is supposed to be on your combined Head of School, however, if there is a child protection issue that is disclosed towards the end of the day, this would be very hard to deal with correctly should the support you need not be on site.”

“The best leaders I have encountered in my teaching career are the ones who are very present within the school. The leaders who still take time to teach, understand the needs and the problems facing both their pupils and staff.”

“Bringing management out of the classroom will be detrimental to the children. Management use this time to build relationships with the children and keep in touch with everyday issues in the school. Removing contact with the children is severing relationship opportunities.”



SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

CRITERIA AROUND COLLECTIVES

Teachers have concerns about mixing school types in a collective (eg. urban and rural schools). And most (but not all) feel that primary and secondary schools are simply too different to work well together.

“The main drawback is the fact that a small island school like ours can’t geographically benefit from shared resources as is mentioned as something that will benefit everyone. We are a small school on a small island and what might work on the mainland is not going to work here. Same problem with a shared curriculum.”



“Primary schools and secondary schools are very different learning environments. How can an Executive Head from one sector have a fair and unbiased understanding of how the other sector operates or what it needs?”

“Sharing of expertise within the school community would allow the knowledge from P6–S2 to ‘flow’ better.”

“Primary schools and secondary schools have very different structures and I would not feel confident being led by someone who does not have a detailed knowledge of the primary school curriculum and environment.”

“I don’t like the idea of mixing primary and secondary in a cluster. I would not feel confident having someone who has no experience in a primary school being in charge of many primary schools.”

“I am concerned about the equity of opportunity for Primary Head Teachers - would they feel confident or have the experience to lead a secondary school as Executive Head Teacher? Do secondary Heads know enough about primary level education and early years to feel confident in gaining an accurate overview?”

“I have heard that through schools sometimes do not work particularly well between their secondary and primary - I think it’s unlikely that just having one person leading us all will make it easier for us to work together with different schools; if that was an easy thing to do we would do it already.”

“If our school needs some guidance and our collective leader is a secondary teacher, how are they going to know how a primary school works? Or vice-versa, secondary teachers will seek guidance from other third level teachers, not early years practitioners.”

SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

SHORTAGE OF STAFF

Teachers are acutely aware of the recruitment difficulties faced locally. They feel the proposal does not address the underlying causes (many of which, like affordable housing, are beyond the remit of education).

“Living in a rural area it seems lack of housing is the biggest problem in attracting teachers and management. If salary and housing situations are to remain the same then how is this a more attractive prospect?”

“As a council, please invest in jobs and housing to support people either staying or moving into the local area.”

“We have not had anyone apply for the role of Head teacher for a number of years in this school. How is the role of Head of School going to be filled?”

“Why would ambitious teachers come to or stay in an authority where the chances for promotion are reduced? Lack of a dedicated Head Teacher will increase staffing issues further.”

“We already have a shortage in supply staff here, this proposal would make this even more challenging.”

“Schools are currently stretched to breaking point with not enough staff yet there are no permanent jobs being advertised.”

“I would like to see what research has been done to show why management is not moving to the area.”

“Senior teacher roles are not attractive when they are only ever temporary posts.”





SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

IT'S NOT FOR ALL SCHOOLS

Teachers feel the proposal could work for smaller schools banding together, but not larger schools. And it could work for rural schools, but not urban.

“In areas where the schools have less than 30 children, sharing resources and management teams might work.”

“Although this may be appropriate in some more rural areas of Argyll and Bute, in more populated areas the benefits seem minimal.”

“I hope that this proposal does not go ahead. It does not take into consideration the wide differences that schools have across Argyll and Bute (particularly Helensburgh).”

“The proposal does not take all the schools and areas in Argyll & Bute into consideration.”

“I feel this proposal will work in smaller school but as a HALCO school with a big school roll I feel this will not work for us.”

“I do think the model will work in smaller schools but in the HALCO area the schools are larger and have very different identities and needs and I am worried about what the future holds if this proposal is seen through.”

SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

UNIQUE SCHOOL IDENTITIES

Teachers understandably feel personally invested in and attached to their own schools. They worry about intangible ‘school identity’ being lost in the collective model.

“We would ultimately lose our autonomy. We are already trying to align timetables which means we are not able to run subjects as we would like and ultimately we would be ‘falling in line’ with larger schools. We have our own peculiarities and needs that cannot be met by a proposal like this.”

“There would be a loss of community that is built up around a school and its local environment - by Head Teachers and staff who know their children, families and local community very well.”

“I worry that individual school identity will be drastically changed in the process to streamline.”

“Small villages will struggle to retain their own identities and may find it difficult to mix with neighbouring communities.”

“It’s important for schools to be able to develop their own ethos and identity, to give pride to the pupils who go there; this would limit that.”

“Each school and the community it serves are unique and need a leadership model that reflects and understands this.”





SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Teachers want to know what happens beyond this stage, if the proposal is implemented. And beyond that - how its success (or lack of) would be assessed and acted on.

“It is very concerning that when asked ‘what if the model fails’ the response is that there will be support put into place. There does not appear to be any provision for the fact that we may need to end this model if it is not successful. There needs to be an acceptance that if it doesn’t work we revert back and go back to the drawing board with collaboration with schools and those it is affecting.”

“As for the 5-10 year plan and slow implementation: has there been nothing learned from the Curriculum for Excellence? This implementation did not listen to its detractors. CfE is too broad, not focused, and it has been tweaked, adapted and adjusted in the school setting since its implementation. There must be more thought for improving the pupils’ educational experience in this proposal.”

SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

DISTANCE LEARNING

With a lack of clarity on how schools will run day-to-day under the proposed model, teachers make assumptions that methods like remote teaching may be relied upon.

“I worry about children picking a subject in high school and ending up using Zoom meetings to join a school that offers what they want to study. A very distant approach.”

“I am concerned about the increased dependency on technology for both staff and pupils, rather than a focus on building face to face relationships across schools - for example, teaching a class from DGS online to Campbeltown Grammar.”

“Sharing resources is just not feasible in practical terms - shipping off Apple Macs between schools, and sharing tech equipment? Or is this a way of saying we can teach over Google Classroom? Means synching up timetables which does not meet the needs of each area - how does this help pupil choice?”





SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

EFFECT ON SCHOOL STAFF

Classroom teachers do not know how their schools would operate day-to-day under the proposed model. They worry about a reduction in middle management roles and how that will affect their own workloads.

“The proposal would also place an additional increase in the workload of Principal Teachers (most of whom are class committed) leading to major disruption to their own class’s education as they are required to deal with issues normally handled by a Head Teacher. Head Teachers already carry a huge workload and this proposal cannot do anything other than increase this workload.”

“There is potential of being part of a shared Headship which did not work well in the past for our school and led to more stress and additional workload for staff. This impacts their ability to focus on teaching and learning.”

“Staff moving between schools to share specialisms etc. does not appear to be practical, even from the point of view of travel time.”

“I have concerns with who the responsibility of the school lies with on a day-to-day basis when school has no Head Teacher.”

“The presentation gave the impression of an increase in promoted posts in the new model yet stated repeatedly how difficult it is in Argyll and Bute to attract anyone to fill already existing promoted posts.”

SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

GAELIC MEDIUM EDUCATION

There are concerns on how Gaelic education will fit into the model, and that it was not properly addressed by the proposal.

“I dont see how Gaelic Medium Education will be supported with the new model and if it will receive what it needs to grow.”

“There is virtually no mention of Gaelic medium education in your new model. Will there be a Head of School who will specialise in Gaelic language education? If so, will you make sure that they are able to speak Gaelic fluently? Will they also have the capacity to support non-Gaelic speaking teachers with their L2 lessons?”

“Other areas of our current provision such as Gaelic Medium Education would surely be negatively impacted as it would become the minority even more so. Although in theory, it could be argued that this will be carefully considered during the recruitment process - the reality is that there would be Exectutive Head Teachers without the adequate knowledge, experience or even interest in each component of their collective equally. Therefore the overarching theme of providing equity across all provisions seems somewhat far fetched.”



SCHOOL STAFF: TEACHERS

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Most teachers see the Executive Head Teacher as another level of management in an already top-heavy model.

“I can’t see how adding another layer of management is going to benefit pupils or teachers. If the big driver is to free up the Head Teachers to lead rather than teach, surely employing more class teachers would be a better use of resources?”

“I’m still not entirely sure how the Executive Head Teacher role adds value. I don’t really understand what their job will be as the video does seem to suggest that Heads of Schools will retain most of the current Head Teacher roles.

“The Executive Head Teacher role will inevitably be occupied by a managerial careerist who has long since worked in the classroom in any positive way”

“How is anyone going to be in a position to manage five schools if they don’t have the experience to manage one, which you highlight as an issue.”

“Basing leadership on lack of decent candidates for existing jobs seems a backwards step. How will you attract new people to Argyll when there is an Executive Head Teacher above them and they are really just a glorified Depute? Who will have the final say on matters if they disagree on a fundamental issue?”

“As a parent myself I worry about the continuity for my children. Head Teachers and Executive Head Teachers are at even more risk of being distant figures rather than active and supportive members of the school community, visiting classes and keeping standards and expectations high rather than being strategic! This is already beginning with my Head Teacher in an office all day not being seen in class - she is not class committed and the younger children do not know who she is.”



SCHOOL STAFF

EARLY YEARS

Early years staff have not responded to the proposal in significant numbers. Those who have responded with concerns about what they see as remote management.

Methodology

The Empowering our Educators website included a dedicated area for school staff, with tailored information relevant to them.

Materials were shared with all school staff via direct email and also disseminated by their Head Teachers, many of whom self-organised discussions within their schools.

Two webinars for school staff took place, led by the Heads of Service and the Education Manager (Transformation).

School staff were directed back to the Empowering our Educators website to have their say and input into the ongoing development of the proposal. At this point they were able to indicate their role, allowing us to segment the early years staff data.

Responses were received from only six early years staff, of 251.4 total across Argyll and Bute's schools as of April 2022.

Observations

Engagement with staff from schools with early years settings has been extremely limited, with only six staff participating from the whole of Argyll and Bute.

There needs to be a specific focus on early years if the proposals move any further, to ensure their needs are represented fairly.

The early years staff who responded have concerns about 'satellite' leadership who are not based full-time in their schools.

There is a feeling that the proposal is too focused on management and not enough on the benefits to children and young people.



SCHOOL STAFF: EARLY YEARS

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

The early years staff who responded have concerns about ‘satellite’ leadership who are not based full-time in their schools.

“I am concerned that the Executive Head Teachers may lack experience to lead schools which also have ELC as a part of the primary schools. What if the current Heads and Executive Heads clash and do not have the same aspiration for the school. I am not entirely sure that this would work and there is no evidence to say that it would.”

“I don’t see how a strong team can be created when we will rarely see the satellite Head Teacher.”

“Personally I feel that the Head Teacher will be undermined by an Executive Head Teacher and not fully in control of how to lead individual schools.”

“Perhaps that the benefits may be diluted by more focus on management rather than improvements for the children.”



SCHOOL STAFF

NON-TEACHING STAFF

Non-teaching school staff are worried about ‘losing’ their school’s Head Teacher, and about the proposed Executive Head Teacher being too distant.

Methodology

The Empowering our Educators website included a dedicated area for school staff, with tailored information relevant to them.

Materials were shared with all school staff via direct email and also disseminated by their Head Teachers, many of whom self-organised discussions within their schools.

Two webinars for school staff took place, led by the Heads of Service and the Education Manager (Transformation).

School staff were directed back to the Empowering our Educators website to have their say and input into the ongoing development of the proposal. At this point they were able to indicate their role, allowing us to segment the non-teaching staff data.

Responses were received from 18 non-teaching school staff. Non-teaching school staff are part of 485 total APT staff* across Argyll and Bute’s schools as of April 2022.

* APT staff includes ASN, Classroom Assistants, Pupil Support Assistants, Clericals, Janitors, CCEW, etc.

Observations

The Head of School remit is not understood. Non-teaching staff are worried about losing their Head Teacher.

Non-teaching staff think the Executive Head Teacher role sounds like their existing Shared Heads. There are worries about the role being too far removed from school classrooms.

Even those who can see that the model would work on the mainland don’t believe the same system can work for island schools, with their particular challenges.



SCHOOL STAFF: NON-TEACHING STAFF

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL ROLE

The Head of School remit is not understood. Non-teaching staff are worried about losing their Head Teacher.



“Head Teachers are needed in schools, not out of schools, especially Joint Head Teachers. And Principal Teachers are needed for the days that the Head Teachers are not actually in the school. I like the idea of an Executive Head Teacher but only with the tier system we have at the moment.”

“Communication issues with a school Head who may not be able to visit the school for weeks on end due to the weather and no ferries. We will rely heavily on digital technologies and remote leadership.”

“Currently having a shared Head has had its issues with communication with staff and a lack of physical presence so I am worried that this may be even worse.”

“Our Head Teacher does not usually teach in class. so the main benefit you are describing we already have in place within our school.”

“Having your Head Teacher interacting with pupils is very important to strengthen the bond with with.”

“I feel a school needs a Head Teacher to be onsite to be there to help and give support when both are needed. I know at the moment finding someone to help in all departments in Argyll and Bute is impossible, there is no one person who can help solve problems and give advice when its needed. Working with a Head Teacher to improve the school and make changes can only work if the Head Teacher is at hand every day. If I have a problem in my school and I have to contact an Executive Head Teacher I could be looking at waiting over a week or two for a response - I know that for a fact, even with my Head Teacher at hand she finds it difficult to give me time to help resolve any problems.”

“Not having one figurehead and go-to person in a school will kill the personal feeling you get from a Head Teacher. A Head Teacher is the person who parents, children and staff get their direction and drive from, removing that figurehead person from a school will not only kill the good feeling from schools but will demoralise staff, children and parents.”

SCHOOL STAFF: NON-TEACHING STAFF

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Non-teaching staff think the Executive Head Teacher role sounds like their existing Shared Heads. There are worries about the role being too far removed from school classrooms.

“An Executive Head would be too far removed from the everyday life of the school, its pupils, parents, staff and the local community. This would have such a negative impact on all of the benefits presented.”

“The Executive Head Teachers will end up being solely budget managers and one or more schools within their cluster will lose out. This could be because either a high achieving school or a school with greater deprivation is favoured rather than each school having their own Head Teacher who is always championing their own school.”



SCHOOL STAFF: NON-TEACHING STAFF

LACK OF TRUST

Mistrust in both the Council and the consultation process has led non-teaching staff to believe the proposals are ultimately about cutting costs, or even closing schools.



“This is a step towards closing schools.”

“I see nothing in this proposal, and I mean nothing, that will benefit anyone except Argyll and Bute Council’s budget.”

“This looks like an overall reduction of budgets and staffing over time.”

“There is a lack of transparency and mistrust as a result of the process. Vagueness of the proposals. Lack of evidence to support claims, and importantly no evidence that they will cause no harm. I have real concerns over the process, and very imbalanced consultation. It causes significant distrust in the analysis of the data and any future consultation. Very much feels like this will be progressed regardless.”

SCHOOL STAFF: NON-TEACHING STAFF

ISLAND SCHOOLS

Even those who can see that the model would work on the mainland don't believe the same system can work for island schools, with their particular challenges.

“Although I agree that there could be improvement with a more structured leadership model, I’m not sure that there will be - owing to the location and logistics of recruiting and retaining staff on a remote island where the challenges are huge despite all the staff working above and beyond continually.”

“I’m not quite sure that being on a small island will enable the staff and children to benefit fully from the vision. We are often overlooked/forgotten and although the children always have a consistently good learning experience it is often hard for the staff with limited support and resources from the authority.”

“It could be posited that adding another layer of management will only make a structure more top heavy and divisive and not necessarily more dynamic. It has happened in other public services. Interesting to see how it will work in an island setting.”

Don't forget the positives ...



“I can see that for a small island school like ours it will bring chances to collaborate with other schools in the area.”

“This in turn may help with the transition to secondary school on the mainland for our island children. It appears we will have the same leadership regardless of our small size. Great if it stops tiny schools from closing as the knock-on affects for a community if a school closes are huge.”

SCHOOL STAFF

CLASSROOM SUPPORT STAFF

The main fear for support staff is losing their Head Teachers. The Head of School role is not seen as an equal replacement.

Methodology

The Empowering our Educators website included a dedicated area for school staff, with tailored information relevant to them.

Materials were shared with all school staff via direct email and also disseminated by their Head Teachers, many of whom self-organised discussions within their schools.

Two webinars for school staff took place, led by the Heads of Service and the Education Manager (Transformation).

School staff were directed back to the Empowering our Educators website to have their say and input into the ongoing development of the proposal. At this point they were able to indicate their role, allowing us to segment the data from classroom support staff.

Responses were received from 16 classroom support staff. Classroom support staff are part of 485 total APT staff* across Argyll and Bute's schools as of April 2022.

* APT staff includes ASN, Classroom Assistants, Pupil Support Assistants, Clericals, Janitors, CCEW, etc.

Observations

Without fully understanding the new Head of School role, the main concern of support staff is losing their Head Teachers.

Support staff question whether an Executive Head Teacher (and their salary) is the best use of limited funds, which could be spent (for example) on ASN support instead.

There is a feeling that this is a 'big school' structure being imposed on small schools - and that it's not suitable.



SCHOOL STAFF: CLASSROOM SUPPORT STAFF

REMOVAL OF HEAD TEACHERS

Without full understanding of the new Head of School role, the main concern of support staff is losing their Head Teachers.

“As a parent I’m concerned, not sure I like the idea of no Head Teacher for a specific school, reason being Head Teacher becomes familiar with students and family and builds rapport which you would lose.”



“From a professional point of view, it is my opinion that the higher Head Teacher role needs to be based within each individual school. Whilst I understand that on occasion the Head Teacher is having to split their time between leadership and teaching which can be hard. There have been multiple times when the Head has been needed as a higher authority figure to get children to behave how they should.”

“My main reservations are that Head Teachers need to be physically present at the school in order to be able to know what the school, staff and children need. One school provides more than enough work for a Head Teacher to deal with and it is hard enough as it is, especially in a high roll school. Head Teachers have a pastoral care role to staff and children. How would they be able to provide a good level of care if they do not know their staff and pupils well? Pupils with Additional Support Needs will suffer the most. At present, as we deal with a pandemic, the presence and leadership of a Head Teacher that we know we can count on is paramount to ensure excellence levels of high adherence to rules and high staff morale. I feel that the Council is attempting to treat schools like a business with this new proposal.”

“I think the new proposals should be disregarded and Head Teacher positions as well as all other school staff posts should be kept as they are.”

“Our Head Teacher knows our families and most importantly our children so well. I feel that the new model may take away the strong ethos and community spirit that we have now and is remarked upon by visitors. I am a community member as well a staff member and can speak as an ex-parent also. I would hate to see our school stepping away from the amazing place it is now.”

“Our Head Teacher does not usually teach in class. so the main benefit you are describing we already have in place within our school.”

SCHOOL STAFF: CLASSROOM SUPPORT STAFF

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Support staff question whether an Executive Head Teacher (and their salary) is the best use of limited funds, which could be spent (for example) on ASN support instead.

“Are we just creating a new job that doesn’t need to exist? Given current budget restraints surely the money could be better spent!”

“I also feel this new Executive role will come in and overrule Head Teachers with the Council’s best interests - rather than the childrens!”

“There seems to be no reason why resources etc can’t be shared at the moment. We don’t need an Executive Head to enable that, just better communication between schools. It mentions ‘more collaboration between schools’ Once again I am unsure why we can’t have this without an executive lead.”

“Overall, to me, this proposal will undermine trust in the leadership, weaken staff morale and relationships, and moreover, make it too big a structure for pupils (and parents) to feel valued and understood.”

“For staff I worry how a central leadership will only contribute to non-flexible situations. Something (e.g. a project that’s school specific) can’t be authorised by a local Head Teacher but has to be discussed with someone potentially far away from our school. It’ll make it a very sad environment where the person in charge can’t easily be approached and it weakens staff morale.”

“Not having an executive lead that knows every child and their families within the setting personally. I feel this may lose the ‘personal touch’ a Head Teacher currently has.”

“There seems to be no reason why resources etc can’t be shared at the moment. We don’t need an Executive Head to enable that, just better communication between schools. It mentions ‘more collaboration between schools’ Once again I am unsure why we can’t have this without an executive lead.”



SCHOOL STAFF: CLASSROOM SUPPORT STAFF

LACK OF TRUST

There is a feeling that this is a 'big school' structure being imposed on small schools - and that it's not suitable.



“Overall, to me, this proposal will undermine trust in the leadership, weaken staff morale and relationships, and moreover, make it too big a structure for pupils (and parents) to feel valued and understood”

“Each individual school in Argyll and Bute has very different needs and I don't see anything positive about bringing them all together as one. The needs of smaller schools are very different from the needs of the larger ones in the area. This proposal would take in children from the age of three years right up to the age of 18. Nursery, primary and secondary level. Once again, very different needs and very different skill sets are required.”

“The main drawback is the fact that a small island school like ours can't geographically benefit from shared resources as is mentioned. We are a small school on a small island and what might work on the mainland is not going to work here. Same problem with a shared curriculum.”

“This appears to be a proposal based on financial reasons rather than the educational needs of each individual child.”

“This proposal might sound fine on paper but in practice it's something I can't see working out to be beneficial to pupils or staff alike.”

“Instead of this programme being implemented, there should be better communication between services to allow children to access the services needed for the best outcome for the child, their peers and the staff.”

“My main concerns are whether budgets will allow enough support staff - ASNs, Classroom Assistants etc - to work in classes and throughout the school. They currently support the teaching staff by supporting the pupils, especially in classes where individuals require frequent support but they have no supported hours allocated. This role will still be necessary regardless of how many teachers are allocated in the new collective model.”

PUPILS

Both primary and secondary pupils were quick to see the benefits in theory of collaboration and sharing between schools. But, like their parents, they have concerns about equity - particularly between smaller and larger schools - and ask for more detail on their own collectives before they would be able to form a properly considered opinion.

The respectful, kind, caring, articulate and balanced views we received are a credit to Argyll and Bute's children and young people.

As these sessions were supported by school staff it is important to recognise that the teacher's own opinion may play a part in the feedback.

"We like that other schools can help us find solutions to our problems. It is good for all of the teachers to get to work together as a team."

"We could make more friends if schools mix."

"If a teacher has a good way to help us learn, then they can go to the other schools and show them what they do and then everyone will learn much better."

"It makes schools more equal if we share - though we think that it helps smaller schools more than bigger ones."

"The risk is the Executive Head Teacher may take over a bit more and the schools may change to all being the same."

"It's important that all schools are equal, no matter what their size."

"Some schools would be the Executive Head's favourites and get more."

"If schools are doing fine, why change?"

"There was mention of increasing teachers in schools through this model. Why are they not doing that anyway?"

PUPILS

Pupils think that collaboration and sharing between schools are good ideas, but they worry about how equitable it might be in practice.

Methodology

Overall, responses were received from 53 Pupil Councils, from schools across Argyll and Bute.

Pupil Councils have a remit to represent the voice of their school.

We engaged the Pupil Councils of each school in Argyll and Bute with an age-relevant presentation. Their sessions were facilitated independently by their own teachers, allowing the conversation to be delivered sensitively with reassurance on hand for the pupils if required.

We asked pupils what they liked about the proposal, and what they didn't.

Pupil Councils had their own section of the Empowering our Educators website, including presentations, videos and feedback forms. These were developed through focus groups with pupils and feedback from teachers and Head Teachers across the local authority.

The Education Service's Inclusion and Equity Team supported specially tailored engagement sessions with a selection of ASN pupils across the local authority.

Context

It is important to acknowledge that by using teaching staff to facilitate these sessions there may have been a natural element of how the teaching staff member themselves feels about the proposal coming through in the children's understanding, but this was accepted as the best way to manage the conversations with children, keeping their wellbeing front of mind.

Not all schools responded officially with the thoughts of their pupils. Some schools left it to their Head Teachers to respond on their behalf.

Observations

Primary pupils think the changes are too complicated and don't understand why they might happen. But they all saw schools working together as a good thing, with social benefits as well as learning benefits.

Sharing resources was seen as a major positive and primary pupils were very enthusiastic about equality and fairness. But they worry about more sharing (especially of leadership) making their schools too similar. They are all quite proud of their differences.

Primary pupils think that schools working together could be a good way to share ideas. But they worry about how it would work - especially if the schools disagree on anything.

Many primary pupils, especially in smaller schools, are used to seeing their Head Teacher every day and don't want that to change. And they worry that the Executive Head Teacher will be an outsider who doesn't really know what their school needs.

Primary pupils from all kinds of schools think this model would benefit smaller schools. But pupils from bigger schools are less sure about it for themselves.

Secondary school pupils questioned the lack of detail in the proposal, asking for examples of real collectives and evidence for why the proposed structure would succeed.

Secondary pupils are not as used to seeing their Head Teachers taking classes, except as cover. They worry about equity, with Executive Head Teachers covering multiple schools.

Some secondary pupils wanted the direct benefits to children in the proposal made clearer, but many commented on collectives being helpful for the primary/secondary transition.

Secondary pupils showed a keen sense of fairness, wanting to ensure resources would be shared equitably across collectives.

The respectful, kind, caring, articulate and balanced views we received are a credit to Argyll and Bute's children and young people.

PUPILS: PRIMARY PUPILS

SCHOOL COLLECTIVES

Primary pupils think that schools working together could be a good way to share ideas. But they worry about how it would work - especially if the schools disagree on anything.



“Working together could improve all schools.”

“We think that it would be good because maybe one Head Teacher who was not sure on something could ask another Head Teacher for help.”

“This depends on good teamwork across schools - what if leaders cannot get on?”

“Maybe some Head Teachers don’t want to work together.”

“Head Teachers working together is good teamwork and it creates more ideas.”

“What if all teachers and Head Teachers don’t agree with what the Executive Head Teacher wants? What if the Executive Head Teacher has an idea and no one wants it? What if one school gets resources and another doesn’t?”

“We don’t like the idea that the Head of School has another boss. This could lead to arguments and we are worried that the Executive Head Teacher could stop decisions being made for our school. We are worried that if we choose to do something for our school then the Executive Head Teacher could come along and change it.”

“Also what if an Executive Head Teacher spent lots of money on another school and there wasn’t enough to buy essential materials for our school?”

“We are worried that it will be overwhelming for students too because the Executive Head might disagree with the Head of their school and give one of their other schools what they want instead.”

“We like that other schools can help us find solutions to our problems. It is good for all of the teachers to get to work together as a team.”

“The Executive Head Teacher can help our Head Teacher.”

“Will the Executive Head Teacher just get to know Heads of Schools or will they get to know the teachers?”

“The Head of School and the Executive Head Teacher would need to have a good relationship so they can share ideas. The Executive Head Teacher would need to take in all the feedback they can instead of doing all their own ideas.”

“We think that it would be good because maybe one Head Teacher who was not sure on something could ask another Head Teacher for help.”

“It’s important that all schools are equal, no matter what their size.”

PUPILS: PRIMARY PUPILS

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Primary pupils worry about the Executive Head Teacher not being in, and knowing, their school - and whether they will really know what each particular school needs.

“Some schools would be the Executive Head’s favourites and get more.”

“The Executive Head Teacher might make changes we don’t like - for example changing our uniform.”

“It is too much work for one person. They would get no sleep.”

“Executive Head Teachers won’t know us all.”

“People who don’t know you and your school would be making decisions that affect you.”

“We think we should keep it simple with one Head Teacher for every school.”

“If we had a Head Teacher above our Head Teacher they might tell them what to do but it might not be the right thing to do for our school.”

“It sounds like the Executive Head would be too busy to spend time with us, maybe they would be rushing to visit everyone. How much time would we get? I don’t know why we need another Head Teacher?”

“We feel that we wouldn’t connect to an Executive Head Teacher well as we wouldn’t get to know them.”

“Executive Head Teachers wouldn’t know everyone the way our Head Teachers do, so won’t know what is best for us and might not make the best choices for our school.”

“Would we have to change the way we do things just because the new Head Teacher wanted to change things to how other schools do them. Things like our breaks, we have three breaks but other schools only have two.”

“We don’t understand what an Executive Head Teacher will do. Will they get to know us?”

“It is odd that the Head Teacher has another boss. Schools are different and Heads from other schools might not know my school.”

“Do we know who Executive Heads and Heads of School would be? How would it be decided?”

“Head Teachers would get more sleep because the Executive Head would do all the worrying.”



PUPILS: PRIMARY PUPILS

NON-TEACHING HEADS

Many primary pupils are used to seeing their Head Teacher daily and don't want that to change. But they appreciate that not teaching would give their Head Teacher more time to do other important things.

“Our Head Teacher is special and we like it when she sometimes teaches us.”

“What if Head Teachers want to teach?”



“The Head Teacher won't have to teach classes and can concentrate more on leading.”

“The Head Teacher would get more of a break as they would not have to think of what children need to learn.”

“Children would rather Head Teacher kept teaching as the Head Teacher would know children better.”

“Executive Head Teachers and Heads of Schools would not be teaching and we would not see them.”

“We would not see the Executive Head Teachers. How often would they get to Jura?”

“When we have the Head Teacher in class, we can talk to them, tell them how we are feeling. They are the one that runs the school and can do something about it. We don't have to go through another teacher who then has to ask the Head Teacher.”

“For the bigger schools it would be harder as we won't be able to have quality time with our Head Teacher because they will be helping other schools.”

“The Executive Head Teacher won't get to know their pupils and staff.”

“We think that there will be too many children for the Executive Head Teacher to get to know.”

“If the Executive Head Teacher is off sick the Head of School can run their own school.”

“If our Head Teacher goes we will miss her.”

“Some children might want their Head Teacher to teach them.”

PUPILS: PRIMARY PUPILS

UNIQUE SCHOOL IDENTITIES

Some pupils thought that schools might end up more similar as a result of closer collaboration. Maybe too similar.

“We like our school being different. Over the years we have made it the way we all want it. We think that people are trying to make us identical except for our name and colours. We don’t want to be identical. We like being different.”

“This is a terrible idea. We would become part of a chain of schools - a bit like a branch of McDonald’s.”

“One boss over all collective schools means that schools will end up the same as the same Executive Head Teacher is in charge”

“All the schools would be the same. It’s like a rainbow, if the red colour took over then it wouldn’t be a rainbow.”

“Our school would not stay as individual as we are just now.”

“The risk is the Executive Head Teacher may take over a bit more and the schools may change to all being the same.”

“It is important to me that my school is different, but if we have the same Head of School, our school might be the same as the others.”

“It might make our school not Dalintober - it might change the school and make it not the same as it was before. Our identity might change. It wouldn’t just be our school - it would be someone else’s school.”

“I don’t want to be learning exactly the same thing as other schools because I like that our school is unique. I don’t really get what it wants to achieve because I like that schools are different in their own way.”



PUPILS: PRIMARY PUPILS

CHANGE AND UNCERTAINTY

Primary pupils think the changes are too complicated and don't understand why they might happen. They like their schools as they are.



“I’m not very good with change. It makes me nervous.”

“There is nothing wrong with our school how it is.”

“If schools are doing fine, why change?”

“What are the risks? Will it work?”

“Would we have to change the way we do things just because the new Head Teacher wanted to change things for other schools to do them. Things like our breaks, we have three breaks but other schools only have two.”

“Would we still have our teachers and would we get more teachers?”

“Everything is ok as it is. Five years is too long, what's the point?”

“We think it is a bad idea because sometimes people make big changes that some people don't like and things don't always go to plan.”

“We worry that the new Head Teacher won't like us.”

“Another Head Teacher would have different ways of doing things. I don't handle change very well, when I don't know what is happening.”

“We like our school the way it is.”

“It's not our job to say what the teachers want to do. We feel it is for adults.”

“We think it sounds very complicated.”

“I think this is a big thing to change and it will take too long.”

“It may take a long time to make collective schools. We don't know what the journey would be and why it would take so long.”

“We think that if the changes need to be made they should be made quicker - five years is too long.”

“It could take years to be undone if it's not working.”

PUPILS: PRIMARY PUPILS

CONNECTING SCHOOLS

All pupils saw schools coming together as a good thing, with social benefits as well as learning benefits.

“Small schools should come together.”

“We could make more friends if schools mix.”

“We could have clubs running across schools, like basketball or football clubs.”

“We might have more money for things if all schools worked together.”

“We would get different influences from other teachers. Our school could get more support.”



“This might help connect schools together.”

“It could be nice to visit other schools more.”

“It would be really good for our transition to High School as the P7 would get to know more people. We have the cameras now and they can help us work with the other P7s in our group of schools.”

“We’ve had joint trips away with other schools and events together, so we understood how this could work.”

“For the Primary 7s there may be more opportunity to meet with other P7s.”

“We can share how we learn with other schools.”

“We could join together on school trips to help with the cost.”

“Pupils can learn together if they can travel to other schools sometimes. ”

“Some schools might want to be part of a group of schools. Other schools might not want change.”

“We could do collective fundraising for bigger charities and raise more.”

“There will be more teachers to teach us”

“If a teacher is off they can ask a teacher from another school to teach and cover a class - staff can be shared out”

“This might give some schools teachers/staff that they need.”

PUPILS: PRIMARY PUPILS

SHARING RESOURCES

Sharing resources was seen as a positive, but the pupils need more clarity on how it would work. What materials and resources could be shared?



“Everyone in Argyll and Bute would get the same education.”

“If a teacher has a good way to help us learn, then they can go to the other schools and show them what they do and then everyone will learn much better.”

“If our bus breaks down we could borrow one from another school.”

“How will it be equal? What if we get more money than we need and bigger schools get less?”

“We could also share ideas on eco, climate change, rights, respecting schools and learning.”

“Specialist Head of Schools could help a new Head of School in numeracy or gymnastics for example.”

“We would have access to more teachers if we needed it.”

“I came from a school with over 500 pupils and our small school has better resources than they had.”

“It would be good to share equipment.”

“We like the idea of sharing money with other schools.”

“Bigger schools can help smaller school and we are quite big so could help others. There are bigger schools than us so they could help us. We can share resources around.”

“We are a bigger school and have good IT equipment. What if we get less time using it and what if we share it and another school doesn't look after it properly and breaks it?”

“Our pupil council only think this proposal is a good idea because of sharing resources. It means some schools can have things they don't have now.”

“Who will make sure resources are looked after and take them to places?”

“What if we get fed up sharing?”

“Would bigger schools share their things with smaller schools or would everything stay with bigger schools?”

“If we share people and materials there will be a transport cost.”

“Each school could get a big barn to keep all of their resources in.”

PUPILS: PRIMARY PUPILS

IT'S NOT FOR ALL SCHOOLS

Primary pupils from all kinds of schools think this model would benefit smaller schools. But pupils from bigger schools are less sure about it for themselves.

“It’s good for smaller schools to get together, but not schools like ours.”

“We think that smaller schools should be in collectives, but not the others. We can’t see the benefit to bigger schools.”

“It makes schools more equal if we share - though we think that it helps smaller schools more than bigger ones.”

“This is only a good idea for rural and small schools. It doesn’t suit the needs of larger towns and schools and I don’t think there are any benefits to our school.”

“Smaller schools would be as well equipped as bigger schools.”

“Each school would have different things to improve, how does the collective decide?”

“We think smaller schools will get more opportunities and it would be more equal. The smaller schools could get more resources.”

“All the rural schools might get more out of it - more equipment and they can experience what it is like in a bigger school.”

“This gives smaller schools better opportunities because the Head Teachers have more time to lead their schools.”

“Some schools are quite well equipped and some are less well, but we can already share stuff right now instead of being in a collective.”



PUPILS: SECONDARY PUPILS

CRITICISM OF THE CONSULTATION

Secondary school pupils questioned the lack of detail in the proposal, asking for examples of real collectives and evidence for why the proposed structure would succeed.



“The pupils wanted clearer examples of what this would actually look like.”

“The students had a vague understanding of the proposal but didn’t feel that the information offered answered all of their questions about how it would work in practice.”

“Not enough detail offered to make a decision on this.”

“Not sure how this benefits pupils as presentation not specific enough (what are the wages for new posts, will primary teachers run secondary schools and vice versa? We want a Head Teacher who knows their pupils.”

“Would it affect the structure of middle management, i.e. less Principal Teachers?”

PUPILS: SECONDARY PUPILS

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Secondary pupils are not as used to seeing their Head Teachers taking classes, except as cover. They worry about equity, with Executive Head Teachers covering multiple schools.



“Head Teacher could focus more on the job if not teaching.”

“Most Head Teachers don’t have time to teach anyway so this seems an irrelevant point.”

“They like the idea of working collaboratively across schools but do not like the idea of an Executive Head.”

“The idea of the Executive Head Teacher and the Heads of School working together is a benefit.”

“They felt students might not get to know the Head Teacher well and vice-versa.”

“We sometimes need the help of Deputes and Head Teachers to teach or cover classes when teachers are off. Some Head Teachers might actually like to teach!”

“We are worried about the impact on current Depute Head Teachers who are already dealing with heavy workloads. This could also impact on other staff like Principal Teachers. If the staff aren’t happy, the school won’t be.”

“There won’t be as much diversity in the education system or different views/opinions as there won’t be a mix of Head Teachers from different backgrounds.”

“They couldn’t see how this would be equitable and felt that smaller schools would inevitably lose out to bigger ones in the day to day demands of an Executive Head.”

“It would be difficult to spend equal amounts of time at each school - what if island schools become the poor relation?”

“This might slow everything down – if something was happening within a school, it may require the answer of the Executive Head Teacher and therefore this delays getting answers to things.”

“The quality of education might decrease because an Executive Head Teacher has to focus on a number of schools and can’t concentrate on the one.”

“Lack of trust and respect for the Executive Head Teacher because pupils won’t know them, they won’t know the pupils. It will just be a figure in an office running schools.”

PUPILS: SECONDARY PUPILS

SHARING RESOURCES

Secondary pupils showed a keen sense of fairness, wanting to ensure resources would be shared equitably across collectives.

“More learning resources could be shared – but this would need to be done fairly.”

“Might making sharing equipment easier between primary schools.”

“Some schools would benefit from the sharing of money and equipment.”

“Money could be shared across the collective.”

“There was mention of increasing teachers in schools through this model. Why are they not doing that anyway?”



“Sharing of money and equipment might disadvantage some schools as well. The Executive Head Teacher might not fully appreciate the impact of this on a day to day basis”

“Sharing of staff might not work due to timetabling in the secondary school.”

“Expenses for Executive Head Teachers dependent on where they are based will be an additional cost.”

PUPILS: SECONDARY PUPILS**WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Some secondary pupils wanted the direct benefits to children in the proposal made clearer, but many commented on collectives being helpful for the primary/secondary transition.

“P7 would be able to transition easier if there was a shared Head Teacher across primary and secondary.”

“It would help with primary pupils getting to know other pupils before they moved to secondary.”

“Not sure how this benefits pupils as presentation not specific enough. We want a Head Teacher who knows their pupils.”



COMMUNITY BODIES

After being talked through the proposal, 93 Chairpersons of Community and Parent Councils were given toolkits to share and discuss the proposal independently with their members, and respond collectively as a Council.

These community groups responded overwhelmingly against the proposal for change, and the consultation process was heavily criticised by them.

Many of the benefits of the proposal were recognised, however, any positivity was quickly extinguished by common negative themes, some repeated by multiple groups.

“We want the benefits that it is claimed will be brought about but, instead of a serious dialogue about how to achieve them, Argyll and Bute Council has simply provided us with PR-led assurances.”

“The proposal seems to lack any empirical data to base its assumptions on.”

“Who will be in our collective? There was considerable concern that we don’t know what schools will comprise our local collective.”

“There is concern that the individuality of our school may be lost amongst the homogeneity your plan clearly seeks.”

“Rural schools are well resourced and there is no need to share with the larger schools.”

“The new Head of School roles appear to be a demotion of Head Teachers.”

“They need to improve their recruitment policies in order to attract teachers to remote and rural areas, rather than this smokescreen of executive leadership which is a savings plan in disguise.”

COMMUNITY BODIES

Quantitative research methodology

An email was sent to representatives of Community Councils, Parent Councils, and selected other bodies in Argyll and Bute, with a personalised link to an online survey (hosted on the Empowering our Educators website).

There were some misunderstandings on how the response form worked. The multiple choice question of “What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?” was not mandatory, and users could choose to select none. However, many responders selected “Other (please explain below)” and used this opportunity to express, in their view, there were no benefits. Therefore, any selection of “Other (please explain below)” was not quantified and counted as a benefit.

For open-ended questions in the response form (“Other Benefits”, “What are your main reservations about the proposal?” and “Is there anything else you would like to share?”) and any responses received via the *support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk* email address, responses were categorised under 26 wide-ranging themes. For example, if one respondent mentioned the “Consultation process”, “Detail of the proposal” and “Mistrust of the council” within their question responses, then this would be counted against all three themes. This was to give a broad overview of the most common points of discussion.

Those submissions received outwith the portal (to the *support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk* email address) did not answer the multiple choice questions - therefore these responses are not quantified in: “Which of these best describes you?”, “What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?” and “Having engaged with the proposal, do you believe the School Collective Leadership model will positively affect the future education of young people in Argyll and Bute”.

Two parent councils submitted their response to the wrong response form, but have been included in this data.

Responses

Total number of responses	67
Duplicates omitted	0

Respondents (Selected from list)	Number
A Parent Council	52
A Community Council	13
An employer or organisation	2

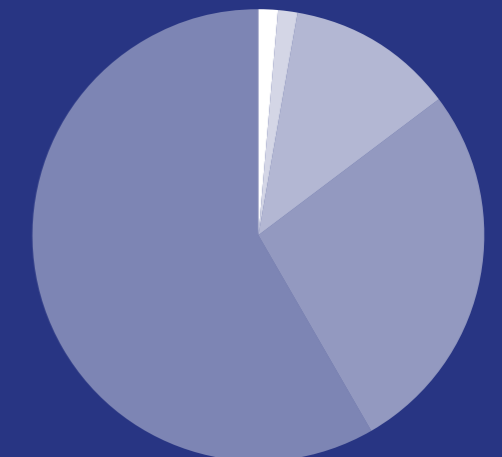
Q. What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?

Benefits (Selected from list*)	Positive responses
More teachers in classrooms	3
Sharing specialists (like science teachers) with neighbouring schools	12
Giving Heads more time to lead schools, instead of having them teach as well	5
More equality between schools, with resources better shared	9
Expert specialists in local schools (like assessment specialists, or early years specialists)	8
More collaboration between schools	10
Improved progression for pupils between primary classes and when moving to secondary	4
An Executive Head Teacher whose job is to drive improvement across all the local schools	4

* Respondents were able to select multiple or no answers.

Q. Having engaged with the proposal, do you believe the collective leadership model will positively affect the future education of young people in Argyll and Bute?

Answer (Selected from list)	Number of responses
Strongly Agree	1
Agree	1
Neither agree nor disagree	8
Disagree	18
Strongly disagree	39



COMMUNITY BODIES

COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

Lack of detail has allowed misinformation and suspicion to take root, with bad feeling towards the proposal overwhelming the consultation.

Methodology

Overall, responses were received from 27 Community Councils and 76 Parent Councils across Argyll and Bute (13 and 52 of those submitted via the dedicated website forms with the remainder submitted outwith).

Five Q&A sessions were hosted for chairpersons of Community Councils and Parent Councils. The Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) presented the proposal and answered questions from a total of 93 chairpersons from across Argyll and Bute at these sessions.

Chairpersons were encouraged to then share the proposal independently with their Community Councils and Parent Councils for discussion, using a supplied toolkit including presentations, email invitations and filmed content, and feed back through the Empowering our Educators website.

Argyll and Bute Council offered the support of an education professional to attend their discussions and answer any questions. 37 Community and Parent Councils took that offer up.

Parents were invited as individuals to visit the Empowering our Educators website to access information on the proposal. Ongoing information was disseminated through the existing Xpressions app for school-to-parent communication. Drop-in Q&A sessions for both parents and other Argyll and Bute residents were promoted through local press and social channels.

Context

Parent Councils exist to represent the parent voice for each school in the authority.

The remit of a Parent Council is defined in the *Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006*. "The Parent Council is designed to be a vehicle for promoting communication. It is required to promote contact between the school, the Parent Forum, parents of prospective pupils at the school, pupils in attendance there, the community and such other persons as the Parent Council consider it appropriate to include (Section 8(1)(c)). A Parent Council for a primary school should promote contact between itself and the providers of nursery education to prospective pupils at the school (Section 8(2) and (3)). A key function of the Parent Council is to represent the interests of the Parent Forum, pupils and relevant others."

It was expected that each Parent Council would bring the unique context of their own local school to the consultation process.

However, due to a significant level of lobbying directed at the Parent Councils, they mostly fed back with broader, less school-specific views. Key themes were around the consultation process and mistrust of the key drivers for change, citing budget cuts instead.

One parent wrote to us by email to express concern that the local Parent Council did not represent her own views as a parent. They had not consulted locally and her voice was not heard.

Observations

Community and Parent Councils are overwhelmingly against the proposal for change, and the consultation process was heavily criticised by these groups.

Many of the benefits of the proposal are recognised, however, any positivity was quickly extinguished by common negative comments from multiple groups.

Sharing of resources was almost universally welcomed, however, questions were asked as to why this can't currently be the case. It is not seen as enough justification for transformation on this scale.

Equity between schools (not pupils) is at the heart of most concerns.

Catholic/Gaelic schools are very concerned at perceived threat to their identity/autonomy and teacher specialisms.

Smaller/island schools are concerned they will go overlooked, disadvantaged and unheard.

COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

CRITICISM OF THE CONSULTATION

A perceived lack of detail, clarity and evidence has been seen as deliberate and manipulative. Community groups feel the proposal has been ‘spun’ in an attempt to manufacture consent.



“We want the benefits that it is claimed will be brought about but, instead of a serious dialogue about how to achieve them, Argyll and Bute Council has simply provided us with PR-led assurances.”

“We are presented with meaningless, feel-good sentiments”

“No evidence/balance of information provided - the process was likened to buying a house without a surveyor’s report.”

“We have no doubts that the ‘PR’ literature published by the council gives a very biased view with very little to no supporting evidence to back it up.”

“How much has been spent on the consultation/proposal?”

“Agreeing to the principle before detail has been developed is very risky. We understand the plans for further consultation, but no legal framework exists for parent and teacher decision-making involvement subsequent to Councillors’ approval.”

“As the chair of the Parent Council, too much of my time and energy has been spent on this process of consultation which has either been incredibly poorly thought out, or Argyll and Bute Council has been disingenuous with some of its proposed costs/impacts.”

“A parent commented, “I would be interested to hear the views of the teaching community. After all, they are the ones with the most experience on education matters, not the parents! It would be useful if there was a mechanism for this at some point in the consultation process”.”

“Gaelic appears to have been an afterthought in the proposal”

“The Parent Council have found this to be a very time consuming process and are concerned that the voices of parents will not be taken into consideration by those promoting the change. There are also concerns that parents have not fully understood why their involvement is important and the implications the change may have on for their children’s education.”

“We now wish to register our strong disappointment in the consultation process undertaken by Argyll and Bute Council. We remain keen to work constructively with the council in a process of genuine engagement, ideally to explore multiple options. At the least, we strongly request that the Community Services committee is not asked to approve proposals until local communities and other stakeholders can genuinely understand what is being proposed for their local area – including cluster groupings, costings and salaries.”

“We feel it was highly inappropriate to expect a Community Council to lead any part of the consultative process. This should have solely fallen upon the Education Department to engage with parents and consult via local meetings, online sessions and one-to-one parent sessions.”

COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

LACK OF TRUST

There is a core belief among community groups that these proposals are driven by cost savings and the Council are dishonest to say otherwise.

“It is difficult to understand how the various assertions in the proposals can be sustained without any clear financial plan. The claim in the Council’s report last June that there are no financial implications does not seem credible.”

“The proposal seems to lack any empirical data to base its assumptions on.”

“This set of proposals seems like a defensive move by Argyll and Bute Council after an initial pilot scheme of local clusters was knocked back.”



“In the absence of costings, cluster plans or examples, many members of the school community expressed the fear that the main motive for the proposals is cost savings (especially as cluster plans for Kintyre, Bute and Cowal published in 2021 identified “an annual saving of around £300k”).”

“There has been a lack of transparency and clarity within the process of consultation. Despite detailed modelling having clearly been done to work out that this project is ‘cost neutral’ none of these figures, salaries or the collectives that will have been put through the modelling have been shared.”

“A number of other Community Councils have experienced ‘withholding’ of information when making Freedom of Information requests from Argyll and Bute Council. This has caused great concern amongst parents in our area causing them to doubt the validity of the proposal.”

“An added layer of complexity when none is required. This feels like change for the sake of change. If there are issues with the running of schools, it is at Argyll and Bute Council level and not in the schools.”

“This abrogation of responsibility by Argyll and Bute Council concerned the Community Council. We are not education professionals and putting the Community Council in between the parents and Argyll and Bute Council had the potential to cause serious harm to the reputation and perception of the Community Councils by the local residents.”

“It was wholly inappropriate for the responsibility of engagement to fall on the shoulders of the Community Council. It was not appropriate for a group of unpaid part-time volunteers to have to help coordinate a very complex and sensitive consultation.”

“It was felt that the department was not being open or transparent, or treating parents with respect. People felt that the council hired a marketing company to ‘sell’ the plans to parents, rather than genuinely trying to elicit feedback and honest responses.”

“The Council has not proven, or even stated a case, for why change is needed and, without that background information, we cannot understand the need for change when it appears the purported benefits could be achieved via a less drastic programme of improving the current system rather than making a whole new system.”

COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

UNIQUE SCHOOL IDENTITIES

There is widespread belief that Executive Head Teachers would be micromanaging from on high with a remit to make all schools identical, and the power to actually do so.

“There is concern that the individuality of our school may be lost amongst the homogeneity your plan clearly seeks.”

“We are concerned about the risk of interference from above and lack of autonomy at school level if the authority lies with the collective lead. This could also cause a loss of the schools’ individual identity.”

“Each school is unique, with their own values”

“Personalisation will be non-existent”

“Schools don’t need managers, they need role models”

“We cannot have confidence that schools in island and rural areas will not be diminished, and that our communities will not be diminished with them”

“The pastoral care provided by the Head Teacher at a primary school is beyond price and extends far beyond the school gate.”

“One size doesn’t fit all”

“This proposal would, in our view, be likely to have a negative impact on our many excellent Head Teachers who exercise their skills and experience to ensure the highest standards of education are maintained while retaining the unique identity, values and stewardship of their schools.”

“Losing Head Teachers risks undermining the independence, functioning and identity of each school – even if the consultation materials claim that schools would retain their unique character.”

“Control of budgets and decision making by a single Executive Head seems very likely to remove autonomy from Heads of Schools and to dilute school identities.”

“Personalisation of schools will be non-existent as Executive Head won’t know the schools as well as the Head Teacher.”



COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

SHARING RESOURCES

There is a general feeling that more resources would be better than shared resources. And already well-resourced schools don't want to share, or lose what they have.

“We are keen to see more resources in schools.”

“Synergies of resources and expertise are always welcomed if they benefit pedagogically”

“Rural schools are well resourced and there is no need to share with the larger schools.”



“We can see the benefits of schools sharing resources and coming together for certain events, however there is no reason why this can not happen already through improved communication and networking rather than changing the school model. This benefit is not therefore reliant on a new school model.”

“Schools working collectively, hopefully all children at the centre. Heads of schools can collaborate, share views, work in partnership for better outcomes for schools in their region.”

“It is in the equality between schools and better sharing of resources that we particularly fear losing out, as experience tells us this is harder (and perhaps too hard) to achieve in such a remote location.”

“Not many benefits from this proposal, only one benefit we can see is maybe shared resources between schools and more awareness of our special needs school in other schools.”

“The purported benefit of sharing teaching material resources between schools is a clear effort at council cost cutting at the expense of students. If a collective only has one set of resources needed for a calendar sensitive class, how are all students in the area supposed to benefit?”

“Resourcing discussions for the whole cluster are bound to centralise resource to bigger schools and leave smaller schools at the periphery. In our discussions with the parent community, particular concern was raised around potential centralising of specific specialist areas like ASN support and whether this would continue to be available in every school or would a collective approach to budgeting result in these services being centralised in larger schools with children from outlying areas expected to travel.”

“Several concerns are held by the parent forum at present with the main reservation being the belief that resources would be spread too thin or not managed effectively by those in Executive held positions. This is closely followed with feelings of confusion and uncertainty as to how these proposals will effectively assist in resolving the area's shortage of experienced teachers.”

“The need for collegiate working to share resources, expertise, improvement planning, best use of finances etc is obvious and we would be surprised to be told that this does not already happen and that schools in Helensburgh and Lomond do already collaborate and communicate with each other. If they do not this is an easy fix without disrupting the whole system.”

COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

CRITERIA AROUND COLLECTIVES

Community groups want to know how the collectives will be decided, and what their own local collective will be - particularly if their school has a specialist remit.

“This is a one size fits all approach.”

“Could Heads of School move pupils with significant Social, Emotional and Behavioural issues to the smaller primaries where they feel their behaviour could be more effectively managed?”

**“Who will be in our collective?
There was considerable concern that we don’t know what schools will comprise our local collective.”**

“Does the proposal mean that pupils will be evenly distributed so that there is the optimal teacher:child ratio in each school in the collective?”

“The proposal repeatedly mentions the importance of equality for all pupils and young people in Argyll and Bute, and across the school network. Whilst equal opportunities are welcomed, it is unclear as to how the collective leadership model will provide these if every school is viewed as the same.”

“We feel that parts of the proposal are vague and not enough details about the ‘clusters’ have been released as to how they will be organised. Therefore this does not fill us with confidence agreeing to the proposal as we have no idea what this is going to look like at our school. How will the clusters be organised?”

“Will clusters be formed around the demand for Catholic/Gaelic teachers?”

“Gaelic is of huge cultural importance to the Mull Community, the lack of any mention of it in the initial proposal document caused great concern. There is no information as to how it will be included in this model and its statutory rights protected.”

There is also concern that an Executive Head will not have sufficient knowledge of Gaelic medium education to support a Head of School.”



“Our school is a catholic school, so we are unsure to what benefit we would gather, as our teachers also need to be catholic, we would presumably not benefit from sharing teachers strengths and weaknesses throughout the cluster.”

“First and foremost, as a Catholic primary school our biggest reservation about this proposal is ensuring the Catholic faith and identity is no way compromised. St. Joseph’s in Helensburgh lies under the Archdiocese of Glasgow, while the other Catholic primary schools in Argyll and Bute are under a different Archdiocese. Has the Archdiocese of Glasgow been consulted and represented throughout this process?”

“Is it going to be a cluster of all Catholic schools in Argyll and Bute? Will the Executive Head Teacher in charge of the cluster have Catholic Teacher Approval? We feel this is a necessity to ensure the values and ethos of our Catholic school are not lost.”

“Our main concern as a Parent Council is how this would work for a RC school. Every person in a management position involved in the school would need to gain church approval and agree to respect and support the teaching of the faith. We have reservations this would be agreed upon by numerous Heads of Schools.”

COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL ROLE

There is a broad misconception that Heads of School would not be based full-time in their own schools, combined with the perception that Head of School is a lesser role than Head Teacher.



“There is a concern experienced teachers will be lost to non-teaching roles.”

“The new Head of School roles appear to be a demotion of Head Teachers.”

“The replacement of Head Teachers by ‘Heads of School’ has caused significant confusion and uncertainty. It appears the new ‘Heads of School’ will have the same responsibilities as Head Teachers without the salary or status.”

“The proposal is business led, not teaching led.”

“Potentially, current Head Teachers could have more time running their school than dealing with bureaucracy, but I doubt it because it simply amounts to a different level of management for the Head Teacher to report to.”

“We are very concerned about returning to a shared Head system. We have been under a shared Head previously and it was not a positive experience. Parents felt a lack of contact with the Head Teacher due to the requirement to split time between two schools. We would not welcome a return to this setup.”

“There is a big jump in roles from Head of School to Executive Head Teacher - how will the Council train and recruit for this role?”

“This, we feel, will take away ‘the point of contact’ within each school. The continuity and stability for the children will not be the same if their Head of School is not there daily. We feel the Head of School will struggle to create and maintain the expected level of relationships with pupils and their families if they are also responsibly for aspects of other schools in the cluster.”

“Some parents also felt that a non-teaching Head of School would be distanced from both parents and children so they would not feel confident approaching them to discuss any problems.”

“This, we feel, will take away ‘the point of contact’ within each school. The continuity and stability for the children will not be the same if their Head of School is not there daily. We feel the Head of School will struggle to create and maintain the expected level of relationships with pupils and their families if they are also responsibly for aspects of other schools in the cluster.”

“The possibility that the Heads of School will be doing the same job as a Head Teacher for less pay. We are unconvinced that the demotion of the Head Teacher role will be beneficial or that a head overseeing several schools will be a better way of working.”

“The suggested benefits of ‘collaboration’ seem to imply that Heads of Schools would move around within the cluster. This would risk leaving some schools without a head for significant periods and lessen the engagement, involvement and awareness of the Head. It is also noted that Heads of Schools would naturally tend to spend more time in larger schools and in secondary schools, potentially leaving smaller schools and primaries and nurseries to suffer from a lack of leadership.”

COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

SPECIALISMS FOR HEADS OF SCHOOLS

There is concern about specialisms adding to the workload of Heads of School. There is also concern about specialising in one area being to the detriment of all-round capability.

“Expert specialists (an additional cost of a reorganisation that is described as at no cost) would of course be beneficial, but experts cannot be everywhere at once, so it is not an equal opportunity.”



“Current ad-hoc support arrangements between schools mean that if a school lacks a particular specialist, either in the short or long term, they can call upon others within the local area for help and support. Whereas, under the collective model, if for instance the specialist SEN teacher becomes unavailable in a similar manner, the collective is unlikely to have another SEN specialist on hand to fill in.”

“There are specific concerns relating to: children with special educational needs; adopted, fostered and looked after children; Gaelic Medium Education; smaller schools. These have not been addressed.”

“Within the proposals there would be an element of de-skilling staff if each Head of School is expected to take on a specialism. Presently all teachers and Head Teachers undertake professional development as a matter of course.”

“There is confusion about how the adoption of a ‘specialism’ by the Head of School would work. It is suggested that they would become the ‘expert’ in their speciality across the cluster, but it is not clear how this would complement their in school presence and not be an additional workload burden.”

“The suggested management of specialisms within the school collective is of particular concern. Whilst it offers prima facie benefits in that schools do not have to organically cultivate specialists in all areas within one teaching body, it results in a significant loss of resilience.”

“At an engagement session with the Council on the proposals, we were told that our schools would still have a shared Head of School but also that Head of School positions would become more attractive because they would allow holders to develop specialisms and share those specialisms round schools in the cluster. We asked and were told that for a shared Head already running two schools this wouldn’t apply – so we question where the benefit is for either the teachers or the pupils of the new model when applied to a school like ours.”

COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Because of the title there is a perception that the Executive Head Teacher will be the only ‘real’ Head Teacher in the school leadership - and that sharing one between multiple schools will be ineffective.

“We do not believe that an Executive Head Teacher with responsibility for a number of schools will be able to maintain an appropriate relationship with each school.”

“How much management does a school need?”

“With several schools in their remit, how are the Executive Head Teachers, who are unlikely to be based in a rural school, going to get to know the pupils, the teachers, the local community in a meaningful way?”

“The proposal states that the Executive Head Teacher will have oversight across the whole school cluster budget. This is worrying as it is inevitable that larger schools will require larger amounts of funding. What guarantees are there that as a smaller rural school we will not suffer as a result of this?”

“The Executive Head role is going to be vitally important to a number of schools. If recruitment is poor this reduces parents’ choice to move to another school due to the poor leadership.”

“One Head Teacher managing a number of schools will be ineffective and result in a loss of experienced educators, and schools being run like businesses.”

“A school requires full time attention. The pupils deserve more and the teachers require leadership on site. I oppose the idea fully. The Government hits a problem in education and instead of fixing it they produce a distraction, typical.”

“Given that Executive Head Teachers will be drawn from the existing pool of Head Teachers and will naturally be based at one school in the collective (although no doubt visiting others) there will be an unavoidable unconscious bias that arises when looking at funding options, so far from generating equality between schools, this will generate inequalities.”

“Concerns were raised that Executive Head will be away from each school for days or even weeks at a time, so will have little contact with pupils and will struggle to get to know them.”

“If a school cluster includes primary and secondary schools (which is highly likely due to our location), how can an Executive Head have the skills and experience to run both types of schools when the expertise required for each school is very specialised and different?”

“The lack of practical details of how this proposal would be implemented has raised concerns about bias with the hosting school receiving greater benefits and whether an Executive Head based in a secondary school will really understand what is important at primary level.”

“Individual schools within collectives will have differing community and student body requirements, particularly in collectives that are spread across a large geographical area. An Executive Head will not necessarily have the local knowledge and awareness to balance these needs.”

“I feel it is just another level of management and right now our school does not need this, they need feet on the ground!”



COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

The new collective leadership roles are perceived to be less attractive than existing roles, still available in neighbouring authorities. And there are unaddressed challenges around rural and island recruitment.

“They need to improve their recruitment policies in order to attract teachers to remote and rural areas, rather than this smokescreen of executive leadership which is a savings plan in disguise.”

“More attractive recruitment is of course desirable but how do we know that these new types of positions will be more attractive - many teaching Heads enjoy the teaching part of their role and to remove that may lose us, rather than gain us, good people.”



“It’s disappointing to see Argyll and Bute Council planning for population decline.”

“The Head of school role will be drawn from existing local headteachers - they will be 100% leaders so will we then be short of teachers?”

“Advertising used by the Council for Head Teacher and promoted post recruitment is very limited. Housing is an issue; to our knowledge no relocation package exists.”

“Attracting and retaining staff isn’t just about the school, its about housing, community, infrastructure and many other aspects. Argyll and Bute needs to address many more issues to attract staff to our schools and specifically our Gaelic units. More GMUs are opening across the Central Belt thus making it harder to attract experienced staff.”

“Living on an Island, we are concerned that this new ‘proposal’ will not attract professionals or the attraction will be limited to professionals aspiring to middle management. We see the removal of the position of Head Teacher and autonomy, while creating in effect a demotion of role, as a surety of making working in Argyll less desirable, creating further issues with recruitment and career advantages.”

“What evidence or knowledge is available that makes the Authority think that creating those “Super Head/School Head” posts with higher salaries will make working in Argyll and Bute any more attractive?”

“Better pay and opportunities would be better than these changes.”

“The main problem Argyll and Bute Council has with recruiting teachers to the area is housing. There is no affordable housing. The private sector right now is having to buy properties in order to get employees to the area.”

“We are concerned that shared Headship would create a demotion of the Head Teachers role and create more issues for recruitment.”

“The difficulty in recruiting Head Teachers was cited as a serious problem and also a driver for the proposals. But the consultation process has offered no data or empirical evidence of this. In fact, the concerns being raised with the Community Council suggest that the proposal could indeed make the recruitment process more difficult due to the limit on career progression making working in Argyll and Bute less attractive for qualified staff. They can simply look to another neighbouring authority with a more traditional Headship model and relocate.”

COMMUNITY BODIES: COMMUNITY AND PARENT COUNCILS

STAFF PROGRESSION

There is a fear that teachers aspire to the role of Head Teacher, and will leave Argyll and Bute to get it elsewhere. This stifled discussion about progression for other levels of staff.

“An improved career path and management structure aids recruitment and professional development.”

“We have real concerns about the impact on staff - job satisfaction, connection with children and mental health. There is wide concern that the Head of School role will be used as a stepping-stone out of area, achieving the exact opposite result we are told these proposals are intended to encourage.”

“The new model seems to cap progression and autonomy at much lower levels for the vast majority of staff.”

“We are concerned there is a risk people will progress out of this area if the Head of School roles are less attractive both financially and from a control/autonomy point of view compared to Head Teacher roles outwith Argyll and Bute. What is to stop people advancing up to Depute within Argyll and Bute, moving elsewhere for a Head Teacher post, then back to Argyll for a collective lead? How do we make the Head of School posts attractive?”

“The proposals suggest a lack of job security for Head Teachers and compromised career progression.”

“Why is the grammar school included in the collective? In other collective school situations it is solely primary schools. This means the Executive Head will need to be from a secondary school teaching background. This would not be attractive to a primary school teacher as your career advancement is effectively capped? This doesn't sound very attractive and is more likely to lead to increased recruitment/retention issues.”



PUBLIC BODIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

Public bodies (in this case professional organisations and the Diocese) and community groups voiced similar concerns: Not enough detail in the proposal at this stage and a perceived bias in the consultation process. Both of these concerns are linked to an underlying mistrust of the Council.

There is agreement on the theoretical benefits to schools of collaboration and shared resources, but a widespread belief that these benefits are already enjoyed under the existing system of school leadership.

Community groups have been especially vocal in their dislike of the proposal for change.

“A key concern expressed about this proposal is the lack of requisite evidence. Without that evidence the proposal cannot be properly assessed.”

“Need to know more specifics about our own establishment before making an informed decision. Too many unknowns at the moment.”

“No rationale has been provided, no risk assessments or cost analysis, there is no balance of information, no detail of clusters.”

“There has been a loss of confidence in the leadership of the Council, and the integrity of the Education team is being called into question.”

“All of the proposed benefits refer to things that already happen to a significant extent within our school cluster. These are well established and embedded practice.”

“We wonder if all of the education benefits outlined in this proposal would still be possible with a more strategic approach to collaboration across discrete schools while maintaining the current leadership model?”

“The benefits laid out in the proposal are assertions with no guarantees. Surely sharing of resources and collaboration exists already and if not why not? Could it not be achieved by communication between schools in the existing model?”

PUBLIC BODIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

Official bodies like the Diocese and teaching unions want more detail on the proposal. Unofficial bodies and community groups have already made up their minds - they are strongly resistant to change.

Methodology

The Education Manager (Transformation) consulted with the relevant Trade Unions and Professional Associations at school, authority and national levels. They have met with AHDS, EIS and JSC representatives to present the proposal and answer questions.

Elected members were invited to attend sessions with the Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) to explore the proposal one-to-one. None took this opportunity. 21 out of 36 elected members engaged as part of workshop sessions. One short written response was received from an MSP, echoing the views already recorded from the public.

The Education Manager (Transformation) met with diocese and representatives from SCES on several occasions to discuss the implications of the proposal for denominational education in Argyll and Bute. The conversation remains open.

A briefing was held for members of the local press and representatives of community newsletters. An interview was arranged with the Times Education Supplement.

Context

EIS actively campaigned against the proposal, even before the consultation was live. It targeted Parent Councils with its opinion on the proposal, influencing the community consultation.

The EIS Argyll and Bute Local Association surveyed members in mid-March 2022 on the Council's collective leadership proposals. Over 52% of EIS members responded to the survey. Only 4.9% of responses supported the proposal whilst 85% of responses did not support the proposal with 9.6% remaining undecided. This survey did not require sign-in to vote, any individual could vote, and any individual could vote multiple times. The 52% response they recorded is therefore not robust and reliable.

AHDS surveyed its 29 local members at the beginning of March 2022. 72% of members responded to the survey. Only 9.5% of responses supported the proposal whilst 90.5% of responses did not.

Wise4All, a local lobbying group, rallied Parent Councils and local press, driving their agenda on the validity of the consultation and promoting a message that the proposal was driven by budget cuts.

Press coverage across the authority led on cuts to Head Teachers. This headline remained constant during the consultation period.

Observations

EIS has interpreted the proposal as Heads of School being equal to Depute Head Teachers - not equal to Head Teachers. Based on that belief, schools would be without a senior leader on site. While EIS are in favour of increased collaboration between schools, they are firmly against changing the leadership model to formalise such collaborative working. As the largest teaching union in Scotland, they understandably have concerns about job titles, remits and pay.

AHDS members felt the proposal is too high-level and lacks detail for individual schools. They don't feel the consultation has been fair.

SLS are more positive - supporting the general aims of the proposal - but are clear that they believe five or six schools is the upper limit for workable collectives.

The Diocese are broadly positive about the proposal, but want more detail - and commitment to a specific Catholic Education specialist remit being included - before they can endorse it.

Unofficial community groups have demonstrated extreme negativity towards both the proposal and the consultation process. Primary complaints have been the lack of detail in the proposal, perceived bias in the consultation, and a general desire to leave schools as they are.

There have been a few disruptive individuals within some communities, who have had an effect on the consultation. As a result some Parent Council and Community Council responses were very similar, down to exact phrases and wording, and some Parent Council responses may not be representative of individual schools.

PUBLIC BODIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND (EIS)

The EIS has interpreted the proposal as Heads of School being equal to Depute Head Teachers - not equal to Head Teachers. Based on that belief, schools would be without a senior leader on site.

The EIS Argyll and Bute Local Association surveyed members in mid-March 2022 on the Council's collective leadership proposals. Over 52% of EIS members responded to the survey. Only 4.9% of responses support the proposal with 9.6% remaining undecided. Several hundred respondents elaborated on their views with comments.

While the EIS are in favour of increased collaboration between schools, they are firmly against changing the leadership model to formalise such collaborative working.

Where the proposed model is intended to increase collaboration and empower school leaders by creating a broader multi-school leadership team, the EIS believe it will not do this, and instead that the proposed model removes responsibility from individual school teams and shifts power to a smaller central group (the Executive Head Teacher and Heads of School).

The EIS believe that the proposal is counter to the recent (Scottish Government accepted) proposals in Professor Ken Muir's 'Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education' report. They call the Council's proposal "directly counter to the empowerment agenda and emblematic of a culture with Scottish education that Ken Muir's report clearly identified as needing to change'.

“The proposal is that Depute Head Teachers or current Head Teachers can become Heads of Schools and deputise for the Executive Head Teacher who will be out of each school for the majority of the week, providing ‘strategic leadership’ to the collective.”

“These roles cannot be “in accordance with the SNCT Handbook” because neither post nor job title exist within the SNCT Handbook. The EIS does not believe these posts can be adequately job-sized.”

“The model really relies on a weakening of leadership structures within each school in favour of a model of heroic leadership which places too much responsibility and workload demand upon one individual whilst minimising the day-to-day leadership role of the Headteacher onsite in a school building.”

“It is the EIS view that the legislative framework for Head Teachers in Scotland does not envisage a Head Teacher of a collective of establishments, potentially consisting of primary, ASN, secondary and early years settings. Ultimately that is a matter of statutory interpretation which can only be tested by legal action.”

“The EIS believes that the fundamental weakness of the Council's proposal is in the transposition of a multi-establishment Headship or Head Teacher of a single 3-18 school model, often borne out of necessity, applying it (wrongly in our view) to ‘a collective of schools’ as if it had established educational rationale.”

“The EIS is in favour of increased collaboration, sharing experiences, specialist PTs, sharing resources etc. The Local Association contend this already happens across the majority of Argyll and Bute schools. This does not provide an explanation or rationale for the Executive Head/Collective Leadership/Head of Schools model.”

“I have watched and read all materials promoting this new model from Argyll and Bute. The last thing teachers and pupils need is more people who do not work or spend time in classrooms telling people what should go on inside a classroom. I am STRONGLY against the proposals.”

“A money-saving plan. No improved career plan for teachers. Reduces numbers of promoted posts. No sound educational basis for plan.”

“All of the proposed benefits refer to things that already happen to a significant extent within our school cluster. These are well established and embedded practice.”

“Just trying to get back to pre-Covid teaching styles is difficult, all of this on top is not wanted and not needed.”

“Need to know more specifics about our own establishment before making an informed decision. Too many unknowns at the moment.”

“The workload for deputies and Heads of Schools are already very high. This workload won't change but their pay and job status would.”

PUBLIC BODIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

AHDS

The Association of Headteachers and Deputies in Scotland (AHDS) reported that their members broadly understand the proposal as presented, but feel unequipped to see how it would apply to their own schools.

AHDS surveyed its 29 local members between 25th February and 2nd March 2022. 72% of members responded to the survey. Only 9.5% of responses supported the proposal whilst 90.5% of responses did not. All but two of the respondents were Head Teachers. Respondents elaborated on their views with comments.

The first theme reported by AHDS, expressed in almost all comments, was that with the proposal evolving over time (in response to Head Teacher input) it was difficult to be sure that knowledge about the proposal was accurate or current. Several respondents indicated a feeling that this undermined the credibility of the plan and the capacity of school leaders and school communities to properly understand and respond to a partially formed proposal. The role of Head of School was an area that came in for repeated criticism in this regard.

The second theme was one of feeling that the consultation was a marketing exercise rather than a genuine consultation. This went hand in hand with the belief that this was a money saving exercise dressed up as a service improvement.

The third was to express disappointment at the lack of focus on expected benefits for young people in any practical sense.

“Every phase of consultation that I have attended (so far, three) the role of the Head of School has increased. As far as I can see, the Head of School will probably now be doing a Head Teacher role but on a smaller salary!”

“I have serious concerns about the process of engagement. There can be no more of a leading question than ‘Which of these benefits of the proposal do you agree most with?’”

“No detail as to how it will directly impact me and the school. All just high level information.”

“There is no evidence that these proposals will have any impact on learning and teaching. The current rationale is based on recruitment of leadership. There is no evidence base offered for any of the claims made in the proposal.”

“It has not been made clear as to how exactly this will improve learning and teaching. The class teacher will remain the same. There is some talk in the proposals of additional teachers, we have no supply teachers available so it will be impossible to get additional teachers.”

“I am struggling to understand where the teachers are going to appear from to allow HTs to come out of class.”

“Very little information on how this will improve learning and teaching. Main emphasis has been on savings.”

“Small schools will benefit from becoming non-teaching. Big schools won’t have any new benefits, just additional work.”

“We have been told that the role of Head of school would be very similar to Head Teacher role and that job sizing would mean the pay would be the same. If this is the case, why change the name of the role?”



PUBLIC BODIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

OTHER TEACHING UNIONS

School Leaders Scotland (SLS) are broadly positive about the proposal for change. Their main concern is the number of schools in each collective.

“The local SLS membership support exploring the journey towards the proposed leadership model.”

“Their key concern was the impact on leadership of the number and size of schools that could form a collective and they viewed no more than four or five schools to be feasible.”

“The national view of the SLS Executive was that they would monitor with interest models that Local Authorities are developing and comment at an appropriate juncture.”



A joint meeting between members of different teaching unions delivered a positive response to the proposal, with a couple of concerns about its practical application.

A joint union meeting was held between Oban High School's union members on 21st December 2021, via Google Meet. Members of The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT), School Leaders Scotland (SLS) and Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association (SSTA) attended.

The cross-union group felt positive about the non-teaching role for Heads of School and therefore their increased capacity to lead improvement and support in conjunction with the leadership team within the collective.

The group were also positive about the position of Executive Head Teacher within schools, thereby having first hand knowledge of the experiences of the schools within the collective which will allow the strategic direction and council policy to be more relevant for schools.

They also felt positive about the greater equity of resources and the greater equity of voice from each school, regardless of size.

The group voiced concerns about the size of the collectives, feeling strongly that four or five schools per collective should be the maximum.

They also had concerns about specialisms for Heads of School, feeling that whilst specialist roles seem useful for primary schools, they cannot see the benefit for secondary settings.

“We appreciated the reassurance that existing leaders would not have to apply for their current posts, and indeed would be able to choose whether or not to be part of the new structure.”

“In order for the Executive Head Teacher to lead each school within their collective, it is vitally important that they will be able to be visible in each school and community very regularly. If the number of schools within the collective is too great this would not be achievable. Ideally, each collective would have four or five schools so that the EHT could be part of each school each week to some degree. This would allow for strong links to be forged between the EHT, their schools and communities. These are essential if each school and community is to feel that their unique identity and voice is an important and valued part of each collective.”

“We feel that specialist roles need some thought and attention in order to ensure the specialisms are fit for purpose across levels and sectors as appropriate for the collective. For example, specialisms in Learning and Teaching, assessment and moderation, or progress through levels might be more appropriate.”

PUBLIC BODIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

DIOCESE OF ARGYLL AND THE ISLES

The Diocese are broadly positive about the proposal, but want more detail - and commitment to a specific Catholic Education specialist remit being included - before they can endorse it.

The Diocese are cognisant of the challenges facing education in Argyll and Bute and appreciate the Council proposing positive action to mitigate them.

However, they feel that the proposal is at an early stage and not yet fully formed enough to base any real decisions on. And, like many, they question whether change on this scale is really needed to achieve the stated benefits - or whether collective working could instead be encouraged and formalised within the existing school leadership model.

The Diocese would like assurance that Catholic Education would be formally recognised as a specialism for Heads of Schools, or otherwise formally added to a leadership remit. And they have recommendations about ensuring future Catholic leaders are developed within the new model.

Finally, and again echoing the thoughts of many stakeholders, the Diocese have asked about projected risks of the proposed change, which they feel have been left out of the Council's communications so far.

“We appreciate the honest and frank conversation with Council officers regarding the proposal, however, we continue to have significant questions and concerns regarding the benefits of the proposals and the impact on Catholic education.”

“We wonder if all of the education benefits outlined in this proposal would still be possible with a more strategic approach to collaboration across discrete schools while maintaining the current leadership model?”

“The Diocese cannot currently support this proposal as we do not have a full understanding of the implications for pupils, families, staff and communities.”

“We recognise the significant challenges facing the Council and Scotland as a whole with regards to recruitment and retention of teachers and leaders for all schools across the Council area and the ambition of the proposal to refresh the approach to education in the area.”

“We would be interested to understand what have been identified as possible dis-advantages and unintended consequences? Furthermore, what measures of success have been identified to know if the new model is working and should be rolled out to the other clusters? What evaluation process will be in place and, should the first adopters not meet the expected success measures are there contingency plan for reversal of this, or would it just not be rolled out?”

“The Diocese would ask that consideration is given to the specific professional and vocational development needs of Catholic leaders for schools, including the early identification of potential leaders and their planned formation, within the Council CLPL and Leadership programmes.”



“The Diocese would request that consideration is given to a corporate responsibility for Catholic Education within one of these remits, should the proposals go ahead and, should they not go ahead, that this is added to a current remit. We would ask that this includes a holistic approach to the education of Catholic children across Argyll and Bute and is not limited to the provision within the four designated Catholic schools.”

PUBLIC BODIES AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Unofficial community groups have been among the most vocal and resistant to the change proposals, and some have lobbied other audiences with their opinions.

Argyll and Bute Community Network for Carers of Care Experienced Children (a volunteer group with 19 members) responded to the consultation with a letter rejecting the proposal in its entirety.

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd are a charity based on the Isle of Mull. They attended the Community Council meeting about the proposals and wrote a letter to the Council in response.

Wise4All are a lobbying group of Mull residents, focussed on education and schools. Their opinions have come through strongly via Community and Parent Councils but they also wrote a detailed letter themselves.

“How ASN staff and resources will/would be shared is of great concern, and there is no clear indication how this has been provided for in this model.”

“Strong, safe relationships are key to our children. They need school to be predictable and consistent where routines are firmly in place. They do not need changing staff, stressed staff and/or unexperienced staff.”

“When we make key decisions on behalf of the Charity/Community we are required to do so based on evidence. A key concern expressed about this proposal is the lack of requisite evidence. Without that evidence the proposal cannot be properly assessed.”

“No rationale has been provided, no risk assessments or cost analysis, there is no balance of information, no detail of clusters.”

“The model has been agreed even before island impact assessments have been undertaken. The need for volunteers to monitor their Council to ensure provisions such as the Islands Act are adhered to is a waste of volunteers’ time, that could be better spent on community projects.”

“We have huge concerns that the introduction of school clusters will, in reality, create a remote layer of management that is less likely to understand our children, their families and the communities in which they live.”

“We are concerned as to how small island schools will be accommodated by this model, and whether they will be able to continue to thrive. This concern is partly driven by attempts to close small schools in the past.”

“We believe the consultation process is deeply flawed, and it does not meet with Scottish Good Guidance for Consultation or Scottish National Standards for Community Engagement.”

“Parents/Carers have expressed a strong desire to hear directly from the teachers in their schools. They worry what they deem is good for young learners and staff, may not be, they feel they lack the necessary expertise to make this decision.”

“It is imperative that Heads of Schools/Head Teachers are accessible to organise and/or support Child Plan meetings, SEN assessments and plans and to be part of the supportive GIRFEC team around a child and the family. This cannot be deferred to Deputy Head teachers if they too will be overworked as a consequence of the proposed model and additional duties being passed to them.”

“At present, this proposal is too “light on evidence”, with no risk assessments, cost analysis, no rationale or balance of evidence to make an “intelligent consideration” of it. It is a model/proposal in principle without any accompanying detail or evidence.”

“There has been a loss of confidence in the leadership of the Council, and the integrity of the Education team is being called into question.”

“There is a consensus that the problems that the Council have identified as driving the need for change will simply be carried over to any new ‘model’.”

“We have serious concerns over sharing resources in the proposed model. The proposal does not suggest examples of what kind of resources and the grave concern would that this would include resources such as specialist staff (ASNs) and specialist equipment (such as sensory and nurture equipment).”

“We reject the proposal and would welcome working with our Council to have a new and inclusive discussion about the future of Education and its implications for our schools and island way of life.”

“Parent Councils should be able to maintain independence and by presenting this they could be perceived to be selling it, they feel their independence has been compromised.”

“The case for radical change has not been established, collective working and sharing of resources happens under the current system.”

“Parents/carers have no idea of how Gaelic will fit into the model in the long-term, and it is unclear how its cultural significance will be protected in the ‘model’ on offer.”

“The leadership of our schools has been identified by HMIE as one of the key strengths of the ‘status quo’ so why change it?”

PUBLIC

Many members of the public who responded voiced mistrust of the consultation and the reasons given for change.

Press coverage across the authority led on cuts to Head Teachers. This headline remained constant during the consultation period, and led to widespread concerns about a perceived removal of Head Teachers from schools.

Residents (non-parents) seem unaware of shortcomings in the current school leadership system, so they struggle to see the need for change.

“I feel the proposal is pulling the wool over peoples eyes.”

“I would strongly urge the council to cease this PR campaign that claims to be in the interest of our future generations and find some other way to save money that doesn’t jeopardise hundreds of children’s futures.”

“This proposal seems to be based on cost cutting. Very disappointing.”

“A larger and bureaucratic management structure has no efficacy when running organisations based on people. You need a leader of a school to be there every day.”

“Having a leadership team which does not do hands on teaching anymore is frightening.”

“I do not think that one model can be applied to the whole of Argyll and Bute. Challenging as it is, different solutions require to be found for different issues/geography.”

“Every one of these things can, should, and almost certainly is already happening in Argyll and Bute schools.”

PUBLIC

Quantitative research methodology

Public responses were collected through an online survey hosted on the Empowering our Educators website.

If there was more than one response from the same email address, both were analysed and counted.

There were some misunderstandings on how the response form worked. The multiple choice question of “What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?” was not mandatory, and users could choose to select none. However, many responders selected “Other (please explain below)” and used this opportunity to express, in their view, there were no benefits. Therefore, any selection of “Other (please explain below)” was not quantified and counted as a benefit.

For open-ended questions in the response form (“Other Benefits”, “What are your main reservations about the proposal?” and “Is there anything else you would like to share?”) and any responses received via the *support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk* email address, responses were categorised under 26 wide-ranging themes. For example, if one respondent mentioned the “Consultation process”, “Detail of the proposal” and “Mistrust of the council” within their question responses, then this would be counted against all three themes. This was to give a broad overview of the most common points of discussion.

Those submissions received outwith the portal (to the *support@empoweringoureducators.co.uk* email address) did not answer the multiple choice questions - therefore these responses are not quantified in: “Which of these best describes you?”, “What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?” and “Having engaged with the proposal, do you believe the School Collective Leadership model will positively affect the future education of young people in Argyll and Bute”.

Responses

Total number of responses	461
Duplicates omitted	N/A

Respondents (Selected from list)	Number
A parent or guardian	375
Resident of Argyll and Bute	82
Non-resident of Argyll and Bute	2
Secondary school pupil (S1-S3)	1
Primary school pupil	1

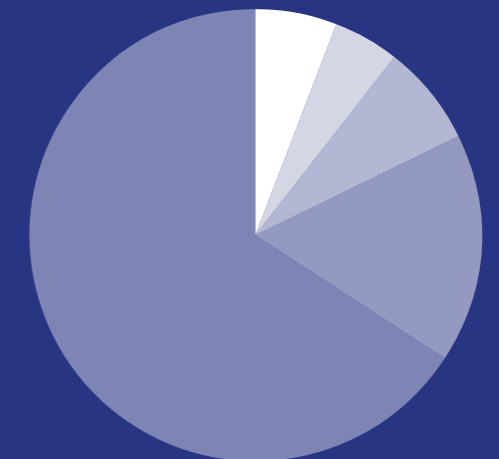
Q. What do you think the main benefits of this proposal could be?

Benefits (Selected from list*)	Positive responses
More teachers in classrooms	55
Sharing specialists (like science teachers) with neighbouring schools	80
Giving Heads more time to lead schools, instead of having them teach as well	57
More equality between schools, with resources better shared	61
Expert specialists in local schools (like assessment specialists, or early years specialists)	55
More collaboration between schools	73
Improved progression for pupils between primary classes and when moving to secondary	43
An Executive Head Teacher whose job is to drive improvement across all the local schools	54

* Respondents were able to select multiple or no answers.

Q. Having engaged with the proposal, do you believe the collective leadership model will positively affect the future education of young people in Argyll and Bute?

Answer (Selected from list)	Number of responses
Strongly Agree	27
Agree	22
Neither agree nor disagree	32
Disagree	76
Strongly disagree	304



PUBLIC

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Parents and guardians voiced mistrust of the consultation and the reasons given for change. They are concerned about a perceived removal of Head Teachers from schools.

Methodology

Overall, we received 387 responses from respondents self-identifying as parent/guardian. 375 of those (96.8%) were made through the Empowering our Educators portal and 3.2% were submitted by email or post. As part of each response, individuals self-selected as either 'parent/guardian' or 'Argyll and Bute resident'.

All parents of children and young people in Argyll and Bute schools received a summary of the proposal titled 'In a Nutshell' via the Xpressions app. This was also shared with all school staff by email.

The facility was provided for any individual to book a one-to-one call with an education professional from Argyll and Bute Council to personally discuss the proposal. This opportunity was promoted through local press and social media. 28 such calls were held.

Three sets of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were collated, responded to and published through the website.

Observations

Mistrust of the consultation and the reasons for change were strongly voiced by parents and guardians. Much more detail was wanted on specific collectives and on the costing. There were questions on why they are only seeing one proposal, and not a range of alternative possible ways forward.

Parents and guardians shared a deep mistrust of 'management' and perceived bureaucracy. They feel that teachers know best - and include Head Teachers in that assessment.

There is a critical misunderstanding of the proposed Head of School and Executive Head Teacher roles, demonstrated by concerns about schools not having leaders on site, or about there only being one school leader across each entire collective.

Understandably, parents and guardians place the wellbeing of their children front and centre. They generally see the proposal as disruptive - and disruption is not welcome.

Parents and guardians worry about equity of education provision. They feel that one style of leadership cannot possibly work for both small/rural and large/urban schools.



PUBLIC: PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

CRITICISM OF THE CONSULTATION

Mistrust of the consultation and the reasons for change were strongly voiced by parents and guardians. Much more detail was wanted on specific collectives and on the costing.



“I would strongly urge the council to cease this PR campaign that claims to be in the interest of our future generations and find some other way to save money that doesn’t jeopardise hundreds of children’s futures.”

“The Council state that the proposal will be cost neutral, but the Heads of School will no longer teach. If this is true, how will we pay for the teaching time our Head Teachers will no longer be covering?”

“I love my school the way it is, my children are within an environment in which they thrive. Their teachers and headteacher know them on a personal level.”

“This proposal seems to be based on cost cutting. Very disappointing.”

“In the middle of the Covid pandemic, with staff absences and pupils being sent home en masse, having a Head Teacher who can step in and teach classes is what is saving our schools, not an expensive consultancy firm trying to reinvent the wheel.”

“I feel that that a more transparent discussion relating to the reason for the proposed changes would be beneficial. I accept the current pressures and difficulties that the Education Service is experiencing, however the way the changes have been presented feels misrepresentative.”

“The costs savings that this model would result in should be shared as part of the consultation, allowing stakeholders to make an informed choice.”

“The video and associated information mention that there will be more teachers on the ground with this model. How will this work and does it mean that there will be increased costs with this model? How do support staff tie in with this model? Lots of questions and not enough ways of getting information.”

“We don’t need sweeping changes, we need to rebuild our children’s futures after a major disaster. Whomever dreamt up this proposal is not considering children’s education!”

“Very concerned that we as parents are not been given the clear picture, or honest, straightforward answers.”

“Children with ASN needs stability and support. Parents need to have a relationship with the educators. This proposal is poorly considered, lacking evidence and aimed at keeping those at the top in high paid, cushy jobs.”

“Proper consultation needs to be done with parents in sessions run by Education Dept/Council NOT Parent Councils, they do not have the knowledge to answer all our questions AND to be frank it is not their job to do the consultation for you.”

“I think a parent forum should of been involved with the earlier stages of any changes to the education system.”

“I don’t believe this proposal should have gotten as far as it has without a wider forum input. I think whilst some aspects might benefit smaller schools, for larger schools this proposal will not work. I think the porposal needs to be far more transparent and the details need to be shared.”

“Such a drastic change to the educational structure must have an evidence base. No trial has been proposed. Why? Surely that is the only way to test whether this can work. I also consider that you are asking people to vote on an unknown entity at this stage, as the authority have not presented detail as to what schools will be in a collective. I don’t understand the logic behind this omission.”

“I cannot understand how additional senior posts can be added without additional resource. This must have negative impact somewhere else in the system.”

“You say there are a lack of experienced teachers? How does this model do anything to improve this? Surely the problem still exists that it is hard to recruit into Argyll?”

“We need assurance that you can recruit teachers. The issues around recruitment lie in the housing sector which is something that cannot be solved by the education department.”

PUBLIC: PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Parents and guardians shared a deep mistrust of ‘management’ and perceived bureaucracy. They feel that teachers know best - and include Head Teachers in that assessment.

“How will paying people at a higher management position directly benefit my child? These new positions will just add another layer of bureaucracy, place a burden on already tight budgets, and not raise attainment levels.”



“A larger and bureaucratic management structure has no efficacy when running organisations based on people. You need a leader of a school to be there every day.”

“What we do not need is ‘pen pushers at desks’ writing vision statements whilst standards drop before our eyes and the welfare of our kids is neglected.”

“Why can’t teachers lead and teach? One teacher said to remove the teaching element out of their job would ‘remove the glitter from it’.”

“The term ‘drive improvement’ sets my alarm bells ringing. Let teachers teach.”

“We walk to the school every morning and there you see the Head Teacher greeting us with a smile which is so welcoming and if there is anything, you can address it straight away and she knows every single child and parent. A cluster Head Teacher would not have the time to meet you or have a chat every now and then.”

“I agree Heads should lead rather than teach. They are currently providing a supply role when teachers off sick.”

PUBLIC: PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

NEW LEADERSHIP ROLES

Concerns from parents and guardians about schools not having leaders on site demonstrate a critical misunderstanding of the proposed Head of School and Executive Head Teacher roles.

“Schools need a Head Teacher that is present and knows the pupils, staff, parents and community. An Executive Head Teacher will not have these relationships. Asking a teacher to essentially take on being a Head Teacher in everything but name is not justifiable.”

“Making less Head Teachers is not the way forward as will remove this essential support for both staff and parents.”

“If Head of School’s will potentially move from school to school according to the needs of the school will this result in a reduced understanding of the young folk/staff/parents in the school, every school is presumably very different and therefore takes quite some time for a Head of School to gain the trust of all, potentially resulting in a disconnect if they are moving around?”

“As a Higher Education professional I strongly disagree with the assertion that 100% non teaching roles are a good thing. This is absolutely not the case and I’m astounded that it is presented as a positive aspect of this plan.”



“The teaching community is facing challenges, mostly because education is not seen as an investment. Budget and staff have been cut relentlessly over the last few years.”

“You seem to have a very weak understanding of the duties and responsibilities of teaching staff, or you are assuming that the general public does. Schools need more staff in the classroom, but not only teachers, they also need teaching assistants and support staff. The paperwork load needs to be eased so that staff can concentrate on pupils and teaching. Head teachers are under a lot of pressure, they need to be able to delegate - more Deputy Heads would be useful, not an Executive Head.”

PUBLIC: PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

WELLBEING OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Understandably, parents and guardians place the wellbeing of their children front and centre. They generally see the proposal as disruptive - and disruption is not welcome.



“To improve education, all we need are teachers who get ‘hands on’ (an old fashioned term) with the kids.”

“As much as I can see the benefits of the new proposal, I still believe that rural pupils will be disadvantaged. It is a small step in the right direction, but more thought needs to be put into it from the pupils’ perspective.”

“It’s hard to believe that this isn’t just another way to save money at our young people’s expense.”

“The mental health of our children over the last two years has suffered and many Care Experienced children and their families have really struggled with high levels of anxiety, depression, anger and in some cases, child on parent violence.”

“The real focus following the pandemic (and now in the face of a possible war in Europe) should be on the emotional wellbeing of our children, finding ways to support and help families whose children are struggling to even attend school because of extreme anxiety and unmet needs and our children’s fundamental need for stability and security.”

“More watering down in the quality of children’s education.”

“I don’t agree with this proposed approach, I think it’s at the least going to cause problems through confusion and staff ‘settling in’ and more likely going to cause - unintended perhaps - harms to the children.”

“Having a leadership team which does not do hands on teaching anymore is frightening. I have seen the Curriculum for Excellence come in and most parents are shocked at how much the standards have fallen as a result. Education Scotland was reported in the national press for putting biased pro-Scottish independence material on its website. All my children learn about is climate change, and anti-English history.”

“I feel this is a cost cutting measure that will end up actually costing more, both financially and in relation to the education and wellbeing of the children and young people in Argyll.”

“I am shocked that the benefit to children’s education is not considered important enough to even make it on to your list of possible benefits.”

“Removal of posts in already understaffed schools. Why should my child’s education suffer because of their postcode? I thought the drive was to attract people to go rural areas?”

“The education of our children cannot, and should not, be treated in the same way as a business. There needs to be direct personal involvement with the education and wellbeing of every child.”

“There’s no one size fits all approach and to try this during an already unsettling time is, in my opinion, careless and quite frankly dangerous to the emotional wellbeing of our children who are faced with yet more upheaval and change!”

PUBLIC: PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

IT'S NOT FOR ALL SCHOOLS

Parents and guardians are primarily concerned about whether they feel the proposal would work, or not, in their own child's school.

“There is a lot of negative feeling around the idea of change and I think that anyone who is ‘for’ the proposal is nervous to say so out loud!”

“I don’t believe that one size fits all and currently we are only being offered one proposal. I feel like a lot of money has already been invested which could have been invested elsewhere.”

“How will schools effectively share resources, considering the long distances between sites?”

“The proposal is ridiculous. And definitely not suited for a rural area like Campbeltown.”

“I think those whom require more support and already lost in the system are going to be failed further.”

“Not sure that any of these apply to our school. Possible that it could help Argyll and Bute overall with recruitment and retention, but doubtful this would be the case here.”

“From what I have heard it seems Helensburgh is being asked to fit with a rural model to suit the rest of Argyll and Bute. Which in my opinion would not get it right for the children of Helensburgh.”

“I do not think that one model can be applied to the whole of Argyll and Bute. Challenging as it is, different solutions require to be found for different issues/geography. This is not unique to the local authority, it is the same in health.”

“I do not agree to this new mediocre system that you are trying to introduce, it will only affect the education of our child and the relationship we have with the headteacher. We are a small village with an amazing community and all this new system will not work in here.”

Most feel that one style of leadership cannot possibly work for both small/rural and large/urban schools.

“I’m not in favour of one Head Teacher being in total control of several schools, especially within a very small area e.g. on an island, as this seems too authoritarian to me. Schools are all individual little communities and their own identities will be lost within a new, collective identity - dare I say, brand?”

“Helensburgh and surrounding areas do not face the same challenges as the more rural and isolated parts of Argyll and Bute. Reducing the role, responsibility and perhaps pay of Heads of School in favour of an Executive Head will create problems attracting key staff from surrounding areas.”

“I worry that our independence might be jeopardised by the imposition of a collective leader. And that a collective leader who has no real experience of our community might enforce blanket policies that are not suitable.”

“The model does not work, as we are dealing with two completely different environments. With some areas of the region being remote/rural and others urban, the model cannot be effective. The needs and requirements of both are completely different, as you would expect.”

“I fully appreciate that an alternative structure may need to be developed for our outlying areas and understand that similar models may already be in place in other regions.”



PUBLIC

ARGYLL AND BUTE RESIDENTS

Residents seem unaware of shortcomings in the current school leadership system, so they struggle to see the need for change.

Methodology

We received 87 responses from respondents self-identifying as Argyll and Bute residents. 82 of those (97.7%) were made through the Empowering our Educators portal and 2.3% were submitted by email or post. As part of each response, individuals self-selected as either 'parent/guardian' or 'Argyll and Bute resident'.

All parents of children and young people in Argyll and Bute schools received a summary of the proposal titled 'In a Nutshell' via the Xpressions app. This was also shared with all school staff by email.

The facility was provided for any individual to book a one-to-one call with an education professional from Argyll and Bute Council to personally discuss the proposal. This opportunity was promoted through local press and social media. 28 such calls were held.

Three sets of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were collated, responded to and published through the website.

Observations

Residents of Argyll and Bute who responded to the consultation are deeply mistrustful of the Council and many are dissatisfied with the consultation process. They feel not enough evidence has been presented to justify the proposed changes. This mistrust leads many residents to believe the proposal could be the first step towards closing rural schools.

Residents' opinions included whether geographical issues restrict which schools should be in a collective, and whether the model can tackle isolation in rural teaching.

While many residents acknowledge the potential benefits, most feel that schools are already doing these things - working together - so there is no need to introduce a new model.

Residents' opinions are divided over the idea of Heads of School being non-teaching. Some see the benefits, others feel Heads cannot understand their children without teaching classes.

Most residents questioned the need for Executive Head Teachers, with the role being almost universally disliked.



PUBLIC: ARGYLL AND BUTE RESIDENTS

CRITICISM OF THE CONSULTATION

Residents of Argyll and Bute are deeply mistrustful of the Council and are dissatisfied with the consultation process. They feel not enough evidence has been presented to justify the proposed changes.



“To be transparent, this document should have included the reservations expressed by teachers’ unions. as it stands it is a piece of propaganda This proposal will create another layer of management which is exactly what NHS suffers from.”

“Where is your evidence? What other options did you consider? What are the financial implications for this proposal?”

“I don’t think there are benefits and do not like this leading question.”

“I feel the proposal is pulling the wool over peoples eyes.”

“In my opinion this is a poorly constructed and biased survey. From the survey multiple choice section, the council seems to be saying that this proposal only has benefits, and no potential disadvantages?”

“This is either astounding optimism bias, or intentionally a tick box exercise to say we were surveyed and lots of support for supposed benefits? I think a lot of parents will find this approach disrespectful to providing meaningful input.”

“There is not enough evidence to base any thought on this. Not enough information given as to the future under these new proposals. Where is the evidence this is better? Why is there a need for this change? What is wrong with the current situation? Why now? Where is the funding coming from?”

PUBLIC: ARGYLL AND BUTE RESIDENTS**ISLAND/RURAL SCHOOLS**

Residents' opinions included whether geographical issues restrict which schools should be in a collective, and whether the model can tackle isolation in rural teaching.

“It’s a lonely job, teaching Head in a remote, single teacher, island school. With careful planning and organisation this could reduce isolation, lead to greater opportunity for children and give teachers time to teach, plan and think. And provide greater access to expert specialists.”

“Isolated island schools, with limited transport links to either the mainland or other islands are not going to benefit.”

“Careful consideration would have to occur if trying to combine island schools as the distances are prohibitive, unless the proposal is for a private boat issued for this purpose!”



PUBLIC: ARGYLL AND BUTE RESIDENTS**NO NEED FOR CHANGE**

While many residents acknowledge the potential benefits, most feel that schools are already doing these things - working together - so there is no need to introduce a new model.

“Every one of these things can, should, and almost certainly is already happening in Argyll and Bute schools.”

“I believe that most of our local schools already actually talk to each other and are fully capable of, and already are, making the most of the ‘possible benefits’ you have listed (within the current rules they are told they must work to).”

“Anyone involved to any extent in the provision of education across this local authority will be aware that the ‘benefits’ above have always been available to schools and clusters of schools for many years. The barrier to full achievement of these benefits has been in the past, and will continue to be so in the future; the limitations of financial resources, availability of staff, recruitment and retention of staff, access to transport between schools and clusters etc.”



PUBLIC: ARGYLL AND BUTE RESIDENTS

CLOSING SCHOOLS

Mistrust of the Council leads many residents to believe this proposal could be the first step towards closing rural schools.

“I am very sure that you can provide ‘absolute evidence’ that your current proposal will not result in any local school closures, however, I do sincerely believe that the results of this project will be used in the next step of the process to provide ‘absolute evidence’ that we should all now send our children to the new ‘good’ big schools.”

“This is nothing more than a blueprint for future reductions.”

“This exercise appears to be a standard precursor to the inevitable next step of ‘centralising’ our education system and it will inevitably result in another consultation exercise which will detail the list of reasons why we should close our local community schools and make everyone travel to new ‘good’ big schools because, as a result of this exercise, we now know how well they work.”



PUBLIC: ARGYLL AND BUTE RESIDENTS

NON-TEACHING HEADS

Residents' opinions are divided over the idea of Heads of School being non-teaching. Some see the benefits, others feel Heads cannot understand their children without teaching classes.

“Are there no benefits from headteacher’s teaching children, as well as ‘leading’? Surely they understand pupils in their school better, and also, the pupils benefit from these more accomplished teachers on a day-to-day basis.”

“I think it would be far more positive to retain teaching Heads, who can focus on education and deal with the things they became a teacher to do, and really improve the provision of financial management and administrative support provided to a group of schools by a dedicated administrator.”

“Giving Heads more time to lead schools, instead of having them teach as well - therefore losing valuable skills and ability to understand teaching needs.”



“The burden of juggling management/ leadership responsibilities, in addition to a teaching commitment for headteachers of smaller schools is a challenging and difficult task.”

“A Head Teacher does not need to have a teaching remit to be effective but they must have a presence.”

PUBLIC: ARGYLL AND BUTE RESIDENTS

EXECUTIVE HEAD TEACHERS

Most residents questioned the need for Executive Head Teachers, with the role being almost universally disliked.

“I have taught in various education facilities and feel that more leaders are not required. More teachers and smaller classes wins every time.”



“Why do we need leaders of leaders. What next ... leaders of the leaders and their leaders? We already have this, so those people should be leading on the improvements not structural change to a department because it sounds good.”

“Executive Head defeats the whole purpose of small schools as they cannot have intimate knowledge of the individual ethos of the schools and pupils they are responsible for.”

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Education is complicated

The Council asked that the community be consulted on the proposed model.

Five months of consultation followed, supported by significant resources from the Argyll and Bute Council leadership team to help respondents understand how the education service runs and the considerations that need to be made around this proposal.

The response from both professionals and public has shown that consulting on a 'theoretical' model results in mistrust. It has also shown that reasons for change can be easily dismissed if they are not supported by clear evidence.

Even with the significant amount of engagement undertaken by educationalists to support the consultation, the theory of the proposed model was swamped by the depth of explanation required.

One repeating mantra was 'If it isn't broken, then don't fix it'. If this proposal is to move forward, it's time to help local communities recognise that everything is not currently perfect in Argyll and Bute's schools. The sustainability of schools is at risk and Argyll and Bute's Head Teachers are struggling to deliver while juggling increasing demands on their time.

Recruitment challenges, an ageing workforce and education reform do not resonate with the majority of respondents. And to their eyes these challenges certainly don't justify a full scale change to the way our schools are run.

Until the Council is able to present a compelling case for change and a tangible model with fully described roles and clear information on what individual school collectives would look like, further engagement with public/community stakeholders is not recommended.

Our firm recommendation is to work exclusively with Head Teachers at the next stage, to shape a tangible model. Only then should you take this back to wider audiences for consideration.

The qualitative work done with Head Teachers at the end of the consultation period showed high levels of willingness to engage. This is not to be confused with acceptance of the proposal. Head Teachers appreciate the challenges involved and can help develop the model to best fit their needs.

Head Teachers need to see a clear reason for their change of title, and they need to be meaningfully engaged in the next stage of development. Co-creating the new leadership model with Head Teachers will benefit all parties.

A pilot scheme, as previously planned, is also essential. It will provide the evidence so many have called for.

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Appendix 2

School Leadership Transformation in Argyll and Bute Island Community Impact Assessment

1. Introduction

This Island Community Impact Assessment should be read in conjunction with the full suite of papers on School Leadership Transformation presented to Community Services Committee on 25th August 2022.

Argyll and Bute Council have proposed transformative changes to school leadership in the authority to address the challenges education faces with both local and national changes. The proposal is based around collective leadership, grouping schools into small collectives, each with a shared collective leadership team. The proposal and collective leadership model was developed by Education professionals across the authority and has been under public and professional consultation for 11 months, to present the benefits and rationale for the school leadership transformation and capture concerns and feedback.

In June 2021 the Education Service presented a report to the Council's Community Services Committee detailing the Education change programme to deliver a sustainable Education service in this rural area. Following a motion at the Committee, members requested that the Education Service progress with a programme of engagement with our communities, our staff and their representative bodies and the wider group of stakeholders in relation to the principles of the school leadership model. And that the Executive Director – Education report back to a future meeting of the Committee on the outcomes from the engagement action, before progressing these elements of the Education Change Programme.

This ICIA details the impact on island communities which were raised through the consultation, on the principles of the model, which ran from November 2021 to March 2022. It should be noted that the School leadership proposals do not constitute "relevant proposals" under Schedule 1 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) 2010 Act and on the basis that the schools retain their own existing identities and locations, then the 2010 Act would not be triggered. Consultation and engagement could therefore follow a format and approach of the authority's choosing which reflects the needs of our communities, our staff and their representative bodies and the wider group of stakeholders led by the Education Service. The consultation, supported by the council's external partner Stand, followed Scottish Government Scottish Government's Consultation Good Practice Guidance and allowed for representation from all stakeholder groups and all communities.

According to the 2011 census Argyll and Bute has 23 inhabited islands. Bute, Coll, Colonsay Danna, Easdale, Eilean da Mheinn, Erraid, Gigha, Gometra, Inchtavannach, Innischoonan, Iona, Islay, Jura, Kerrera, Lismore, Luìng, Mull, Oronsay, Seil, Shuna (Luìng), Tiree and Ulva.

Argyll and Bute has 23 island schools (19 primaries, 1 secondary and 3 3-18 schools) - Arinagour Primary, Tiree 3-18, Tobermory 3-18, Dervaig Primary, Ulva Ferry Primary, Salen Primary, Lochdonhead Primary, Bunessan Primary, Iona Primary, Lismore Primary, Easdale Primary, Luing Primary (mothballed), Kilchattan Primary, Small Isles Primary, Keills Primary, Port Charlotte Primary, Bowmore Primary, Port Ellen Primary, Islay High, Gigha Primary, North Bute Primary, St Andrews Primary and Rothesay Joint Campus.

Feedback from all stakeholder groups relating to island communities and or island schools was gathered and segmented to allow for further analysis into the unique challenges for island communities.

The school leadership model was developed to be scalable and adaptable to all collectives of schools whether island or mainland, and whether classified as accessible rural, remote rural, very remote rural in the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification. The proposals offer educational benefits for island schools and communities and support the Education Services to address the challenges of depopulation and falling school roles, an ageing workforce and challenges with recruitment, delivering equity and excellence and ensuring that Argyll and Bute schools are ready for the national changes planned by Scottish Government.

Delivering education on island offers challenges with transport and connectivity however the educational benefits of raising attainment and delivering equity and excellence for island schools and their pupils is anticipated to be the same as on the mainland. Many islands are seeing depopulation and the collective leadership model was developed to help address this. The education authority models the school roll projections for all schools and the rolls for 40% of the island schools are projected to decline in the next five years.

The collective leadership proposals are new to Argyll and Bute and are seen as an extension of both shared headships and 3-18 schools which have been operating successfully for many years. Other local authorities have also explored and implemented collective leadership models most notably Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

2. Consultation

The consultation was split into engagement with education professionals, engagement with pupils and engagement with the public. Presentations (in slideshow and video formats) were prepared that explained the reasons for change, shared the proposal, and posed questions to help frame responses. The presentations were tailored to appropriate levels of detail for each audience or stakeholder group. The consultation was extended twice and ended on 31st March 2022.

A website (Empowering our Educators) was published on 29th November 2021, where information and presentations could be accessed. The website provided clear ways for people to have their say, and included the full engagement timetable. Audience-specific documents were disseminated through the website to:

- 29 November 2021: Parent and Community Councils;
- 29 November 2021: Elected Members;
- 3 December 2021: Head Teachers and school enquiries email to disseminate to school staff (prior engagement on the proposals was conducted with Head Teachers in focus groups).

The Empowering our Educators website included a questionnaire to enable stakeholders to respond with their opinions on the proposal, positive or negative. Two open-ended questions enabled this input. A short list of the benefits which the authority believe the model delivers was provided for consultees to either agree, or disagree with. And finally an overall 'highly agree' or 'highly disagree' indication.

The website also enabled individuals to schedule 'one-to-one' sessions online with education professionals and ask questions directly. Finally, it provided a Frequently Asked Questions area which was regularly updated. Argyll and Bute Council's social media channels were used to promote awareness of the website, as well as direct email addressed to the Council's existing education mailing lists. Independent groups (eg. community councils, parent councils) were provided with a toolkit to facilitate their own engagement meetings, curate learnings and feedback through the Empowering our Educators website.

Feedback from all island stakeholders, education professionals in island schools, pupils attending island schools and parents, parent and community councils on islands and community organisations representing island interest, has been gathered, analysed and segmented by stakeholder group, island community and unique island specific challenges.

3. Island community impacts

I. Education Professionals

Feedback from head teachers' focus groups shows that head teachers of island schools face the same challenges as mainland head teachers, but some challenges are made more complex by their island context. Island challenges identified were:

- Equity and parity of support for all schools in a collective and a concern that larger mainland schools would have a larger voice in the collective and more resource.
- Staffing and recruitment which is exacerbated by a shortage of affordable housing and increased cost of living on islands.
- Collectives would have to be developed with an understanding of context.

Feedback from teaching and school support staff in our island schools identified the following challenges. The perception here is that island schools can often feel distant and over looked.

- Small island schools won't be able to benefit from shared resources and shared curriculum due to geography.
- Implementing the model in island communities will be more challenging due to the problems with recruiting and retaining staff.
- Additional and non-productive time wasted when travelling between island communities.

Benefits were also recognised:

- For small island schools the model will bring chances to collaborate with other schools in the area.
- The model can help with the transition to secondary school on the mainland for island children.
- Enhanced leadership regardless of smallness of roll is welcomed if it prevents schools from closing

II. Pupils

Pupil Councils had their own section of the Empowering our Educators website, including presentations, videos and feedback forums. This material was developed through focus groups with pupils and feedback from teachers. Pupils were asked what they liked about the proposal and what they didn't. Not all schools responded officially with the thoughts of their pupils.

13 pupil councils of island primary schools gave their feedback to the consultation, Iona, Lochdonhead, Ulva, Easdale, Arinagour, Port Charlotte, Small Isles, Bunnellan, Lismore, Tobermory, Bowmore, Port Ellen and Salen. Pupils from Islay High and Tobermory High gave their feedback to the secondary consultation.

There was misunderstanding about the proposals from some of the primary pupils consulted fearing a loss of head teachers, teachers and that this was a proposal to save money. Primary pupils in island communities do think that collaboration and sharing between schools are a good idea especially for their schools.

Benefits for **primary pupils** in island schools:

- Opportunities to meet more people, make more friends and work collaboratively.
- Good idea to share equipment with other schools but it has to be fair.
- It will help us to see what other children are doing/learning so we can compare, improve and have more learning ideas.

- It will be better for our transition into secondary as the P7s will get to know more people.
- More teachers to teach us and help us with our learning.
- The Head Teacher can focus more on running our school and will get more support.
- Executive Heads could help with improvements to schools and give support to the head teacher.
- It's good to try something new.

Challenges:

- There is no reason to change how it is just now and not everyone likes change.
- Resources and budgets have to be shared fairly.
- Executive head teachers won't know the pupils as well as their head teacher does.
- Unclear about the role of Head of school and Executive Head. There should be choice as to whether HTs teach.
- Concern that the right person will be appointed. New staff can have a greater impact in a smaller school.
- A new head will boss us around.
- Teachers might not want to come to island schools and some teachers may leave.
- The timescales are long.
- It's confusing.

Secondary pupils questioned the lack of detail in the proposals and looked for the detail of the collectives, which is unavailable.

Challenges for **secondary pupils** were:

- The Executive Head will not get to know the pupils as well as the Head Teacher does and that the pupils wouldn't have the same opportunity to get to know the Executive Head.
- No plan to recruit teachers to the island, the proposals don't make it more attractive.
- The Executive Head job will be stressful and they will not understand about enough about each school to make informed decisions.
- Smaller school could lose out to bigger schools with the day to day demands of the Executive Heads job.
- Don't want island schools to become the poor relation.

The benefits secondary pupils identified were:

- The Head Teacher could focus more on leadership if not teaching.
- Resources can be shared.
- Transition into secondary would be better.

III. Community Bodies

Community and Parent Councils were given toolkits to share and discuss the proposal independently with their members. Chairpersons of Community Councils and Parent Councils across Argyll and Bute were invited to one of five Q&A sessions arranged for them. The Heads of Service and Education Manager (Transformation) presented the proposal and answered questions.

Chairpersons were encouraged to then share the proposal with their Community Councils and Parent Councils for discussion, and feed back in a structured fashion through the Empowering Our Educators website. The Education Service offered the support of an education professional to attend their discussions, present the proposals and answer any questions. Out of the 37 community and parent council who took up that offer, of an education professional, 10 represented island communities. The parent Councils of Keills, Small Isles, Easdale, St Andrews, Rothesay, Iona, Gigha and Bowmore. The Community Council of Seil and Easdale and a joint meeting between the parent and community council on Lismore.

Responses to the consultation were received from community bodies on the islands of Mull, Islay, Bute, Iona, Lismore, Jura, Tiree, Easdale and Coll.

Community bodies were the most negative about the proposals and were critical of the consultation process, seeing it more as PR exercise and stating there was a lack of evidence as to why change was required and why the collective model would offer improvement. Many of the community responses repeated the same negative concerns about the proposals and the concerns were more generic to Argyll and Bute than local to their community most likely due to the high level of lobbying. The community response from island communities was high.

Sharing of resources was almost universally welcomed, however, questions were asked as to why this can't currently be the case. Equity between schools (not pupils) is at the heart of most concerns. Smaller/island schools are concerned they will be overlooked, disadvantaged and unheard if they are included within collectives of larger schools. Mistrust of the Council, loss of unique school identities, makeup of collectives, the role of head of school, specialisms, executive head teachers, recruitment and staff progression were commonly raised.

Concerns relating to island communities included a diminishing of the identity of island schools and therefore their community. Recruitment and availability of housing for staff relocating to island communities was raised frequently as an issue. However there were also concerns raised that the model was designed to reduce the number of staff in school and save budget as a result. Several island communities were keen to point out the recent growth in population in particular Islay, Jura and Mull.

Many community bodies claim that cluster working already works well in island schools and the sharing of resources between schools, especially on smaller islands was seen to more challenging and would lead to a loss of resource in remote schools. Travel time between islands for any shared or visiting staff was highlighted.

Island communities are keen to be consulted when detailed proposals are worked up and collectives identified to ensure that unique island needs are understood and the leadership model within the collective would be responsive to maintaining and supporting island communities. Island community bodies emphasised the requirement of an Island Community Impact Assessment relating to a policy change.

IV. Community Organisations

Bòrd na Gàidhlig

The Education Service met with representatives of Bord na gadhlig and Comann nam Pàrant to discuss the proposal and explore opportunities for sharing Gaelic culture and language in the proposed school collectives. This was followed up by consultation sessions offered to parents of children and young people in Gaelic Medium Education on 22nd March 2022. A fourth set of FAQ documents specifically for Gaelic related questions – both in English and Gaelic was also published and shared on the website, disseminated to school staff and parents and shared through social media.

Concerns that Gaelic had been overlooked and the proposals would erode Gaelic culture and GME education and challenges with recruitment of Gaelic teachers were raised by teaching staff, community bodies and the public.

Feedback from Bord na gadhlig highlighted the importance of promoting and supporting Gaelic Medium Education within the leadership model and specialisms, collaborative working across schools and increased collaboration amongst practitioners.

Feedback from Comann nam Pàrant highlighted opportunities for growth, development and further expansion of GME within the new structure. Could there be an opportunity for clusters with GME provision to develop a stronger Gaelic ethos throughout the schools in the collective? Support should be given to attracting Gaelic staff to Argyll and Bute and opportunities for promotion for GME teachers within the new structure. The protection of total immersion and immersion for Gaelic medium classes, parents have raised concerns that movement of teachers within a cluster may result in non-Gaelic speaking teachers being more frequently deployed to cover Gaelic Medium classes.

Diocese of Argyll and the Isles

The Education Manager (Transformation) met with Diocese and representatives from SCES on several occasions to discuss the implications of the proposal for denominational education in Argyll and Bute. The conversation remains open. There is an island denominational primary school on the Isle of Bute, St Andrews Primary.

The Diocese are cognisant of the challenges facing education in Argyll and Bute and appreciate the Council proposing positive action to mitigate them. However, they feel that the proposal is at an early stage and not yet fully formed enough to base any real decisions on. And they question whether change on this scale is really needed to achieve the stated benefits - or whether collective working could instead be encouraged and formalised within the existing school leadership model. The Diocese would like assurance that Catholic Education would be formally recognised as a specialism for Heads of Schools, or otherwise formally added to a leadership remit. And they have recommendations about ensuring future Catholic leaders are developed within the new model. Finally, and again echoing the thoughts of many stakeholders, the Diocese have asked about projected risks of the proposed change, which they feel have been left out of the Council's communications so far.

V. Community Groups

Community groups were amongst the most vocal and resistant to the proposals and lobbied other audiences with their opinions. Primary complaints have been the lack of detail in the proposal, perceived bias in the consultation, and a general desire to leave schools as they are.

North West Mull Community Woodland Company Ltd, a charity based on the Isle of Mull wrote to the Council laying out concerns about lack of evidence and that the proposals failed to address concerns about the future of island and rural schools, and island and rural communities. They were concerned as to how small island schools will be accommodated by this model, and whether they will be able to continue to thrive. They state that their concerns are partly driven by attempts to close small schools in the past such as Ulva Primary School, and Lochdonhead Primary School. NWM Community Woodland are open to working with the Council to have a new and inclusive discussion about the future of Education and its implications for island schools and their way of life.

Wise4All, the local lobbying group from the Isle of Mull, rallied Parent Councils and local press, driving their agenda on the validity of the consultation and promoting a message that the proposal was driven by budget cuts. Press coverage across the authority led on cuts to Head Teachers and drove the general understanding of Argyll and Bute residents on the subject.

Wise4all's opinions came through strongly via Community and Parent Council and they wrote a detailed letter themselves stating the consultation to be flawed in not meeting good practice Scottish Government guidance. This leading to a loss of confidence in the leadership of the Council and questioning the integrity of the education team. Concerns were also raised about Gaelic and protection of Gaelic culture.

In Wise4all's opinion the model had been agreed even before island impact assessments were undertaken. Stating that the need for volunteers to monitor their Council to ensure provisions such as the Islands Act are adhered to is a waste of volunteers' time, that could be better spent on community projects. Ultimately Wise4all rejected the proposals in their entirety and disagree that there is a need for change.

VI. Public

All parents of children and young people in Argyll and Bute schools received a summary of the proposal titled 'In a Nutshell' via the Expressions app, the Education services method for sharing information with parents. This was also shared with all school staff by email. The facility was provided for any individual to book a one-to-one call with an education professional from Argyll and Bute Council to personally discuss the proposal. This opportunity was promoted through local press and social media. The specific island issues raised during the unscripted one to one calls included referring to a remoteness and disconnect from the national improvement agenda. Preferences was also given by one caller for collectives to include only island schools.

Three sets of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were collated, responded to and published through the website. A fourth set of FAQ documents specifically for Gaelic related questions – both in English and Gaelic was also published.

An analysis of feedback from the general public, parents and guardians highlights the following issues unique to island living and education in their view:

Island travel

- Travel logistics including overnight accommodation leading to increased costs
- Difficulties commuting between islands without travel via mainland ports
- Regular ferry disruptions caused by an ageing ferry fleet and increase in poor weather
- Lack of local accommodation for visiting staff

Island living

- Increased cost of island living
- Lack of affordable housing and a housing crisis that is affecting all walks of public sector life

Island education

- Island schools don't have the same facilities as schools on the mainland

- Reliance on video technology would be a poor substitute for teachers in the classroom
- Transitions into mainland high school and hostel accommodation are a significant adjustment for pupils
- Island schools have small rolls and therefore don't have the budget to afford additional support.
- Remote island locations makes achieving the positives a huge logistical challenge, but surely not insurmountable as technology advances.

School leadership

- The executive head will not know the island families or have an understanding of island issues. They won't be able to recruit or retain teachers as they will not know them. Contact between all the schools and the executive head will mean less time for a head to make dedicated individual decisions. Education on the island won't necessarily improve because an executive who doesn't know teachers or learners dictates how things should be done.
- The Head Teacher of an island school is a lonely job, with careful planning and organisation this could reduce isolation, lead to greater opportunity for children and give teachers time to teach, plan and think. And provide greater access to expert specialists.
- Will the executive head have a background in Gaelic

Island recruitment

- Head Teachers of island schools won't be attracted to the post of executive head as they do not have the same career aspirations.
- Rural and Island communities are suffering due to their geographical position. More needs to be done to attract and retain up and coming talented teachers and for them to live locally.
- Offering temporary contracts are less likely to be attractive to teaching staff relocating to islands.

Argyll and Bute has active and engaged communities both in and out of schools. All members of the public who responded voiced mistrust of the consultation and the reason for change. Many residents (non-parents) seem unaware of shortcomings in the current school leadership system and they struggle to see the need for change.

4. Feedback per island community

Much of the feedback from community bodies across Argyll and Bute was templated and similar issues were raised irrespective of geography and community identity. Many island communities were critical that no island community impact assessment had been completed prior to the proposals being shared for consultation showing a misunderstanding of the legislation as detailed in the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.

However an analysis of feedback per island highlights some unique and local challenges which should be considered and mitigated against for the benefit of the island community should the proposals be developed further.

Islay – rural and island infrastructure is a challenge with lack of housing and childcare concerns highlighted by the community. The population of Islay is growing and in the opinion of the community the proposals will not attract professionals to move to Islay and the attraction would be limited to professional educators aspiring to middle management. In parents views there is a strong robust and collaborative cluster already functioning in Islay and Jura. Port Charlotte parent council stated that if the parent council were to be asked to participate in a further consultation it could endanger the future of the parent council. It is also the view of the community that the Gaelic medium units has the support and knowledge within the community from a head of school who has a sound understanding of the principles underpinning Gaelic medium education and thus have the confidence to lead effectively. There is also concern that an executive head may not have sufficient knowledge of Gaelic medium education to support a head of school. If it was a requirement to hire a Gaelic Speaker to manage a school with GME – concerns that this would further limit employment opportunities and possible positive discrimination in seeking GME skills over the many other skills required for Head Teacher positions.

Jura – parent and pupil satisfaction with Small Isles primary is exceptionally high and therefore the community opposes any change which unnecessarily threatens their status quo. In their view any change to the school leadership will risk destabilising the entire island and doctors, carers, nurses, physios, hospitality staff will not live and work on the island if the school changes. And again in their view currently people are moving to Jura because of the school.

Mull – increasing school rolls for some primaries notably Lochdon and a new housing development proposed at Craignure for 90+ homes. There are a number of young people living on the island and training to be teachers who would like to teach on the island. A collective which includes all of Mull and Iona primaries could prove challenging with two feeder high schools. Collaborative learning is something Tobermory High School has done in the past with Tیره High School's Music, and Biology departments and it worked well. Tobermory High School currently works with other schools, and it has been indicated the primary schools on Mull and Iona have worked well/do work well together. Tobermory High school has had two years of upheaval with an active head teacher on-site for 2 years and would welcome a period of stability. Salen parents are satisfied with the present situation at Salen Primary School and that this level of change is not necessary. There are concerns about the lack of affordable housing on the island.

Iona – Iona primary is the only school on an island off an island and are therefore to the community feels very much the end of the line. Parents are attracted to the proposition of an Executive Head driving improvement across a cluster, and can see a direct link between the reform proposals and this outcome. An executive headship could protect against the risk of any head teacher making themselves a silo and ploughing entirely their own furrow in their approach to the curriculum. They are also attracted by the prospect of more teachers in classrooms, were this to happen as outlined in the proposal but are sceptical that this would happen in practice, particularly in their smaller schools where there is a strong precedent for teaching heads, and even more so in "hard to reach" locations like Iona. Iona parents are looking for the detail of the collectives so they can understand what the proposal would mean for the island. They suggest a conversation with island parents, perhaps via an Island Parents Forum, so the authority can truly understand what it means to be at the end of the chain. It is in the equality between schools and better sharing of resources that they particularly fear losing out, as experience tells us them this is harder (and perhaps too hard) to achieve in such a remote location.

Bute – There have been challenges with recruitment to leadership posts in schools on Bute. A unique concern for St. Andrew’s primary is their faith Status. The Catholic Church has yet to decide if St. Andrew’s can be part of such a model. Consideration should be given to options if the model is adopted on Bute without St. Andrew’s and how it would work for St. Andrew’s. Rothesay Joint Campus parent council do not see the proposals as encouraging families to move to or stay on the island. Nor will it increase the range of courses or career opportunities offered at Rothesay Academy.

Lismore – Lismore Community Council are keen that whoever is leading and managing the school on a daily basis is able to live locally and serve as a key member of the community, as has been the case up until now. Lismore Community Council and the community that they represent are not averse to change, provided that this offers demonstrable benefits to our school and community and they would be prepared to give consideration to a model that relates to Lismore. However, they would not be supportive of a model that resulted in the loss of a Head Teacher or Head of School post based within the school. They wish to see a detailed proposal for Lismore that clearly describes the model and how it would work within our community.

Easdale – the primary school is within a shared headship with their partner school Luing which is mothballed. Easdale parents welcome working with other schools and their children benefit hugely from interaction with their peers it is difficult to see how a ‘cluster’ would work for them. Easdale parents value and trust their Head Teacher’s ability to make decisions in their school that will benefit our children. Their concern is that the larger schools within the collective would be more likely to attract the attention and resources at the disposal of an executive head. Parents have seen with the mothballing of Luing School that even simple matters such as the transportation of children to adjacent schools can lead to challenges. Classroom teacher posts would become less attractive adding to the recruitment challenges the school currently faces.

Coll – The model supports improved progression for pupils between primary classes and when moving to secondary. An executive head teacher may ease recruitment challenges.

Tiree - Tiree Community Council consulted with the whole community on the proposals. In their view Tiree High School’s partnership with Oban High School is currently closer to the proposed model than most other schools in Argyll and Bute. Some members of school staff said they valued working with colleagues at Oban High School. However, the majority of community thought that the model would not help teaching or learning in Tiree High School. Respondents were evenly split on whether the model would increase the range of courses and opportunities offered at Tiree High School. Large majorities thought that the model would increase the numbers of young people leaving Tiree and that the model would not attract families to the island. A number of respondents pointed out that there had been substantial investment in the school over the last two years. However, most people thought that the proposed model would ultimately lead to an overall drop in funding for smaller schools like Tiree. The majority believed that the model would result in less Gaelic being spoken on the island. In their experience the closer links with Oban High School have led to an increase in teaching using VC at Tiree High School. Significantly, a large majority (including all responding pupils and a majority of responding staff) wanted to see a reduction in VC teaching.

In conclusion, on unique island concerns island communities are split with some seeing the benefits that the proposals were designed to address benefitting their school community. Others saw challenges. Repeated by the majority of island communities was the phrase “one size will not fit all” and this is clear

from the views shared that our islands are unique places and their communities are advocates of island life and passionate and protective in retaining their identities.

5. Next steps

If community Services Committee approves the school leadership model and collectives are developed further, consultation should take place with island communities to ensure that the collectives of island schools will address the unique island concerns as identified in section 4 above. This consultation should be constructed to support island communities to develop and implement a school leadership model which will mitigate against the concerns and unique challenges of island life.

If the proposals are accepted by the Community Services Committee in August 2022 and further engagement involving island schools is agreed, island specific outcomes should be identified for those island communities and monitored on an ongoing basis by the Education Authority and reported to Community Services Committee to ensure the leadership model address the challenges for pupils and staff living and learning on our islands. A further ICIA will be prepared at this time.

The Empowering Our Educators ICIA will be included with the reports on School Leadership Structures presented to Community Services Committee on 25th August 2022. Following committee the ICIA will be uploaded to the council’s website [Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](http://argyll-bute.gov.uk) and will be shared with island communities who responded to the consultation.

6. ICIA Sign Off

Lead officer details:	
Name of lead officer	Morag Brown
Job title	Business Improvement Manager
Department	Education
Appropriate officer details:	
Name of appropriate officer	Douglas Hendry
Job title	Executive Director
Department	Education

Sign off of ICIA	
Date of sign off	18.07.2022

Appendix 3

Argyll and Bute Council: Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment

Section 1: About the proposal

Title of Proposal
School Leadership Transformation in Argyll and Bute

Intended outcome of proposal
Argyll and Bute Council have proposed transformative changes to school leadership in the authority to address the challenges education faces with both local and national changes and most importantly the challenges of delivering excellent learning and teaching, empowered leaders and learners and best value across our learning estate regardless of place or context.
No school closures are recommended as part of this proposal. Schools will keep their unique identities with only the leadership model changing.

Description of proposal
The proposal is based around collective leadership, grouping schools into small collectives, each with a shared collective leadership team.

Business Outcome(s) / Corporate Outcome(s) to which the proposal contributes
BO108 All Our Children And Young People Are Supported To Realise Their Potential.

Lead officer details:	
Name of lead officer	Morag Brown
Job title	Business Improvement Manager
Department	Education
Appropriate officer details:	
Name of appropriate officer	Douglas Hendry
Job title	Executive Director
Department	Education
Sign off of EqSEIA	
Date of sign off	18.07.2022

Who will deliver the proposal?
Argyll and Bute Education Service

Section 2: Evidence used in the course of carrying out EqSEIA

Consultation / engagement

The proposal and collective leadership model was developed by Education professionals across the authority and has been under public and professional consultation for 11 months, to present the benefits and rationale for the school leadership transformation and capture concerns and feedback.

Data

[Link to Stand report and raw data](#)

Other information

In June 2021 the Education Service presented a report to the Council's Community Services Committee detailing the Education change programme to deliver a sustainable Education service in this rural area. Following a motion at the Committee, members requested that the Education Service progress with a programme of engagement with our communities, our staff and their representative bodies and the wider group of stakeholders in relation to the principles of the school leadership model. And that the Executive Director – Education report back to a future meeting of the Committee on the outcomes from the engagement action, before progressing these elements of the Education Change Programme.

This EqSEIA should be read in conjunction with the full suite of papers, including the separately prepared Island Community Impact Assessment, on School Leadership Transformation presented to Community Services Committee on 25th August 2022.

Gaps in evidence

The consultation was on the principles of the school leadership model. The detail including the make-up of collectives will be determined should elected members agree to progress with the development of the model at Community Services Committee.

Section 3: Impact of proposal

Impact on service users (pupils):

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			X	
Island populations			X	
Low income			X	
Low wealth			X	
Material deprivation			X	
Area deprivation			X	
Socio-economic background			X	
Communities of place			X	
Communities of interest			X	

Impact on service deliverers (including employees, volunteers etc):

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population			X	
Island populations			X	
Low income			X	
Low wealth			X	
Material deprivation			X	
Area deprivation			X	
Socio-economic background			X	
Communities of place			X	
Communities of interest			X	

If any 'don't know's have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

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How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?

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Section 4: Interdependencies

Is this proposal likely to have any knock-on effects for any other activities carried out by or on behalf of the council?	No
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Details of knock-on effects identified

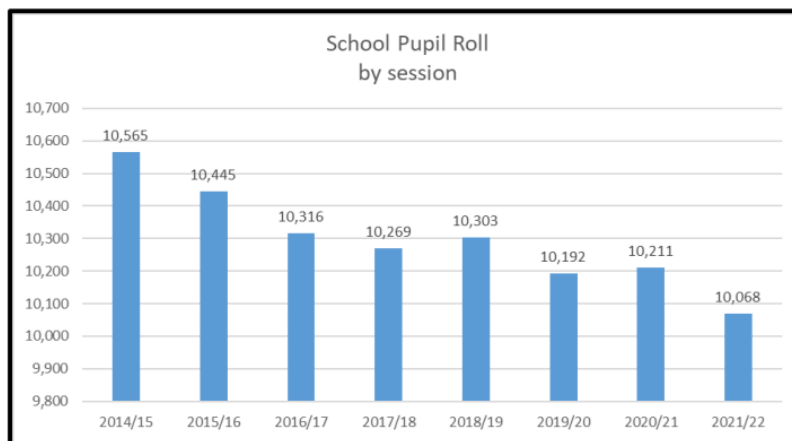
Section 5: Monitoring and review

How will you monitor and evaluate the equality impacts of your proposal?
The EqSEIA will be updated if elected members agree to progress the development of the model. Engagement will be ongoing with Trade Unions and professional bodies, staff and pupils.

Appendix 4

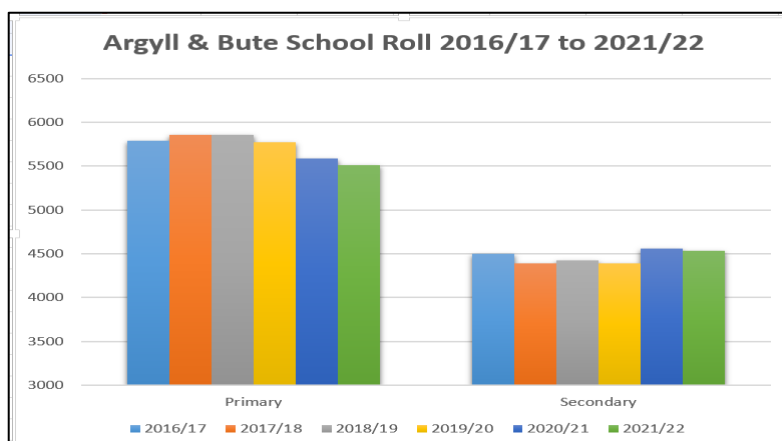
Argyll & Bute School Roll Data

Table 1 – Session 2014/15 to 2021/22



- There has been a drop in the school pupil roll of 4.70% from session 2014/15 to session 2021/22.

Table 2 – Primary and Secondary Pupil Roll by Session 2014/15 to 2021/22



Pupil Projections for Scotland and Local Authorities 2022-2027 indicate that across Argyll and Bute, primary school rolls will fall from 5,500 in 2021 to 4,600 in 2027 and secondary school rolls will fall from 4,500 in 2021 to 4,400 in 2027.

The full report on “Pupil Projections for Scotland and Local Authorities 2022-2027” is shown below.

Pupil Projections for Scotland and Local Authorities 2022-2027

Background

These estimated pupil projections cover pupils in publicly funded primary and secondary schools only. Pupils at grant-aided schools, pre-school children, pupils at special schools and pupils at independent schools are not included. These estimates form secondary analysis of data and are not official statistics.

Methodology

The methodology used to calculate pupil projections is part of the teacher workforce planning methodology used by Scottish Government to model future demands on the teacher workforce.

The projections make use of the following information:

- Mid-year population estimates to 2020 (National Records of Scotland, NRS)
- 2018 based population projections at Scotland and Local Authority Level (National Records of Scotland, NRS)
- 2020 based population projections at Scotland Level (National Records of Scotland, NRS)
- Pupil census data to 2021 (Scottish Government)

The population estimates and pupil census figures are compared to calculate the proportion of children, by age, participating in mainstream school education. These participation estimates are then applied to the population projections to give estimates for future pupil numbers.

Please note that these projections are not directly comparable to our previous pupil projections due to revisions to the underlying data. Previously published pupil projections will not normally be revised to account for these changes.

Contacts

For more information please contact:

school.stats@gov.scot

Education Analytical Services

Scottish Government

Area 2A North

Victoria Quay

Edinburgh

EH6 6QQ

April 2022

Scotland Level Pupil Projections (2018 based)

In Scotland, the number of primary school pupils peaked in 2017 at around 400,000 pupils before decreasing to around 390,000 in 2021. Estimates using 2018-based population projections show a continued decrease each year to around 355,000 in 2027.

In 2017, the number of secondary school pupils in Scotland rose for the first time in 10 years. There was a continued increase each year from 2017 reaching around 306,000 in 2021. Using 2018-based population projections this increase is projected to continue until 2024 reaching a peak of around 316,000 before decreasing annually to around 310,000 in 2027.

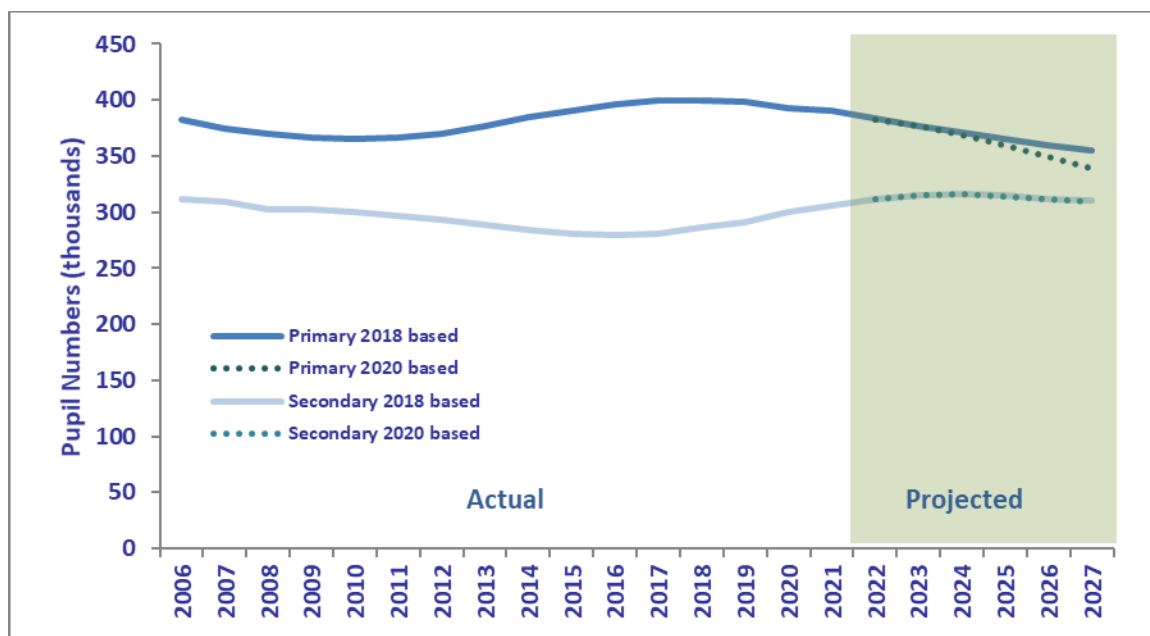
Scotland Level Pupil Projections (2020 based)

Estimates of the number of primary school pupils using 2020-based population projections show a greater decrease, particularly from 2024, to around 339,000 in 2027.

The estimated number of secondary school pupils from 2020-based population projections shows only a slight variation from the 2018-based projections – with the same increase to around 316,000 in 2024 before decreasing to around 309,000 in 2027.

Pupil Numbers by primary and secondary school, Scotland, 2006-2027

Projections cover the 5 year period from 2022 – 2027, based on pupil census data to 2021.



Pupil numbers (thousands), Scotland, 2006 to 2027

Projections cover the 5 year period from 2022 – 2027, based on pupil census data to 2021.

Year	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
2006	382	312		
2007	375	309		
2008	370	303		
2009	367	302		
2010	365	300		
2011	366	297		
2012	370	293		
2013	377	289		
2014	385	284		
2015	391	281		
2016	396	280		
2017	400	281		
2018	400	286		
2019	398	291		
2020	393	300		
2021	390	306		
2018-based projections		2020-based projections		
2022	384	312	383	312
2023	377	315	377	315
2024	371	316	369	316
2025	365	315	360	314
2026	360	312	349	312
2027	355	310	339	309

Note: Covers pupils in publicly funded primary and secondary schools only

Local Authority Level Pupil Projections (2018 based)

Primary Pupil Numbers by Local Authority, 2021 to 2027

Projections cover 2022 – 2027, based on pupil census data to 2021

Local Authority	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Aberdeen City	14,100	13,900	13,700	13,500	13,300	13,100	12,900
Aberdeenshire	20,800	20,700	20,600	20,400	20,100	19,800	19,600
Angus	8,400	8,400	8,300	8,200	8,000	7,900	7,800
Argyll and Bute	5,500	5,400	5,200	5,000	4,900	4,700	4,600
City of Edinburgh	30,100	29,500	29,200	28,600	28,200	27,800	27,500
Clackmannanshire	3,900	3,900	3,800	3,700	3,700	3,600	3,600
Dumfries and Galloway	10,100	9,800	9,600	9,500	9,300	9,100	8,900
Dundee City	10,100	9,900	9,500	9,300	9,100	9,000	8,900
East Ayrshire	9,000	8,800	8,700	8,500	8,400	8,300	8,100
East Dunbartonshire	9,100	9,100	9,100	8,900	8,800	8,700	8,600
East Lothian	8,600	8,500	8,400	8,300	8,200	8,200	8,100
East Renfrewshire	9,400	9,300	9,200	9,000	8,900	8,800	8,700
Falkirk	11,900	11,700	11,400	11,200	11,000	10,900	10,700
Fife	28,000	27,300	26,600	26,100	25,600	25,100	24,700
Glasgow City	40,800	39,700	39,000	38,300	37,700	37,200	36,700
Highland	16,700	16,500	16,200	15,800	15,600	15,300	15,100
Inverclyde	5,200	5,100	5,000	4,900	4,800	4,700	4,600
Midlothian	8,100	8,100	8,100	8,100	8,100	8,100	8,000
Moray	6,900	6,800	6,700	6,500	6,400	6,300	6,200
Na h-Eileanan Siar	1,800	1,800	1,700	1,700	1,700	1,600	1,600
North Ayrshire	9,600	9,400	9,200	9,000	8,800	8,700	8,600
North Lanarkshire	26,300	25,900	25,500	25,000	24,600	24,200	23,800
Orkney Islands	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,400
Perth and Kinross	10,200	10,000	9,700	9,500	9,300	9,100	8,900
Renfrewshire	13,000	12,900	12,700	12,500	12,200	12,100	12,100
Scottish Borders	7,900	7,700	7,600	7,400	7,300	7,200	7,100
Shetland Islands	1,900	1,900	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,700
South Ayrshire	7,700	7,600	7,500	7,400	7,300	7,100	7,000
South Lanarkshire	24,900	24,700	24,400	24,100	23,800	23,600	23,300
Stirling	6,500	6,400	6,300	6,200	6,100	6,100	6,100
West Dunbartonshire	6,700	6,500	6,300	6,100	6,000	6,000	5,900
West Lothian	15,300	15,100	14,900	14,600	14,400	14,200	14,100
Scotland	389,900	383,600	377,400	370,500	365,000	359,600	354,900

Notes:

1. Figures rounded to nearest 100.
2. Covers pupils in publicly funded primary and secondary schools only (excludes special and centrally funded schools).
3. Local Authority projections have been scaled to Scotland totals but may not sum due to rounding.

Secondary Pupil Numbers by Local Authority, 2021 to 2027

Projections cover 2022 – 2027, based on pupil census data to 2021

Local Authority	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Aberdeen City	10,000	10,400	10,700	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,800
Aberdeenshire	15,600	16,000	16,000	16,100	16,200	16,200	16,100
Angus	6,700	6,700	6,700	6,800	6,700	6,700	6,600
Argyll and Bute	4,500	4,600	4,600	4,600	4,600	4,500	4,400
City of Edinburgh	21,700	22,500	22,800	23,200	23,200	23,100	22,900
Clackmannanshire	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,700
Dumfries and Galloway	8,600	8,700	8,600	8,500	8,400	8,300	8,200
Dundee City	7,900	8,100	8,300	8,300	8,200	8,000	7,800
East Ayrshire	6,900	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	6,900
East Dunbartonshire	8,100	8,300	8,400	8,500	8,600	8,600	8,600
East Lothian	6,400	6,600	6,700	6,700	6,700	6,700	6,700
East Renfrewshire	8,000	8,200	8,300	8,600	8,700	8,700	8,600
Falkirk	9,600	9,800	9,900	9,800	9,600	9,400	9,300
Fife	22,100	22,600	22,900	22,900	22,700	22,400	21,900
Glasgow City	28,600	29,600	29,900	30,000	29,800	29,700	29,300
Highland	14,000	14,000	14,100	14,100	14,000	13,900	13,800
Inverclyde	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,400	4,300	4,300	4,200
Midlothian	5,600	5,800	6,000	6,200	6,300	6,400	6,500
Moray	5,300	5,400	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
Na h-Eileanan Siar	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
North Ayrshire	8,000	8,100	8,100	8,000	7,800	7,700	7,600
North Lanarkshire	21,700	21,800	21,900	21,900	21,700	21,500	21,300
Orkney Islands	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,200	1,300	1,300
Perth and Kinross	7,800	8,000	8,100	8,100	8,100	7,900	7,800
Renfrewshire	10,500	10,600	10,700	10,800	10,800	10,800	10,700
Scottish Borders	6,600	6,700	6,700	6,700	6,700	6,600	6,500
Shetland Islands	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,600	1,500	1,500
South Ayrshire	6,500	6,600	6,700	6,700	6,700	6,700	6,700
South Lanarkshire	20,100	20,400	20,600	20,600	20,500	20,500	20,400
Stirling	6,300	6,300	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,300
West Dunbartonshire	5,500	5,600	5,600	5,600	5,400	5,300	5,100
West Lothian	11,900	12,100	12,100	12,100	12,100	12,000	11,900
Scotland	306,200	312,100	314,800	316,200	314,700	312,400	309,700

Notes:

1. Figures rounded to nearest 100.
2. Covers pupils in publicly funded primary and secondary schools only (excludes special and centrally funded schools).
3. Local Authority projections have been scaled to Scotland totals but may not sum due to rounding.

2020 based population projections are not currently available at local authority level.

Appendix 5

Achievement - Closing the attainment gap

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 and the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education set the policy context for Scottish Education.

The Scottish Government's vision for Education in Scotland is:

- Excellence through raising attainment: ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed; and
- Achieving Equity: ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. The National Improvement Framework is designed to deliver the twin aims of excellence and equity and provides challenge and legislation to Scottish education authorities to raise attainment with a focus on improving learning outcomes. This is based on a self-improving system through enhanced empowerment for Schools and Headteachers.

The National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education: Achieving Excellence and Equity, published in December 2021, replaces the 2017 NIF document and sets out five national priorities for Education. They are:

1. Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.
2. Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
3. Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.
4. Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.
5. Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

Audit Scotland Report 2021

- The poverty-related attainment gap remains wide and inequalities have been exacerbated by Covid-19. Progress on closing the gap has been limited and falls short of the Scottish Government's aims.
- There is wide variation in education performance across councils, with evidence of worsening performance on some indicators in some councils.

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL)

Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) Level statistics provide information on performance in the reading, writing, listening & talking and numeracy ‘organisers’. A pupil is deemed to have achieved the expected level in literacy if they have achieved the expected level in all of reading, writing and listening & talking.

There are national curriculum levels to describe different stages of learning and progress. For most* children, the expectation is:

Stage	CfE Expected Level
P1	Early Level
P4	First Level
P7	Second Level
S3	Third level or better Fourth level

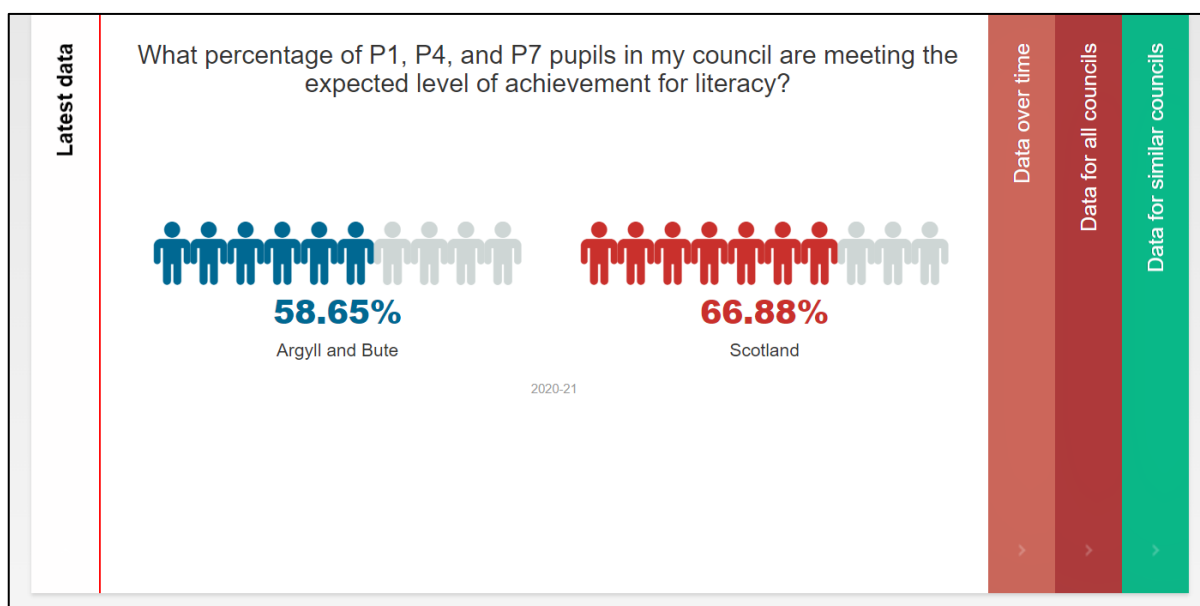
*but can be earlier/later for some as applicable, depending upon individual needs and aptitudes.

The statistics, based on teacher professional judgement, report on the percentage of school pupils in Primary 1 (P1), Primary 4 (P4), Primary 7 (P7) and Secondary 3 (S3) who have achieved the expected CfE level relevant to their stage.

For each organiser, a comparison of the percentage of pupils achieving their expected CfE level of pupils living in the least deprived areas, compared to pupils living in the most deprived areas offers an indication of the ‘attainment gap’ between those groups of young people.

Literacy

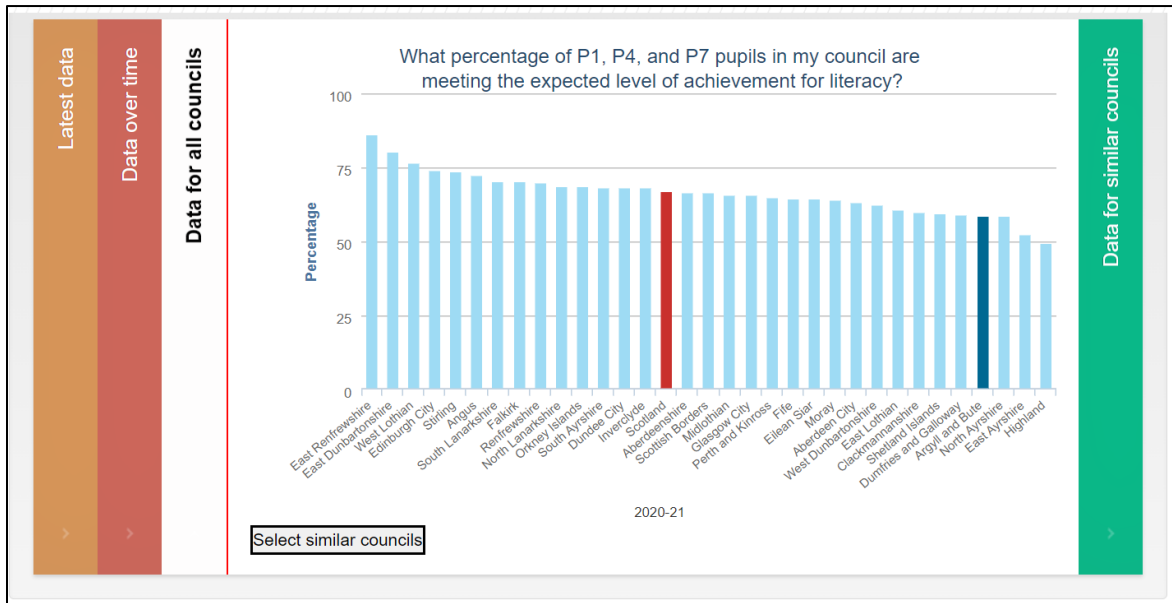
ACEL Attainment: Literacy - All pupils; Argyll & Bute/Scotland



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, Argyll & Bute Literacy was 58.65% - 8% below the national benchmark of 66.88%.

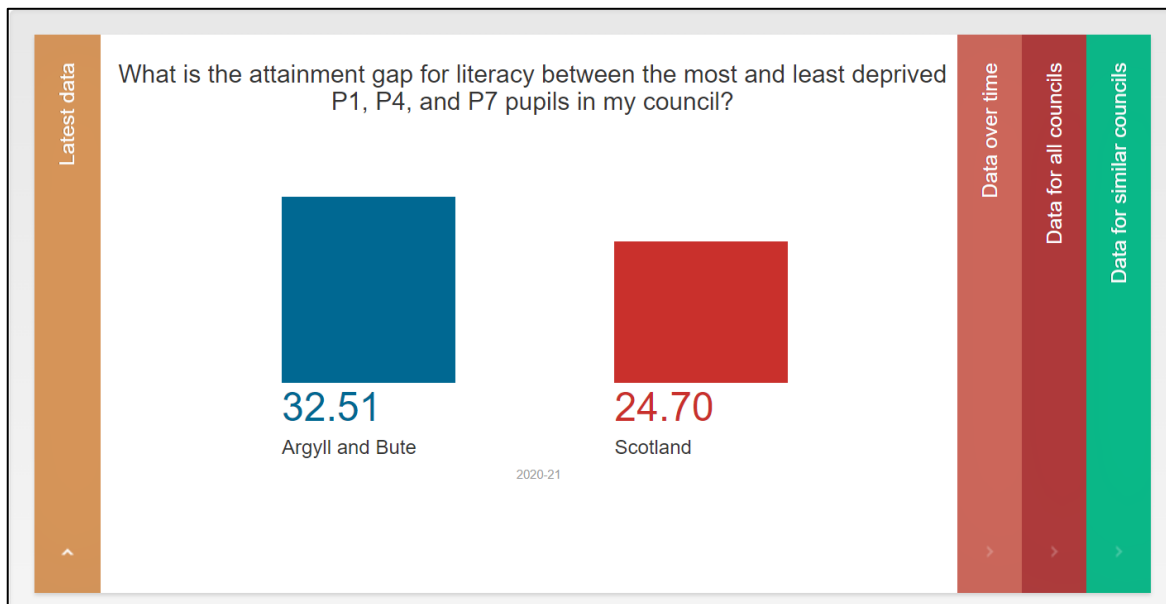
ACEL Attainment: Literacy - All Councils



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.myllocalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, the ACEL Literacy attainment outcomes across all councils ranged from 49.46% to 86.19%.

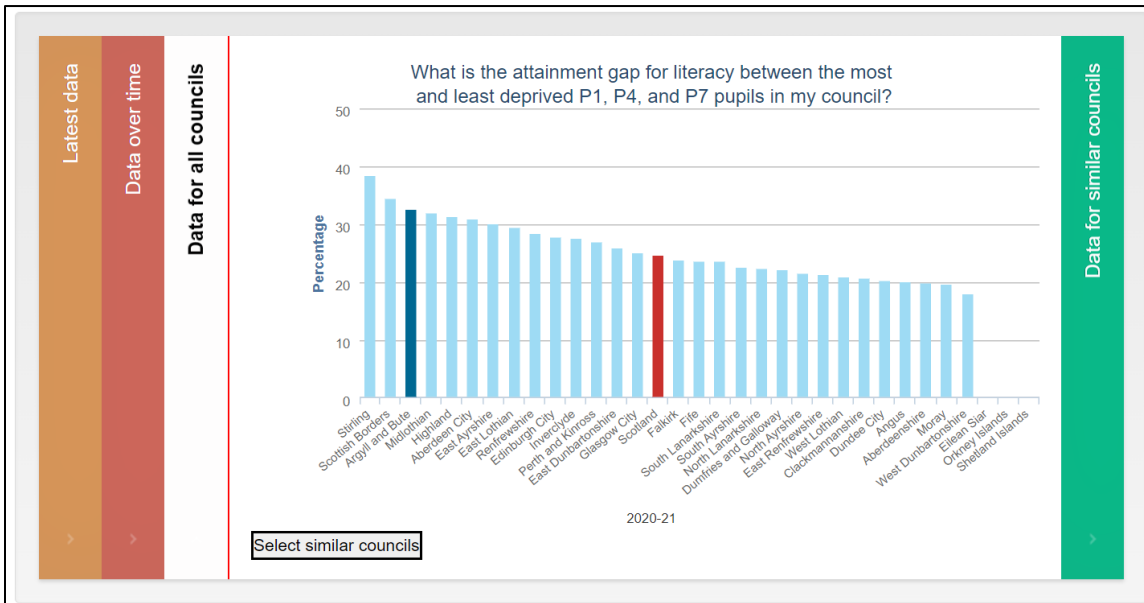
ACEL Attainment: Literacy – Attainment Gap: Argyll & Bute/Scotland



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.myllocalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, the attainment gap in literacy in Argyll & Bute was 32.51% - 7% greater than the Scottish benchmark of 24.70%.

ACEL Attainment: Literacy – Attainment Gap - All Councils



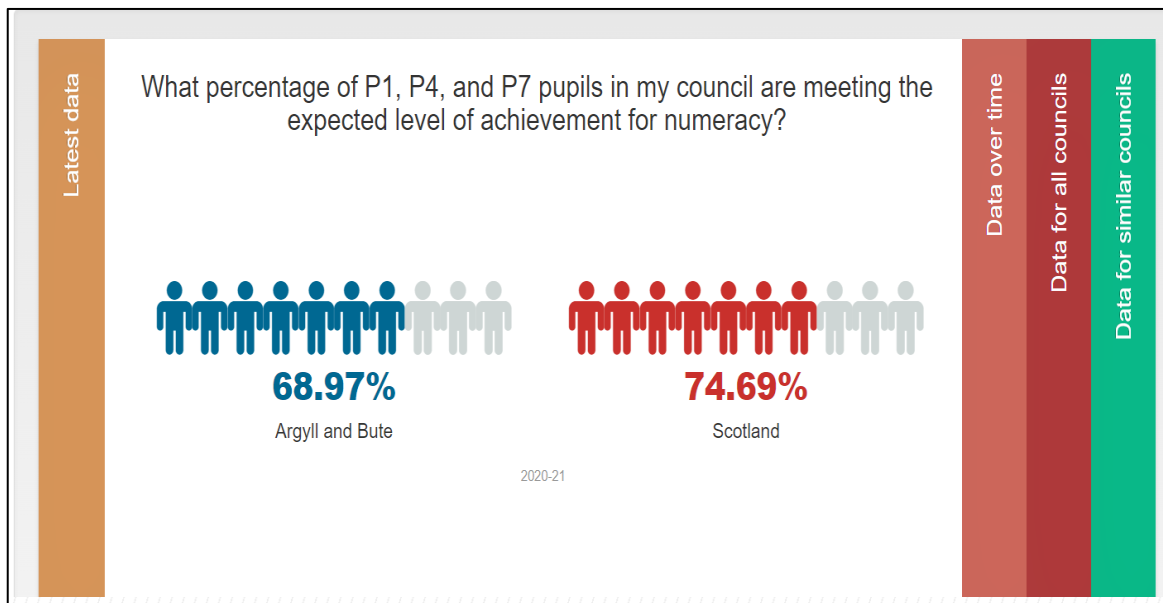
Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.myllocalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, the attainment gap in ACEL Literacy outcomes across all councils ranged from 17.93% to 38.35%.

For further information re Argyll & Bute Literacy measures, see **P 21/22** and **P26-28** of Argyll & Bute’s Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 Recovery, Progress and Impact Report 2021-22.

Numeracy

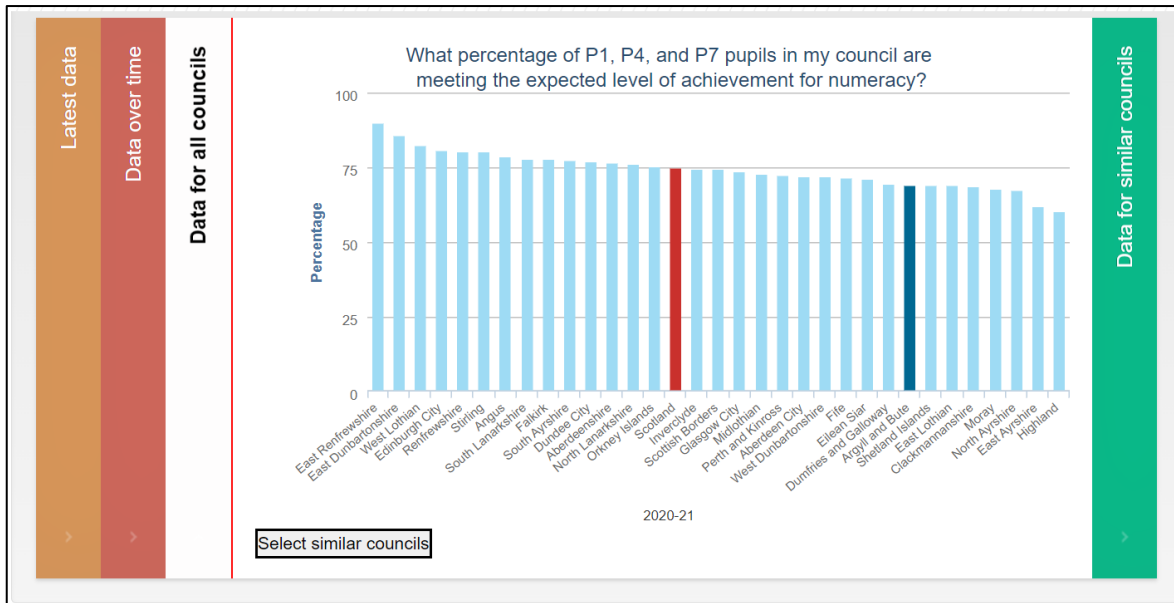
ACEL Attainment: Numeracy - All pupils; Argyll & Bute / Scotland



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.myllocalcouncil.info/>

- Argyll & Bute Numeracy was 68.97% compared with the Scottish benchmark of 74.69% – an attainment gap of 5% below National benchmark in 2021.

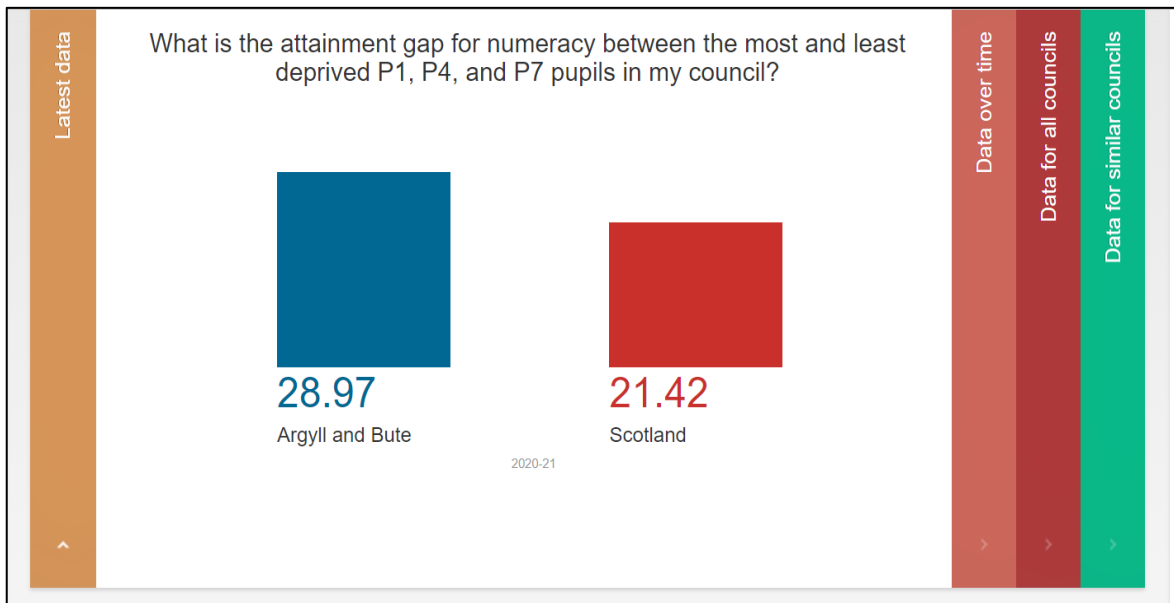
ACEL Attainment: Numeracy - All councils



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.myllocalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, ACEL Numeracy attainment across all councils ranged from 60.1% to 89.88%.

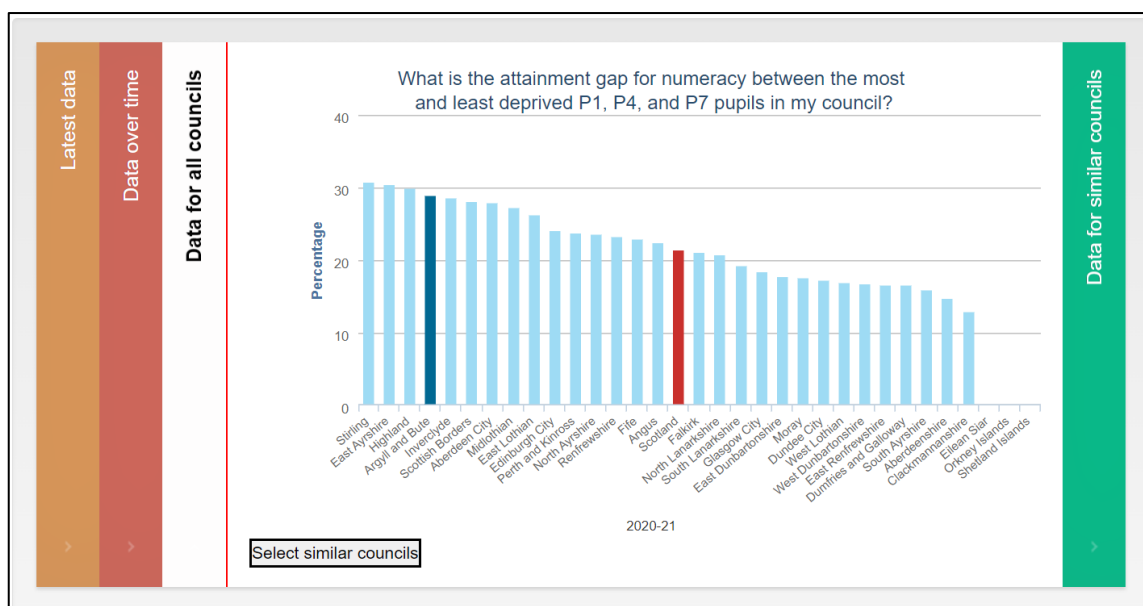
ACEL Attainment: Numeracy – The Attainment Gap: Argyll & Bute / Scotland



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.myllocalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, the attainment gap for Numeracy in Argyll & Bute was 28.97% - 7.55% greater than the Scottish benchmark of 21.42%.

ACEL Attainment: Numeracy – The Attainment Gap - All Councils



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylocalcouncil.info/>

- The attainment gap in Numeracy ACEL across all councils ranged from 12.96% to 30.76%.

For further information re Argyll & Bute Numeracy measures, see **P 21/22 and P26-28** of Argyll & Bute's Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 Recovery, Progress and Impact Report 2021-22.

Senior Phase:

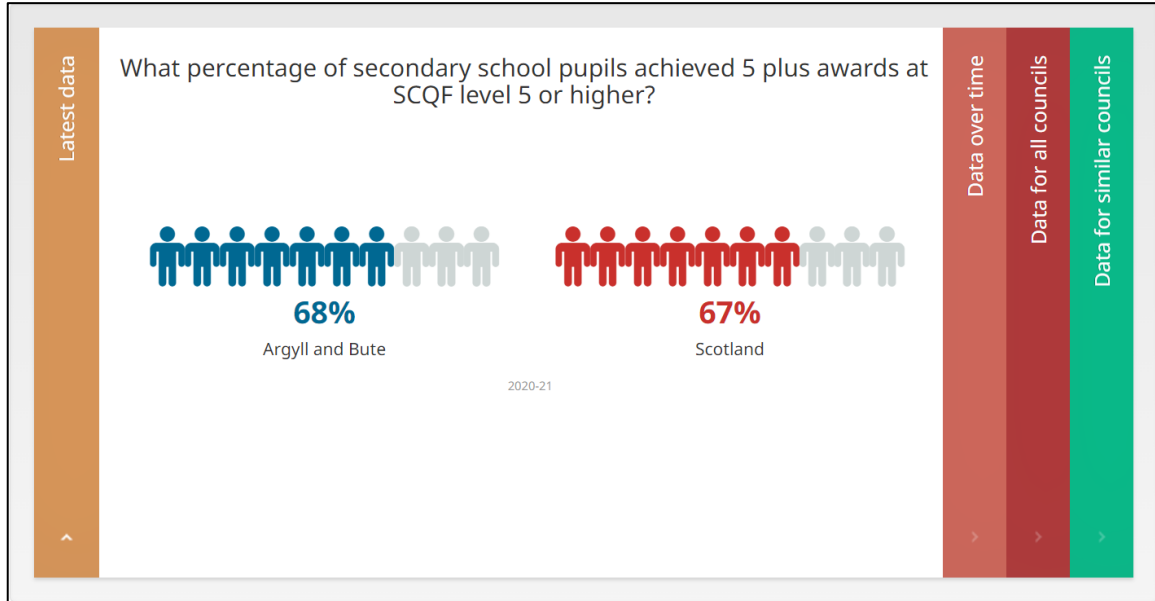
A key stage of the education journey for Scottish students is their performance in their senior phase of secondary school. The Senior Phase is normally defined as S4-6.

The measures below take account of all awards achieved in the senior phase by pupils (this includes qualifications and courses offered by non-SQA Award Providers). All graded and ungraded awards are counted which have an SCQF level between 5 and 6. National Qualifications at National 5 (N5) have an SCQF level of 5; National Qualifications at Higher are SCQF 6.

The '5 or more at SCQF 5 (N5) or 6 (Higher)' is a measure of those who have achieved a higher level of attainment in exams.

5+ Awards at SCQF 5

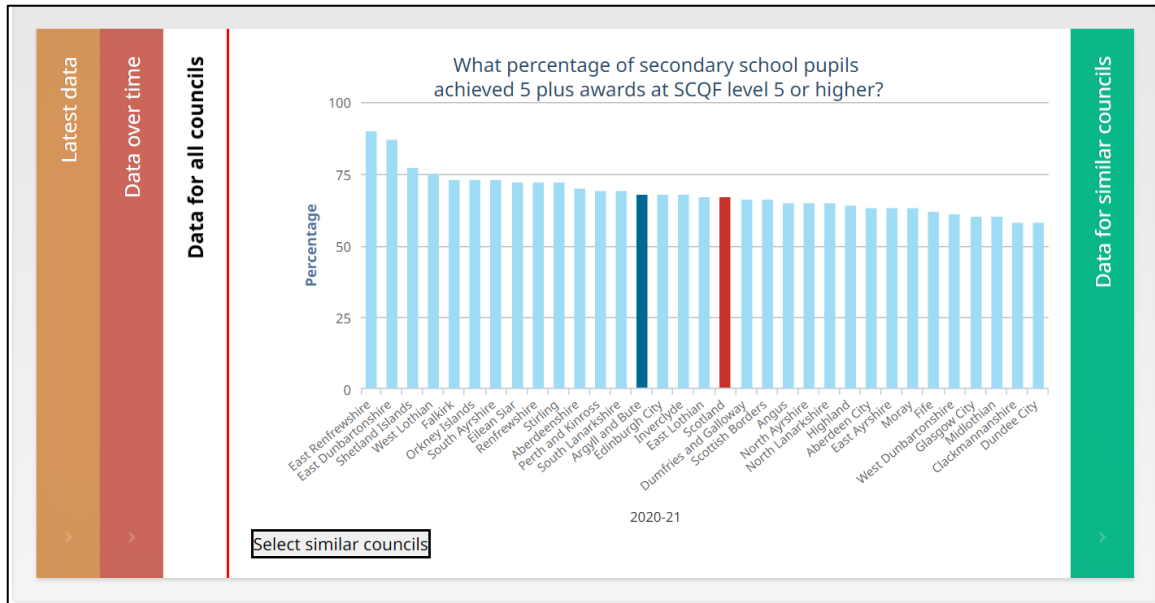
The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 5 – Argyll & Bute/Scotland



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 5 in Argyll & Bute was 68%; just above the Scotland benchmark of 67%.

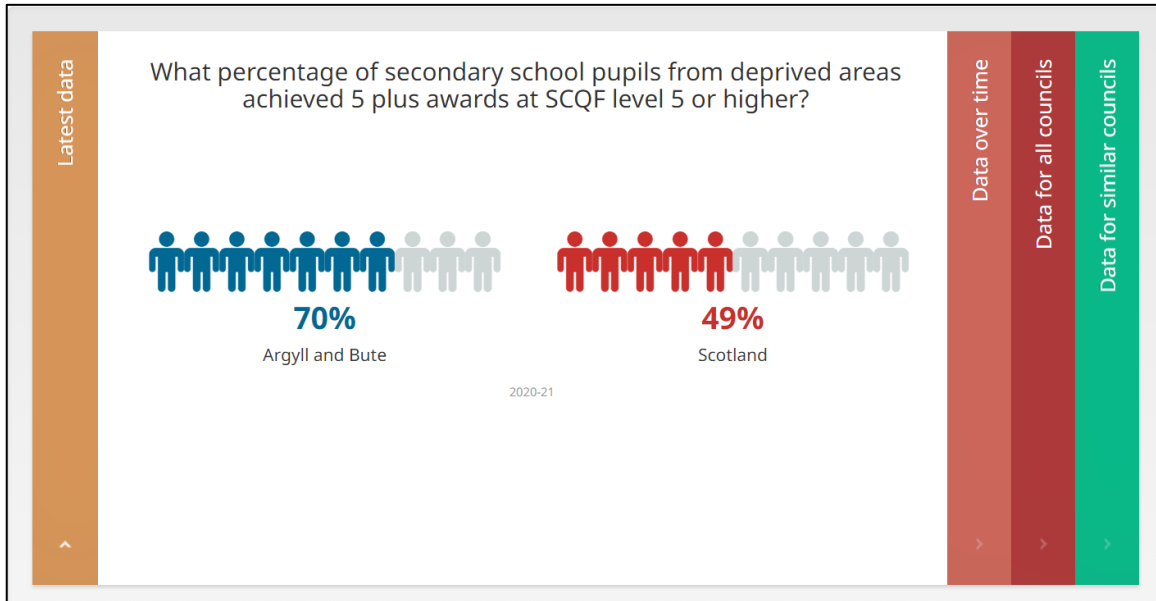
The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 5 – All Councils



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, the percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 5 across all councils ranged from 58% to 90%.

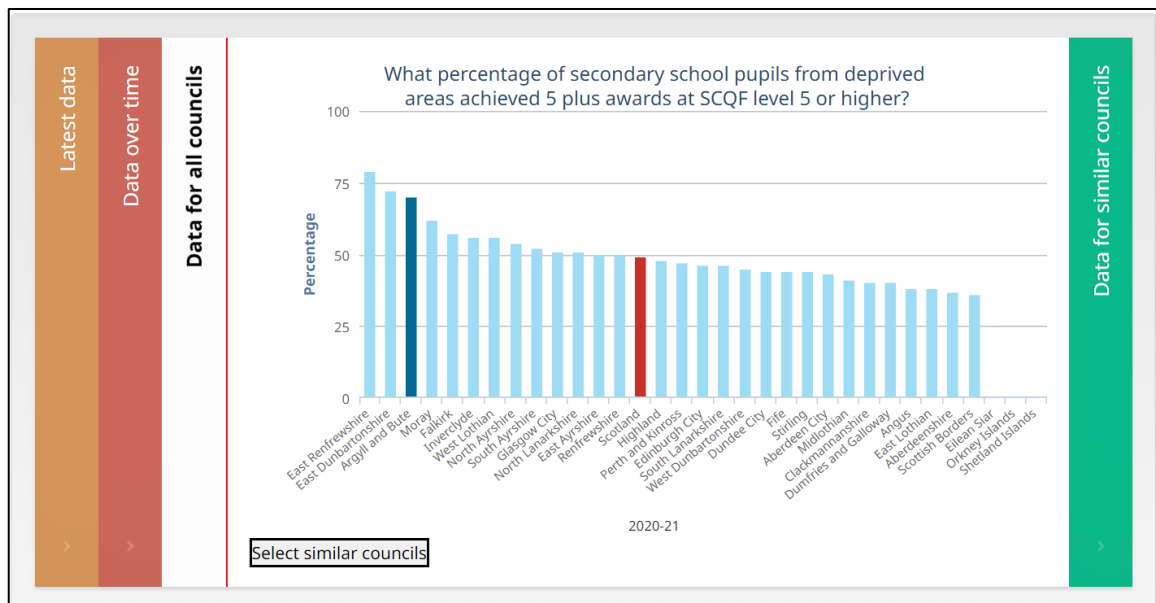
The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 5 – Pupils from deprived areas: Argyll & Bute/Scotland.



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, 70% of young people from deprived areas in Argyll & Bute achieved 5 or more awards at SCQF 5. This is significantly above the Scottish measure of 49%.

The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 5 – Pupils from deprived areas: All Councils.

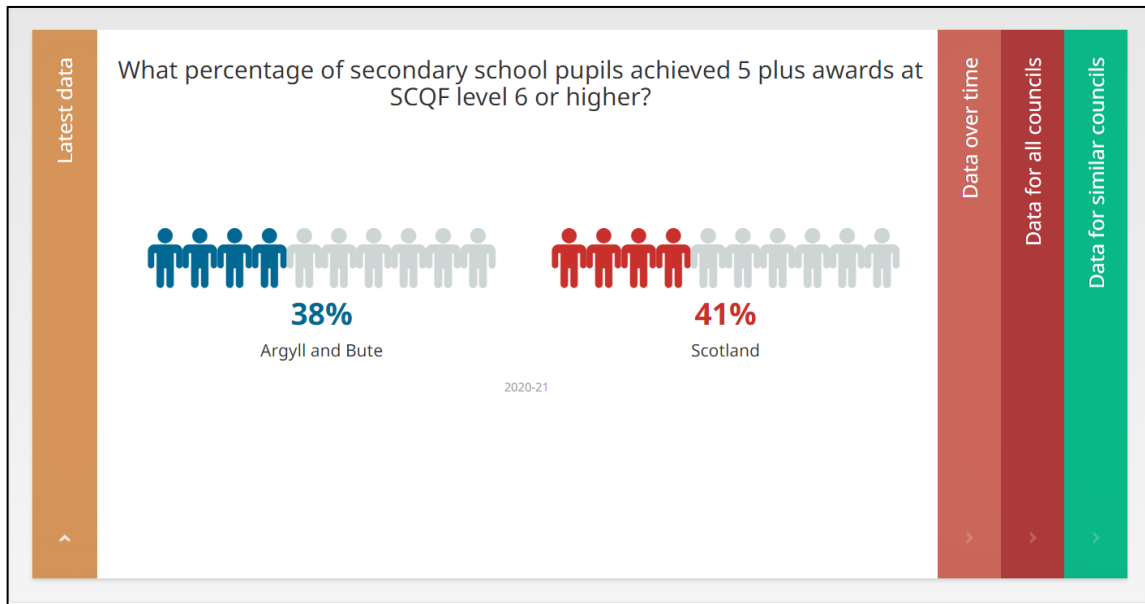


Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- The percentage of young people from deprived areas achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 5 across all councils ranged from 36% to 79%.

5+ Awards at SCQF 6

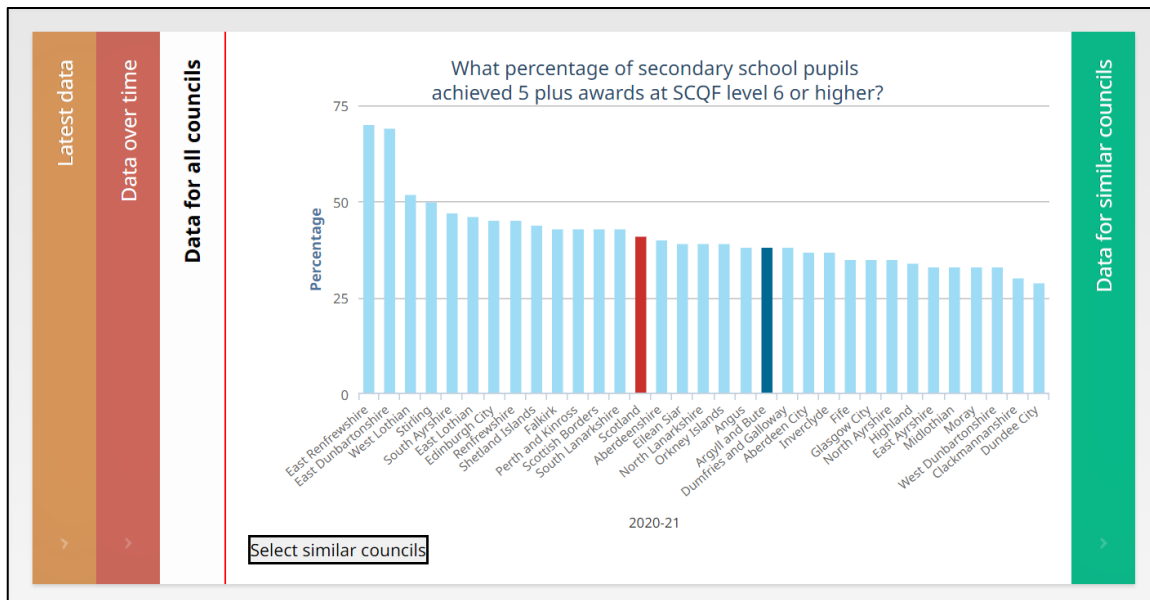
The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 6 or higher – Argyll & Bute/Scotland



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, 38% of young people in Argyll & Bute achieved 5 or more awards at SCQF 6 compared with the Scotland benchmark of 41%.

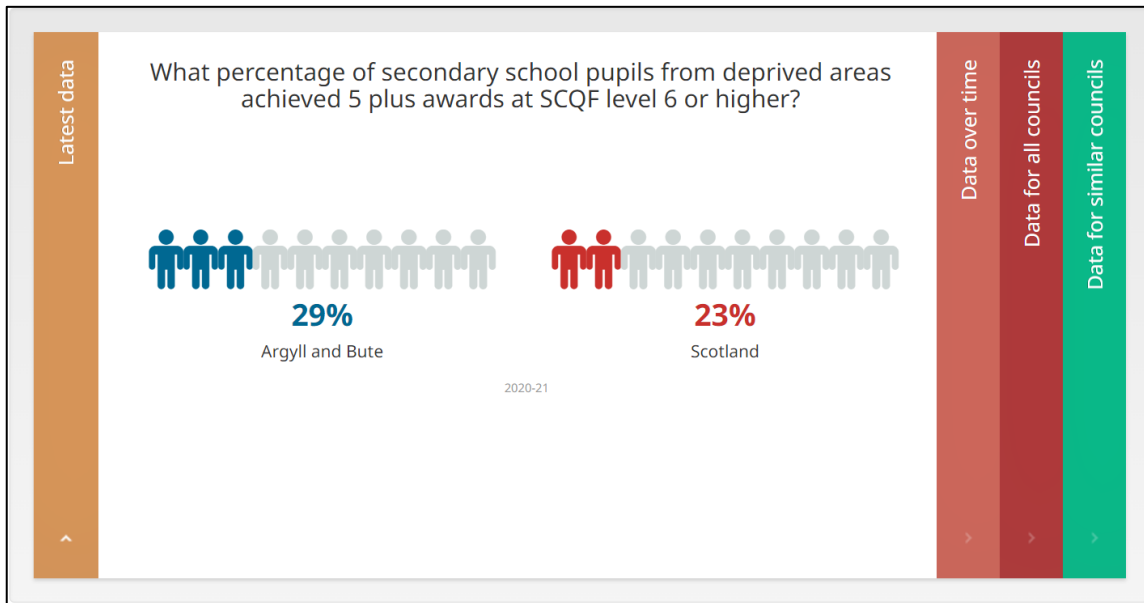
The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 6 or higher – All Councils



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 6 across all councils ranged from 29% to 70%.

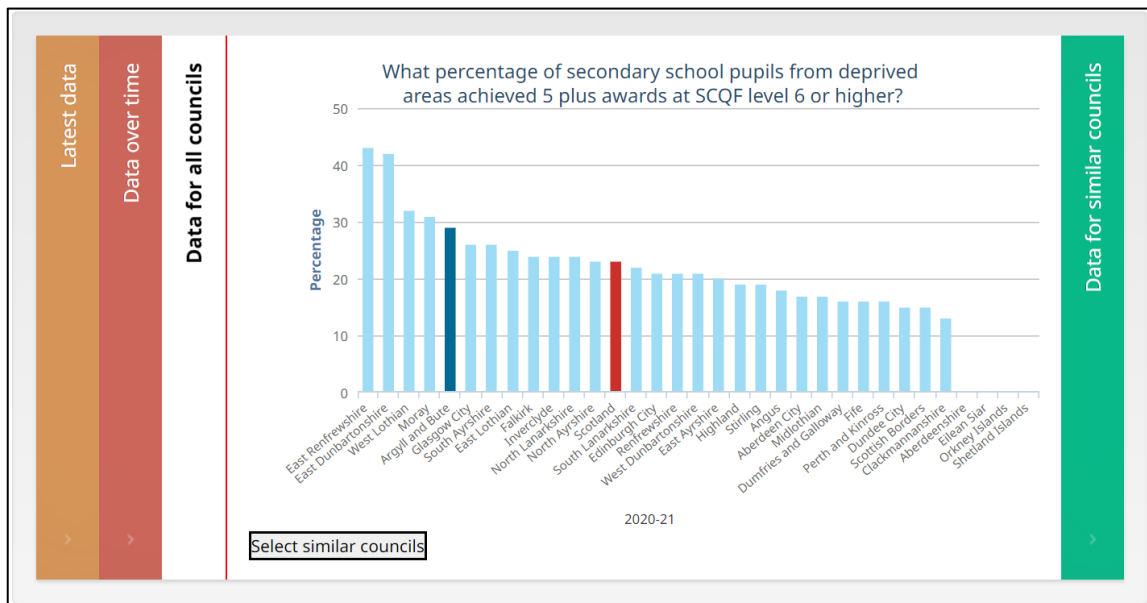
The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 6 or higher – Pupils from deprived areas: Argyll & Bute/Scotland



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, 29% of young people from deprived areas in Argyll & Bute achieved 5 or more awards at SCQF 6 or higher. This is above the Scottish measure of 23%.

The percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 6 or higher – Pupils from deprived areas: All Councils



Source: 2021 data - <http://scotland.mylowalcouncil.info/>

- In 2021, young people from deprived areas achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 6 or higher across all councils ranged from 13% to 43%.

All councils: SCQF awards - Improvement over time (2013/14 to 2018/19)

Change in percentage of leavers achieving 1 or more award at SCQF 5 and 5 or more awards at SCQF 5. Source: audit-scotland.gov.uk

All indicators show improvement at a national level, although there are large variations in local performance.

Council	Percentage of school leavers achieving 1 award or more at SCQF level 5 or better		Percentage of school leavers achieving 5 awards or more at SCQF level 5 or better	
	2018/19	% point change since 2013/14	2018/19	% point change since 2013/14
Aberdeen City	83.5	3.5	57.9	5.9
Aberdeenshire	86.8	4.0	64.8	7.2
Angus	82.5	-1.3	61.7	0.9
Argyll and Bute	88.1	2.6	67.5	8.3
Dumfries and Galloway	86.3	1.1	62.4	4.8
East Dunbartonshire	96.2	1.8	85.8	7.2
East Lothian	82.9	-0.8	63.3	4.0
East Renfrewshire	96.3	0.4	88.6	6.1
Edinburgh City	83.7	-0.5	64.1	3.3
Falkirk	86.5	2.4	67.9	10.5
Fife	81.5	-0.5	60.0	3.5
Highland	85.1	-0.3	62.5	3.1
Midlothian	82.5	2.8	58.4	3.5
Moray	85.3	-3.7	61.6	0.7
Orkney Islands	91.7	2.2	66.8	-3.7
Perth and Kinross	85.4	-0.7	64.1	1.9
Scottish Borders	84.9	1.8	63.9	0.7
Shetland Islands	Not available		72.9	8.5
South Ayrshire	88.0	0.4	70.6	9.4
South Lanarkshire	84.3	2.6	64.9	8.5
Stirling	86.0	-1.6	72.3	9.1
West Lothian	86.1	0.9	72.1	8.2
Western Isles	88.9	-2.5	65.9	0.0

Cont.

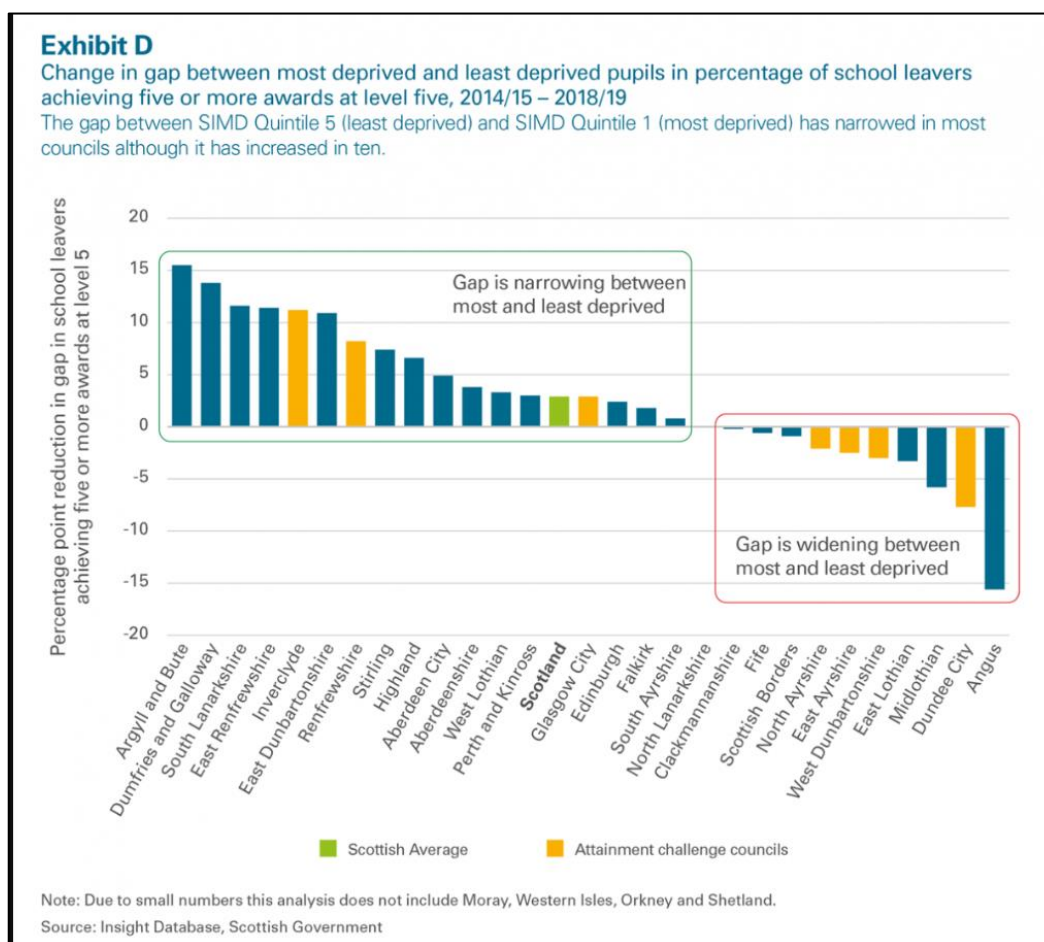
Council	Percentage of school leavers achieving 1 award or more at SCQF level 5 or better		Percentage of school leavers achieving 5 awards or more at SCQF level 5 or better	
	2018/19	% point change since 2013/14	2018/19	% point change since 2013/14
Attainment challenge councils:				
Clackmannanshire	78.8	-1.2	55.8	5.4
Dundee City	78.8	-1.3	55.6	5.4
East Ayrshire	80.0	-2.9	62.0	3.2
Glasgow City	83.2	2.7	57.8	8.1
Inverclyde	89.5	2.5	67.1	8.5
North Ayrshire	83.3	3.2	60.7	7.6
North Lanarkshire	84.4	-0.9	62.4	5.7
Renfrewshire	88.2	0.6	66.3	2.8
West Dunbartonshire	85.6	1.4	58.2	1.6
Scotland	85.1	0.7	64.3	5.5

Between 2013/14 and 2018/19:

- Both indicators showed an improvement at National level, although there were large variations at local level across Councils.
- Argyll & Bute recorded a +2.6% change in 1 award or more at SCQF 5 or better. Councils recorded changes between -3.7% to +4% compared with the Scotland measure of +0.7%.
- At 5 or more awards at SCQF 5 or better, Argyll & Bute recorded a change of +8.3%, compared to the Scotland measure of 5.5%. Councils across Scotland recorded changes between -3.7% to +10.5%.

Gap between deprived and least deprived pupils: All Councils

Percentage of leavers achieving 5 or more awards at SCQF 5. Change recorded between 2014/15 and 2018/19.



Source: audit-scotland.gov.uk

- Between 2014 and 2019, the gap in achievement between Argyll & Bute's deprived and least deprived young people *narrowed* by over 15%.
- Across all councils in Scotland, the gap narrowed by up to 15% in most councils but widened in 10 council areas by up to 15%.

Appendix 6

School Inspection Data

200701 – National_Regional_Local Inspection Outcomes

Overall number of inspections (Jan 2019 - Jun 2020):

Argyll and Bute	23
Northern Alliance (excl. A&B)	124
National (excl. NA)	397
Total	544

Breakdown of Activity / Inspection Type (Jan 2019 - Jun 2020):

Argyll and Bute

Sector	Short	Long	Total
Nursery	3	6	9
Primary	7	5	12
Secondary	1	0	1
All-Through	0	1	1
Total	11	12	23

Northern Alliance (excl. A&B)

Sector	Short	Long	Total
Nursery	21	31	52
Primary	29	30	59
Secondary	5	5	10
All-Through	0	3	3
Total	55	69	124

National (excl. NA)

Sector	Short	Long	Total
Nursery	57	86	143
Primary	102	107	209
Secondary	17	28	45
All-Through	0	0	0
Total	176	221	397

Breakdown of Quality Indicator Grades (Jan 2019 - Jun 2020):

QI 1.3

Leadership of change

	6	5	4	3	2	1
Evaluative Grade	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory
Argyll and Bute	0	0	5	5	2	0
Northern Alliance (excl. A&B)	0	3	23	30	11	0
National (excl. NA)	3	47	93	63	12	3
Total	3	50	121	98	25	3

QI 2.3

Learning, teaching and assessment

	6	5	4	3	2	1
Evaluative Grade	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory
Argyll and Bute	0	0	9	13	1	0
Northern Alliance (excl. A&B)	3	4	50	52	15	0
National (excl. NA)	0	56	198	124	19	0
Total	3	60	257	189	35	0

QI 3.2

Raising attainment and achievement [Securing children's progress]

	6	5	4	3	2	1
Evaluative Grade	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory
Argyll and Bute	0	0	13	7	3	0
Northern Alliance (excl. A&B)	2	8	49	51	13	1
National (excl. NA)	3	59	194	117	24	0
Total	5	67	256	175	40	1

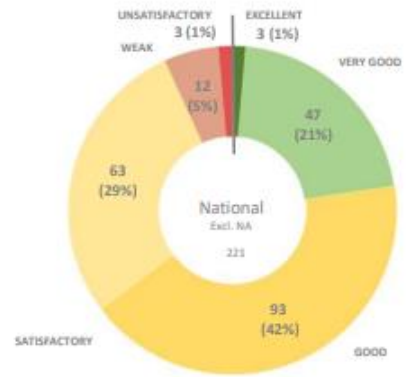
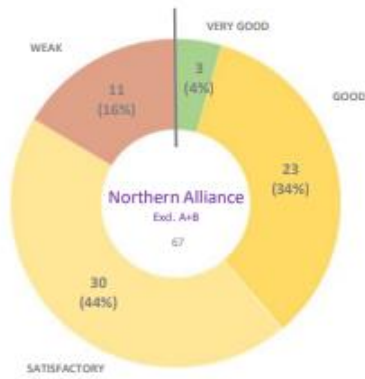
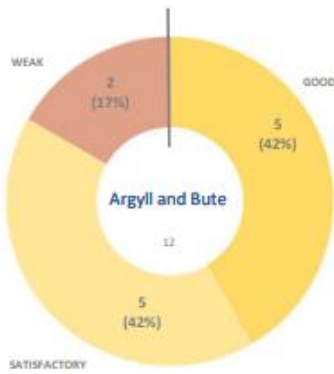
QI 3.1

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	6	5	4	3	2	1
Evaluative Grade	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory
Argyll and Bute	0	1	4	7	0	0
Northern Alliance (excl. A&B)	0	8	36	15	8	0
National (excl. NA)	3	57	102	50	7	2
Total	3	66	142	72	15	2

200701 – HMIE_Data.01

January 2019 - June 2020

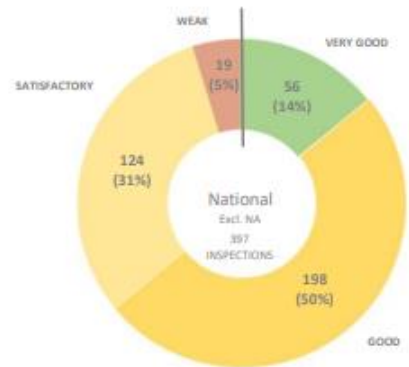
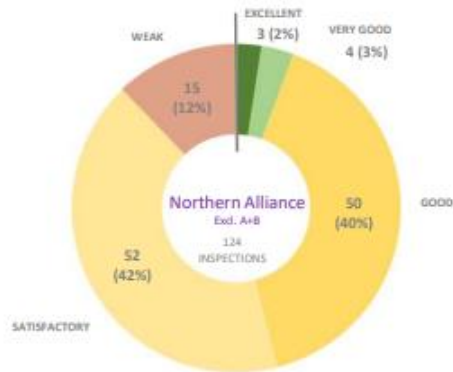
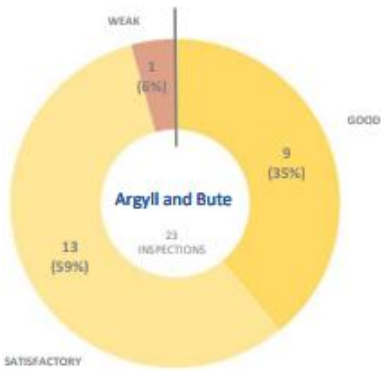


QI 1.3

Leadership of change

Overall

Breakdown of Quality Indicator Grades



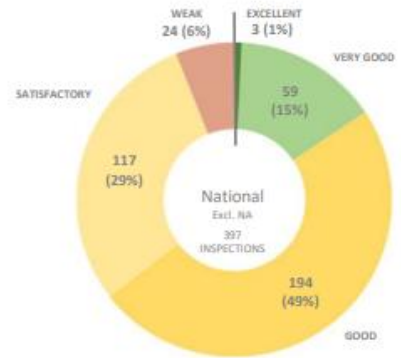
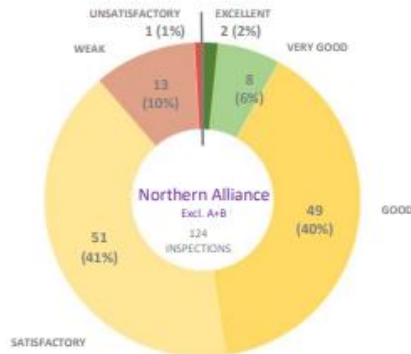
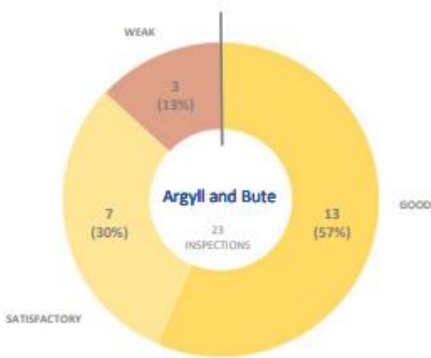
QI 2.3

Learning, teaching and assessment

Overall

Breakdown of Quality Indicator Grades

200701 – HMIE_Data.02

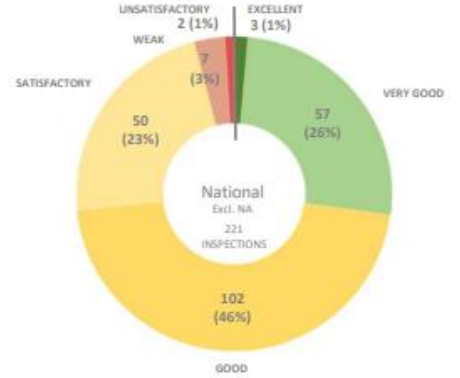
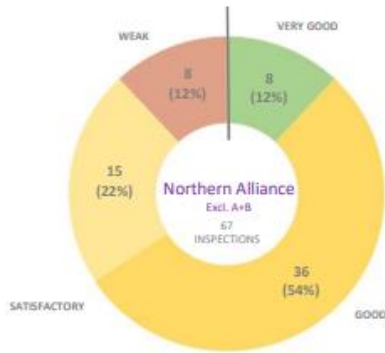
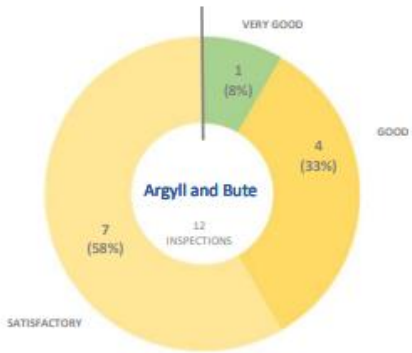


QI 3.2

Raising attainment and achievement (Securing children's progress)

Overall

Breakdown of Quality Indicator Grades



QI 3.1

Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Overall

Breakdown of Quality Indicator Grades

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

**ARGYLL AND BUTE – EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-24 AND RECOVERY,
RENEWAL AND PROGRESS REPORT 2021-22**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress made by the Education Service in achieving the priorities included in the Argyll and Bute Annual Education Plan for 2021-22 presented at Community Services Committee in August 2021 and outline priority actions for 2022-2024.

1.2 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- Note the progress made with respect to priority actions within the 2021-22 Argyll and Bute Annual Education Plan;
- Approve the Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-22 (Appendix 1)
- Approve the publishing of the Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-2022; and
- Approve the submission of the Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-2022 to Scottish Government.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION

25 AUGUST 2022

ARGYLL AND BUTE – EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-24 AND RECOVERY, RENEWAL AND PROGRESS REPORT 2021-22

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Section 13 of the statutory guidance of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 ('the 2000 Act') as amended by section 4 of the Education (Scotland) Act 2016 ('The 2016 Act'), enables the Scottish Ministers to issue guidance to education authorities in relation to their functions under section 3 to 8 of the 2000 Act, and education authorities are required to have regard to this guidance in discharging these functions.
- 2.2 The guidance focuses in particular on education authority duties which are designed to enhance equity and support improvement within schools and across education authorities.
- 2.3 Sections 3F, 3H and 6 of the 2000 Act: impose duties on education authorities in relation to the annual planning and reporting; namely the publishing of an Annual Education Plan.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:
- Note the progress made with respect to priority actions within the 2021-22 Argyll and Bute Annual Education Plan;
 - Approve the Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-22 (Appendix 1)
 - Approve the publishing of the Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-2022; and
 - Approve the submission of the Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-2022 to Scottish Government.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 The Education Service must prepare and publish an annual plan setting out the steps we have taken, over the course of the planning period:
- to reduce inequalities of outcome experienced by pupils as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, including the use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF)
 - to comply with the duties imposed on it by section 3B(3) (to seek and have regard to the views of the persons listed in section 3B(4) and to provide any advice and support the authority thinks appropriate to those persons in relation to its consideration of decisions of a strategic nature about the carrying out of its functions relating to school education;
 - in pursuance of the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education; and
 - to set out any educational benefits for pupils that the Authority considers have resulted from taking these steps.
- 4.2 The Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-22 has been prepared in compliance with the statutory guidance and contains the following sections:
- Our continuing response to Covid-19
 - Our Children, Their Future
 - The policy context for Scottish education
 - Addressing key elements of the National Improvement Framework
 - The National Improvement Framework and Our Children, Their Future – self-evaluation and improvement
- 4.3 In light of the emerging national context for education, our plan takes into account the recommendations from the Audit Scotland Report and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) review of Curriculum for Excellence and the reports resultant from the OECD review.
- 4.4 As a response to the recommendations of the OECD report – *Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence: Into the Future*, the Scottish Government commissioned Professor Ken Muir provide advice on aspects of education reform. Professor Muir, and the team appointed to work with him, carried out a wide consultation with stakeholders. This consultation led to a suite of 21 recommendations for education reform which place children and young people and the teachers and practitioners supporting learning at the heart of the education system. His report *Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education* can be accessed here: [Supporting documents - Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/supportingdocuments-putting-learners-at-the-centre-towards-a-future-vision-for-scottish-education)
- 4.5 Professor Stobart was appointed by the OECD to consider the approaches to assessment at the senior phase in response to the recommendations outlined in

the OECD report. His report outlined options for Scotland's future approach to assessment and qualifications. His *paper Upper-secondary education student assessment in Scotland: A comparative perspective* can be accessed here: [d8785ddf-en.pdf \(oecd-ilibrary.org\)](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docstore/d8785ddf-en.pdf).

- 4.6 The Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-2022 will focus on recovery, renewal and improvement in light of Covid-19 and the emerging dynamic national context for education.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The planning and reporting processes at school, service and Education Authority levels are designed to produce robust, consistent and transparent data of the work of the Education Authority, to improve our understanding of what works and, ultimately, drive forward improvements that will improve outcomes for the children and young people of Argyll and Bute.

- 5.2 The Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-22 presented to Community Services Committee has been prepared in compliance with the requirements set out in the Statutory Guidance accompanying the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 taking full account of the requirement to:

- Analyse the outcomes of the 2021/2022 Annual Education Plan and prepare and publish the annual report of progress as soon as possible after 31 August 2022;
- Takes full account of the continued impact of Covid-19 on our children and young people with a strong focus on recovery, renewal and improvement;
- Enables us to monitor the short and longer term impacts of Covid-19 on our children and young people's learning and wellbeing and take action as required to mitigate the effects and improve outcomes; and
- Enables us to respond to the national context for education and in particular the review of Curriculum for Excellence.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – The development of the Education Strategic Plan and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report supports the central purpose of the Scottish Government and the delivery of national outcomes. The framework supports delivery on the SOA Outcomes 1 and 3, OCTF Key Objectives 1-6 and NIF priorities 1-4
- 6.2 Financial - None
- 6.3 Legal – Council is required to prepare and publish the Education Strategic Plan annually as directed within the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 200, set out within the supporting Statutory Guidance published March 2017.

- 6.4 HR - None
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
 - 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – The Education Strategic Plan sets out the Council’s response, delivered by Education Services to section 3B of the 2000 Act which imposes duties on education authorities which are designed to promote a reduction in inequalities of educational outcome experienced by pupils as a result of socio-economic disadvantage.
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - None
 - 6.5.3 Islands - None
- 6.6 Climate Change - None
- 6.7 Risk – There are potential reputational risks for the Council should they fail to deliver the legislative requirements set out within the Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc. Act 2000 statutory guidance of March 2017
- 6.8 Customer Service – This report provides elected members with an overview of service performance for 2021-2022 and priorities for 2022-2024

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning

1st July 2022

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Jennifer Crocket

Head of Education – Lifelong Learning and Support

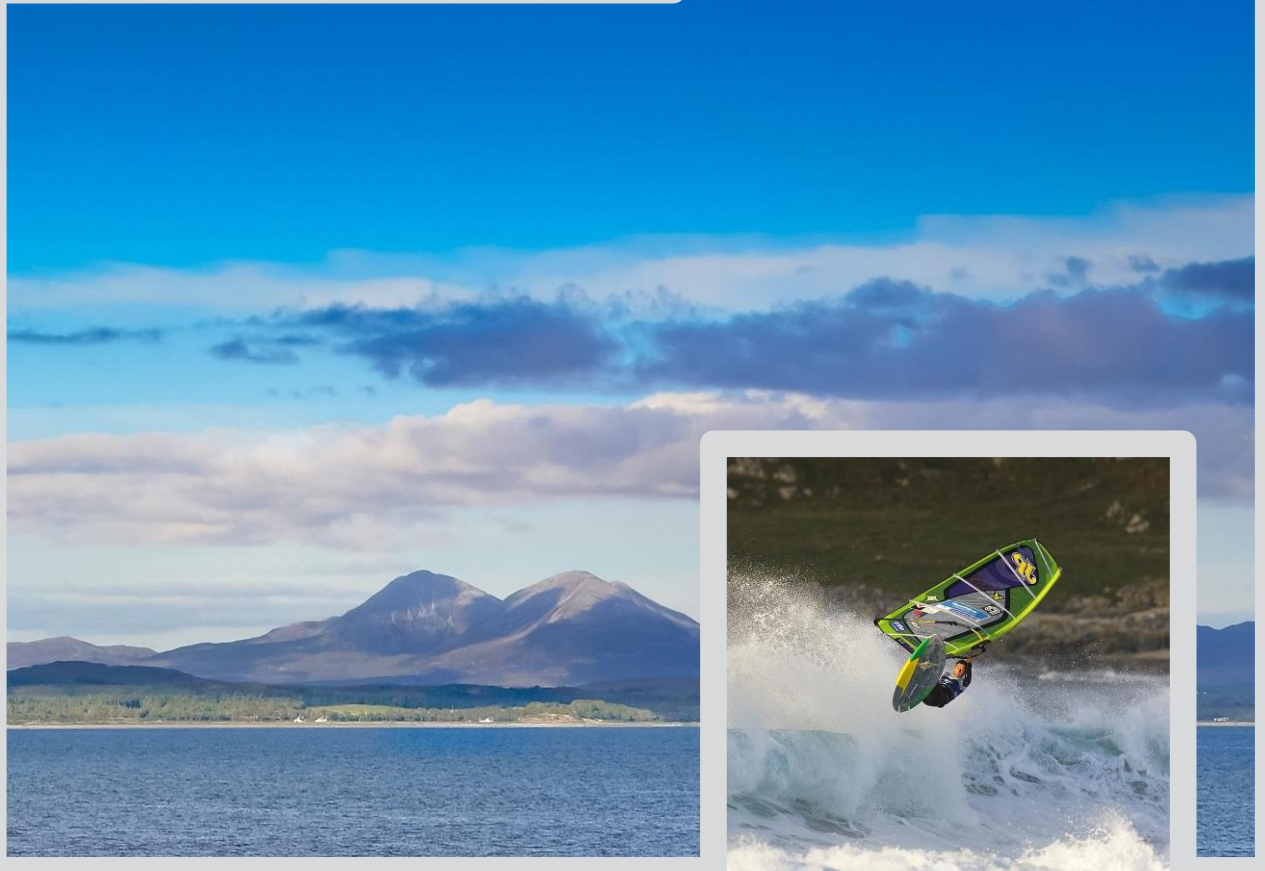
Jennifer.Crocket@argyll-bute.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-22

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Appendix 1



**Argyll and Bute:
Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024
Recovery, Progress and Impact Report 2021-22**

Section	Content	Page
Section 1	<p>Foreword and Introduction</p> <p>Councillor Yvonne McNeilly Policy Lead for Education</p> <p>Douglas Hendry Executive Director, Education</p>	<p>2-3</p> <p>4-5</p>
Section 2	<p>Our Continuing Response to Covid-19</p> <p>2.1 Wellbeing, Transitions and Safeguarding 2.2 Accelerated progress and recovery for children and young people in their learning 2.3 Supporting attainment and assessment of progress in the Senior Phase 2.4 Developing the capacity and skills of Education in delivering learning digitally 2.5 Ensure that, in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), our ability to offer 1140 hours per year of high-quality pre-school education to every child remains on-track.</p>	6-9
Section 3	<p>Our Children, Their Future</p> <p>3.1 Argyll and Bute Education Vision: Our Children, Their Future 3.2 Our Children and Young People 3.3 The Geography, Population and Demographic Profile of Argyll and Bute 3.4 Multiple Deprivation in Argyll and Bute 3.5 Supporting all of our Children and Young People 3.6 Resourcing Our Plan: The Education Budget 3.7 Education Service: Organisation Chart</p>	10-17
Section 4	<p>The Policy Context for Scottish Education</p> <p>4.1 The National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education and the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000</p>	18-20
Section 5	<p>Addressing Key Elements of the National Improvement Framework</p> <p>5.1 Improvement in attainment, particularly in Literacy and Numeracy 5.2 Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children 5.3 Improvements in children's health and wellbeing 5.4 Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people</p>	21-44
Section 6	<p>The National Improvement Framework and Our Children, Their Future - Self-evaluation and Improvement</p>	45-62
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SECTION ONE: FOREWORD AND INTRODUCTION

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Policy Lead for Education

I am delighted to be returning as Argyll and Bute Council's Policy Lead for Education and able to present to you Argyll and Bute Council's Education Strategic Plan 2022-24 and the Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report for 2021-2022. I know first-hand the tremendous amount of work that our practitioners and leaders put in to prepare our children and young people for an ever-changing world, supporting the development of knowledge, skills, abilities and aptitudes that will allow our young people to make a future here and to 'Choose Argyll, Love Argyll'.



Nationally education is undergoing a significant period of change, with expected reforms of Education Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and the Scottish Qualifications Authority. Against this backdrop of change, I welcome the work that will be taken forward in the life of this new plan to refresh Argyll and Bute's Education Vision and Strategy – *Our Children, Their Future*. This vision will be developed in collaboration with a wide range of our stakeholders, ensuring that excellence and equity continue to drive the best outcomes for our children and young people. Our aspiration is to ensure that Argyll and Bute is the best place in Scotland for our children to grow, and our vision is that together we will realise equality, excellence and ambition.

The Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-2022 identifies the wide-ranging work of the Education Service to support our children and young people in realising their ambitions in learning, life and work. I invite you to celebrate with me the successes and achievements of our service. Of course, improvement priorities are also a key feature of our strategic planning, and the plan shares the ways and means by which our Education Service is striving for continued improvement in outcomes for our children, young people and staff.

I am extremely proud of the many successes our schools and young people have had in session 2021-2022, including Dunoon Grammar School's Education Scotland award for developing a positive culture of continuous improvement in Gaelic Medium and Gaelic Learner Education, as well as being in the top 10 finalists for the T4 Education World's Best Schools Award for community collaboration. We have also seen Port Ellen Primary School receive a silver award in the Pearson National Teaching Awards for 'Making a Difference – Primary School of the Year'. A few other awards to highlight from this session include:

- The Early Years Team receiving the General Teaching Council for Scotland's Quality Mark after gaining an Excellence in Professional Learning award.
- Hermitage Academy being the first secondary school in Argyll and Bute to receive a gold accreditation in UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools programme.
- FilmG Awards for Sandbank Primary School's Gaelic P5-7 class for Best Film Production (under 12) and Islay High School for Best Film (learners).

COVID-19 continued to present an unprecedented challenge for education in Argyll and Bute and schools across Scotland in session 2021-2022. Our schools have been remarkable in supporting learners and families during what has continued to be a challenging time where relationships, leadership, health and wellbeing and learning and teaching have been the core of recovery and renewal. We look forward as a service to capitalising on our strengths, building on the opportunities resultant from a changed world post-pandemic and ensuring the best for the children and young people in Argyll and Bute.

Kind regards,

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Douglas Hendry, Executive Director, Education



As Executive Director for Education, it is my pleasure to present to you Argyll and Bute Council's Education Strategic Plan 2022-24, and the Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report for 2021- 2022.

The preparation and publication of this Strategic Plan, which covers the next two school sessions, is required by the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000. As you will see, the plan continues to place a strong focus on the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Importantly, it also places great importance on learners' accelerated progress as we move forward after the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Education in Argyll and Bute recognises and anticipates the wide-ranging changes planned for Scottish education as a result of key reports, particularly the 2021 OECD report and recommendations, and the subsequent report by Professor Ken Muir on changes to Education Scotland, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and the Scottish Qualifications Authority. We recognise these changes as drivers to deliver new, agile ways of teaching and learning and improved leadership structures, and the significant engagement exercise with a wide range of stakeholders which has been undertaken will allow us to harness the views and feeling of pupils, parents/carers, teachers, community councils, elected members and all that have a stake in education in Argyll and Bute as we move forward. We also understand, and are contributing our thinking to, the ongoing work by the Scottish Government to reform the way learning and progress are assessed in Scotland.

Our vision for Education in Argyll and Bute continues to be that, together, we will realise ambition, excellence and equality for all. This vision is encapsulated in *Our Children, Their Future* – Argyll and Bute's Educational vision and strategy. In order to ensure that progress and improvement in Argyll and Bute are absolutely linked to the wide-ranging changes which are occurring in Scottish Education referred to previously, we will work to review *Our Children, Their Future* over the next year, and look forward to presenting it to you in its refreshed form.

The ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has affected our children and young people significantly, and we have focussed strongly on meeting the needs of pupils in this context – from supporting them to remain on-track in their educational attainment, to helping them re-engage with being back in school and face-to-face learning, to providing learning for those having to self-isolate. The work we have done with our most vulnerable children and young people and their families in this context has been particularly focussed.

As part of this recovery and acceleration of progress post COVID-19, we have been building upon the experience, expertise and confidence gained during the pandemic in using digital technology to enhance learning. In harmony with the Scottish Government's commitment to provide all learners with a digital device, we are looking closely at how to ensure learning can continue securely and safely at home as well as in school, and that the council's digital network can cope with the demands that such increased digital learning activity would place on it. Furthermore, we are keenly aware in Argyll and Bute of the potential that digital technology offers in broadening curricular choices and pathways for learners. We are therefore providing resources and exploring practices to allow pupils in our schools to access subject choices not previously available to them, through sharing and participating in learning provided by other schools.

It is the commitment to improvement of all Education Service staff which enables us to take forward our very high aspirations. Section 6 of the plan highlights the key objectives and actions to be addressed by the Service and by schools and establishments as an integral aspect of their improvement planning processes for session 2022-2023. Our continued focus, and the purpose of this plan, is to ensure that we provide the best possible learning experiences and opportunities for all our children and young people, which support and endorse our commitment to ambition, excellence and equality. We are determined to improve our services for everyone who uses them, and this Education Strategic Plan is at the centre of that commitment. I hope you find it both informative and useful.

A copy of this plan will now be sent to Scottish Ministers, as required by legislation. Argyll and Bute Council welcomes this step, as it allows us to increase and deepen our knowledge of the successes and challenges facing Scottish Education, to engage with and share good practice and further our commitment to improving the lives of all children and young people in Argyll and Bute. The Education Service always strives to make improvements, and we welcome any suggestions you may have which will help Argyll and Bute Council's Education Service to make, through its planning, the greatest positive impact on outcomes for our children, young people and communities.

Douglas Hendry,
Executive Director – Education

SECTION 2: OUR CONTINUING RESPONSE TO COVID-19

COVID-19 has continued to affect all those who live and work across Argyll and Bute during session 2021/2022. A full session of face-to-face learning without the interruptions of school closure or further lockdowns has allowed demonstrable recovery in both Health and Wellbeing and attainment in Literacy and Numeracy.

However, the ongoing pandemic has continued to have an impact on educational provision to our children and young people in local contexts. Many learners and members of staff have had periods of absence through self-isolation, and in some cases there was a requirement to ask whole classes to remain at home. In such situations, the experience and skills of our teachers and pupils in accessing online learning has continued to be a valuable means of maintaining educational provision.

As an Education Service tackling and addressing the challenges of COVID-19, our response has been, and continues to be, driven by the advice and guidance issued by the Scottish Government in relation to both health and educational issues. The Education Recovery Workstreams set up in session 2019/2020, which articulate the key priorities of the Scottish Government's own Covid Education Recovery Group (CERG), have continued to lead our response to the pandemic. Over session 2021/2022, we have prioritised the following 5 key areas relating to recovery and renewal, post COVID-19:

2.1 Wellbeing, Transitions and Safeguarding

All aspects of our response to and planning around COVID-19 have had the government's scientifically-grounded health advice at their centre.

Schools in Argyll and Bute know their pupils very well and this knowledge has been applied effectively in addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged children and their families. Targeted recovery for vulnerable children and young people, and those most affected by COVID-19, has been a key focus and schools have been supported to make bespoke interventions for learners, a process underpinned by Education's close partnerships with Educational Psychology, Health and Social Work. Nurturing approaches, counselling in schools and the embedding of trauma-informed practice in schools have created an appropriate environment to ensure all children and young people can re-engage with their education and recover any ground lost during the pandemic, in terms of their progress in learning and their own wellbeing and mental health.

Prior to the pandemic, the Educational Psychology Service worked with colleagues to carry out an audit of practice across schools and settings and identified a need to build a consistent nurturing strategy across the Local Authority, developed as *Our Children, Their Nurturing Education (OCTNE)*. Professional learning for staff was introduced to support the development of the strategy. The learning, aimed at supporting all staff to understand attachment theory and the impact of trauma on wellbeing, has also helped staff to be clearer about their role in supporting learners' wellbeing. As a result of this work, staff are more able to understand learners' behaviour and use nurturing approaches to better support children and young people.

Schools have also been encouraged and supported to continue their focus on wellbeing developments that were already being implemented before the pandemic, such as Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS).

Transition and wellbeing training sessions are delivered by the Educational Psychology Service to staff from primary and secondary schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) practitioners. Furthermore, The Inclusion and Equality team works with the Educational Psychology Service team to ensure guidance and support is in place for children and young people who still require support in re-engaging with school and learning after the disruptions of 2020 and 2021.

Children transitioning to primary and secondary schools experienced transitions which allowed face-to-face experiences in their new settings, and direct interpersonal engagement with their new peers and teachers, COVID-19 guidelines having been followed in all cases.

Significant work has been undertaken to support wellbeing. A set of resources to support our policy, *Our Children, Their Mental Health*, has been kept up to date and promoted within Education, the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and the third sector to support all of our children and young people. This included trauma training modules which ensure appropriate support for children and young people, focus on all relationships and acknowledgment that many staff will also have found the demands and pressures of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to be traumatic.

2.2 Accelerated progress and recovery for children and young people in their learning

Over session 2021/2022, alongside Health and Wellbeing, primary and secondary schools have prioritised pupil recovery in learning, assessing and monitoring learners' progress to identify and address any gaps or delays in learning, particularly relating to attainment in Literacy and Numeracy. Numerous data sources have been used to identify how each young person's progress was affected by periods of school closure, and by the often challenging circumstances learners have faced since early 2020. Data sources have included teacher-generated assessment, standardised assessment, centrally collated Progress and Achievement data and the views of both learners and their parents/carers. Targeted interventions have then been implemented to support children and young people with their learning and progress towards the levels of attainment expected of them pre-COVID-19. As a result, data has shown the rapid recovery of learners in their Literacy and Numeracy, with the majority of pupils showing a recovery in learning within six months of returning to in-person learning.

Outdoor learning, the prevalence of which increased during the COVID-19 period, and learning through play in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and the first years of primary school, have played an increasing role in the link between physical and emotional Health and Wellbeing and progress in learning. Such approaches have supported children and young people in gaining improved knowledge and appreciation of the natural world, skills development and wider benefits associated with wellbeing.

As we ensure accelerated recovery from COVID-19, a further link between Health and Wellbeing and progress in learning and attainment relates to children and young people talking more frequently and meaningfully about their own feelings and their own learning. As a result, children and young people in our schools have not only become more aware of their own emotional wellbeing, but also, increasingly, have taken responsibility for their own learning and have made greater progress as a result.

2.3 Supporting attainment and assessment of progress in the Senior Phase

After the decision to cancel the examination diet in 2021, the Alternative Certification Model (ACM) was adopted by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) for National Qualification examinations in 2021 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, secondary teachers across Argyll and Bute enhanced their collaborative work to ensure the accuracy and consistency of their assessment of pupil work and the final grades they submitted to the SQA.

In session 2021/2022, we have further developed and built on the skills and experience gained in 2021. Secondary teachers have collaborated virtually via online platforms to examine learners' assessment evidence and develop their shared understanding of assessment standards. As a result, robust estimates were submitted to the SQA in April 2022, which candidates can be confident represent their levels of attainment and achievement accurately.

During the 2021/2022 session, the council was allocated funding by the Scottish Government to support attainment for those pupils most adversely affected by COVID-19. Funding was used to offer programmes of supported study during the Easter break, with study sessions running in all schools across many subjects. Schools also used funding for initiatives to specifically target those pupils whose progress had been most affected by their experiences of COVID-19. In total, over 1,400 hours of supported study were offered to Senior Phase pupils across the Local Authority.

2.4 Developing the capacity and skills of Education in delivering learning digitally

During the periods of school closure in 2020 and 2021, the capabilities and skills of teachers in delivering learning via digital platforms, and the skills and confidence of pupils and their families in engaging with such learning, developed considerably. The return to face-to-face learning in August 2021 meant that remote learning was limited to those who were unwell or isolating because of COVID-19. However, the skills and capabilities now in place continue to enhance learning experiences for all learners on a daily basis. Additionally, Education has implemented a vision for digital learning which seeks to increase the breadth and choice of learning available to children and young people, and therefore increase pupils' possible learning pathways, maximising their attainment and supporting them to achieve their desired post-school positive destination. Through intelligent and ambitious investment in digital resources and skills, we have equipped secondary schools with the digital video conferencing resources which allow pupils to engage with learning provided by other schools or colleges. As a result, learners can follow courses of study and attain in subjects which, otherwise, would not be available to them.

Accordingly, we have worked with schools to develop the harmonisation of secondary school timetables, necessary to allow pupils in one school to choose a subject which is only available in another. Although in their early stages, such initiatives have enabled an expanded range of learning experiences for young people, particularly in terms of courses delivered by Argyll College.

2.5 Ensure that, in Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), our ability to offer 1140 hours per year of high-quality pre-school education to every child remains on-track.

As we have moved out of lockdown and mitigations related to Covid-19 have eased, we have sought to rebuild partnerships with ELC parents through consultation around new ways of working, seeking safe ways to involve them in their child's ELC experience whilst building upon the online engagement opportunities established during the pandemic. In addition, our ongoing work towards developing a strong culture of play pedagogy in P1 ensures that children transitioning into P1 enjoy a play based curriculum which targets developmental gaps as a result of lockdowns and puts wellbeing and children's rights at the heart of the Early Level curriculum.

SECTION THREE: OUR CHILDREN, THEIR FUTURE

3.1 Argyll and Bute Education Vision: Our Children, Their Future

Argyll and Bute Council's Vision 'Realising our Potential Together' is underpinned by four key values:

- We involve and listen to our customers and communities;
- We take pride in delivering best value services;
- We are open, honest, fair and inclusive; and
- We respect and value everyone.

The Education Service is statutorily required, as prescribed in the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000*, to provide school education for every child of school age to support the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child to his or her fullest potential.

Our aspiration is to ensure that Argyll and Bute is the best place in Scotland for our children to grow up. Our vision is that together we will realise **ambition**, **excellence** and **equality** for all. Our vision sends a signal about the importance we attach to education, is simple in message and is recognised by everyone. This vision is effectively conveyed in this illustration:



The Education vision is underpinned by our values: **respect**, **openness** and **fairness**. This vision is being delivered for all our children through the following 6 key objectives.

We will:

- Raise educational attainment and achievement for all;
- Use performance information to secure improvement for children and young people;
- Ensure children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed;
- Equip young people to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life;
- Ensure high quality partnership working and community engagement;
- Strengthen leadership at all levels.

2021 saw the publication of an independent review by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which was commissioned by the Scottish Government. The OECD report, *Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence: Into the Future*, identified a number of strengths and areas for development which resulted in a number of recommendations of which the Scottish Government accepted. A further independent report in response to the OECD recommendations around the structural and functional change of the Scottish Qualifications Authority and Education Scotland was commissioned by the Scottish Government. Professor Ken Muir's report, *Putting Learners at the Centre: Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education*, gathered a wide range of stakeholder views to formulate 21 recommendations to simplify the policy and organisation infrastructure to place children, young people and practitioners at the heart of education in Scotland.

The 2016 Education service vision and strategy document, *Our Children, Their Future*, provided Argyll and Bute with a coherent framework to ensure high level objectives to deliver a vision of excellence and equity for our children and young people. Against the current backdrop of significant educational change, the service will embrace the exciting opportunity to embark on a

refresh of *Our Children, Their Future* in collaboration with stakeholders during the life of this plan to ensure we are aligned with national changes in education as well as capitalising on our learning in the recovery and renewal phase post-COVID-19.

3.2 The Geography, Population and Demographic Profile of Argyll and Bute

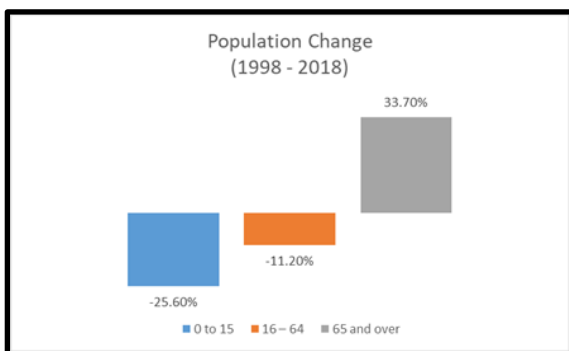
Argyll and Bute, the second largest Local Authority by area, covers approximately 9% of the total land area of Scotland. Argyll and Bute has the third sparsest population density (0.12 persons per hectare). The population of around 86,000 is distributed across an area of just under 2,700 square miles. It is approximately 100 miles long from the Isle of Coll in the north to Southend in Kintyre and 90 miles wide from Bridge of Orchy in the east to the Isle of Tiree in the west.

More than half of Argyll and Bute's population live in rural areas, as classified by the Scottish Government's Urban-Rural Classification (2016). A further 35% live in communities with populations between 3,000 and 10,000 people, designated as small towns. Less than a fifth of the population live in an urban area with a population of over 10,000 people.

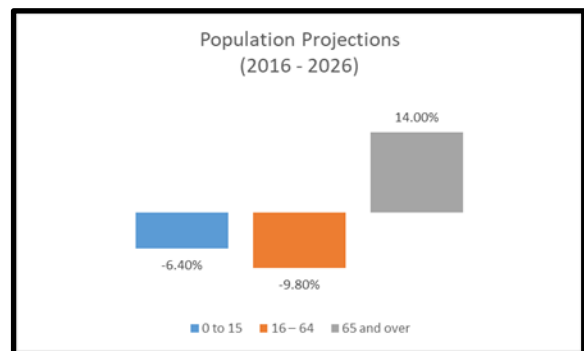
Argyll and Bute is an area of outstanding natural beauty with mountains, sea lochs, and 23 inhabited islands. The geography provides challenges for service delivery, particularly in communications and transport.

The decline in population experienced to date, and that projected in the future, presents a significant challenge to the overall viability of the area. This challenge is made more difficult by the variation in population changes over the areas within our Local Authority.

**Argyll and Bute Population Change
1998-2018**



**Argyll and Bute Population Projections
2016-2026**



In addition to the changes in total population, the demographic balance is also changing. The table below shows the change in population in relation to age cohorts projected for 2016 to 2026 and also the changes in demographics from 1998 to 2018.

Argyll and Bute Population - Percentage total by age

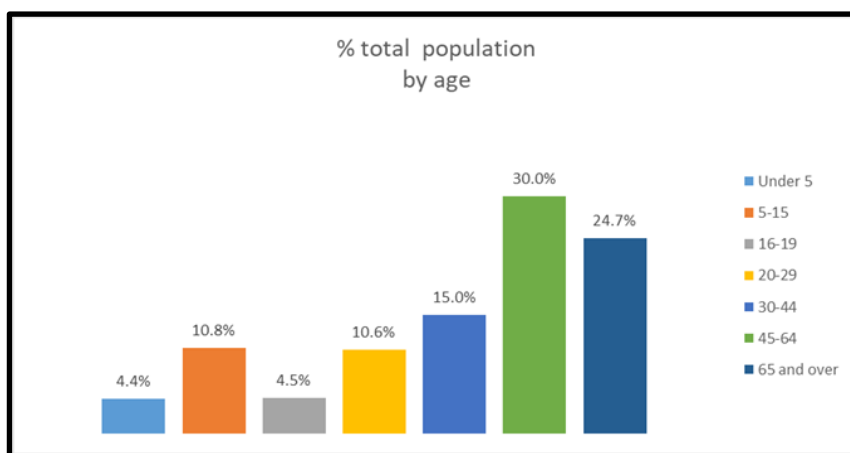


Table 1: Argyll and Bute's Population (NRS Mid-2016 Small Area Population Estimates for 2011 Data Zones)

More people living longer is a real success. However, demographic changes do create a number of challenges for us in Argyll and Bute. These challenges range from:

- Changes to service delivery requirements for Community Planning Partnership partners;
- The availability of people to join the overall workforce;
- A smaller pool of people creating wealth; and
- How to enhance the economic or community contribution made by people.

3.3 Multiple Deprivation in Argyll and Bute

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) is the official tool for identifying and comparing deprivation levels across Scotland. SIMD identifies small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across all of Scotland in a consistent way. It allows effective targeting of policies and funding where the aim is to tackle deprivation. The SIMD is produced in terms of data zones, with data zones being ranked from 1 (most deprived) to 6,976 (least deprived).

SIMD calculates deprivation across seven 'domains':

- Income
- Employment
- Health
- Education, Skills and Training
- Access to Services
- Housing
- Crime

Levels of deprivation in each domain are calculated using a selection of indicators. Relative levels of deprivation are then calculated on the basis of weighting and combining the individual deprivation domains. The highest weightings are given to the Income and Employment Domains (28% each). The Access (to Services) domain, which affects more data zones in Argyll and Bute than any of the other domains, has a relatively low weighting in the Overall index (9%).

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) has been used to identify pockets of overall deprivation within Argyll and Bute. Based on the SIMD 2020, 10 data zones in Argyll and Bute are in the 15% most overall deprived data zones in Scotland. 8 data zones are in the 15% most employment deprived data zones. In 13 of Argyll and Bute's data zones, more than 10%, are in the 1% most access deprived data zones. The most access deprived data zone in Scotland covers the islands of Coll and Tiree. Because SIMD identifies concentrations of deprivation, smaller pockets and instances of individual deprivation are not picked up by the index.

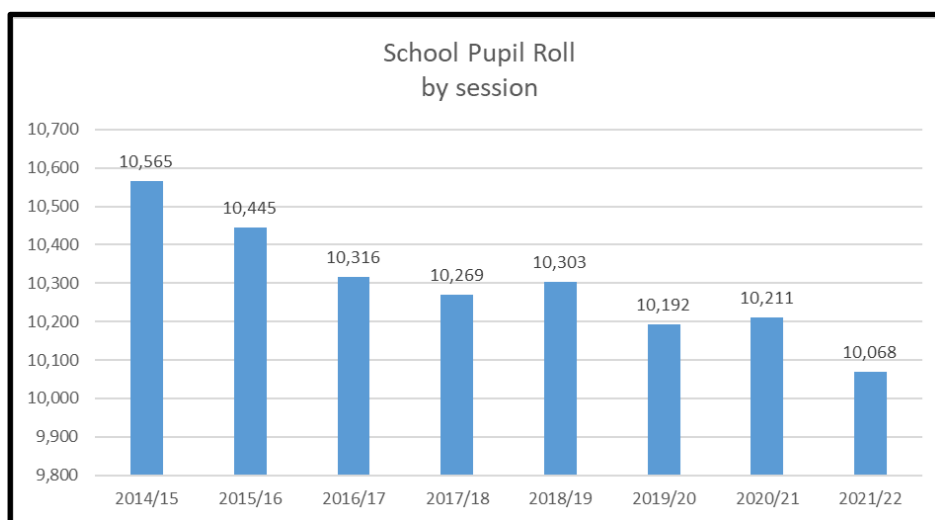
3.4 Supporting all of our Children and Young People

The Education Service is currently responsible for:

- Sixty-five primary schools;
- Four 3-18 schools;
- Five secondary schools;
- One joint campus;
- One school for pupils with complex additional needs; and
- Three Early Learning and Childcare centres

All schools, with the exception of one very small primary school, have a Parent Council as anticipated and defined within the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006.

Pupil Roll in Argyll and Bute



Early Learning and Childcare Provision

Figures at May 2022

There are 1,501 3 and 4 year old children accessing 2,442 Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) places across a broad range of ELC establishments, with approximately 134 children sharing their ELC hours across more than one setting.

Early Learning and Childcare spaces are currently available in 4 Council Nursery Centres, 49 ELC settings, 4 ELC Gaelic classes, 22 voluntary, privately and independently managed ELC establishments, 3 outdoor nurseries (two voluntary and one Local Authority) and 29 funded partner childminders.

In the voluntary, privately and independently managed ELC establishments, 592 spaces are currently being used by 3 and 4 year old children.

In addition, 74 children are receiving Early Learning and Childcare as a 2 year old under the Children and Young People Act criteria (28 with partner providers, 41 with the Local Authority, and 4 with partner childminders).

Early Learning and Childcare is available within 49 services, provided in schools and managed by Head Teachers. The largest services are supported by Lead Childcare and Education Workers. The 4 stand-alone nurseries are managed by Heads of Centre, supported by lead practitioners within each provision. The outdoor nursery is managed by a Peripatetic Head of Centre, supported by a senior manager.

Community Learning Service

The Community Learning team is part of Community Learning and Development (CLD) in Argyll and Bute. The team supports adults and young people to identify their own individual and collective goals to engage in learning and take action to bring about change for themselves and their communities. The Scottish Government's National Performance Framework sets out the strategic priorities for Community Learning:

- Learning, personal development and active citizenship; and
- Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential and inclusive communities.

As part of the budget planning process for 2020/2021, it was agreed to transfer the Community Learning Service from Education to Live Argyll. Live Argyll is a charitable company set up by Argyll and Bute Council to deliver a range of services including libraries, leisure facilities, Active Schools, archives, museums, sport development, halls, community centres and community lets.

The transfer of the Community Learning Service to Live Argyll was completed on the 30th June 2021 and the Trust has been responsible for the delivery of work with young people, work with adults and leading the production and implementation of the Argyll and Bute CLD Strategic Partnership Plan 2021-2024.

There are common priorities shared by Education and Community Learning relating to areas such as volunteer development, literacy, health and wellbeing, community engagement, work with young people and incorporating the youth voice which have been enhanced by the move, leading to a better delivery of services to young people.

Contractual management arrangements are well established, with regular reports and scrutiny of performance via the Community Services Committee. An Education Manager ensures that effective links continue between Education and Live Argyll (Community Learning). Regular meetings between Live Argyll and Education ensure shared objectives and goals are achieved through effective communication and collaboration.

Support for Children and Young People with Severe and Complex Needs

A range of provisions to support the needs of children and young people, identified as having severe and complex needs, as described in the Additional Support for Learning (ASL) Act are available across a number of schools within the Authority.

The majority of children and young people with additional support needs, including those with complex needs, access their education provision in their local Early Learning and Childcare centre or mainstream school.

The Pupil Support Service and Educational Psychology Service provide advice, guidance and training for staff on meeting additional support needs in mainstream settings, as well as offering guidance on the implementation of effective universal early intervention approaches. In addition, these services work alongside partner agencies, following the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) practice model, to provide direct support for pupils and families as required.

The availability of learning centres in most geographical areas of Argyll and Bute allows the availability of an individualised and enhanced curriculum to better meet the needs of the children and young people within their community.

Gaelic Medium Education

Gaelic Medium Education (GME) is available in five Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) provisions: Bowmore in Islay, Rockfield in Oban, Salen in Mull, Sandbank in Dunoon and Tiree. GME is available in 7 primary schools: Bowmore, Rockfield, Salen, Bunessan, Strath of Appin, Sandbank and Tiree High School (primary department). The pupil roll in each Gaelic Medium (GM) provision is growing, with Salen Primary School and Tiree Primary School having more pupils learning through the medium of Gaelic than English.

There is continuity and progression of language skills from primary to secondary in the associated secondary establishments: Islay High, Oban High, Tobermory High, Tiree High and Dunoon Grammar School. Four secondary establishments provide a fluent and learner pathway for students and one provides a fluent pathway only. Several of the secondary schools have used the skills of their existing staff to deliver other curricular areas through the medium of Gaelic, with further plans to extend this opportunity through the use of digital technology, allowing pupils to access learning experiences in schools other than their own.

All educational primary establishments providing GME regularly review their Curriculum Rationale, which details the bespoke requirements for young people learning through the medium of Gaelic and the need to create an ethos of Gaelic across the whole school. Secondary schools delivering GME have started to develop a bespoke rationale. School Improvement Plans include a designated section detailing specific GM priorities, targets and how they will be overtaken across the school session. These priorities align with Argyll and Bute's Gaelic Language Plan 2019-2025. Attainment data for GM pupils is tracked separately and the data is shared with the Education Authority to ensure a parity of quality assurance with English Medium provision. The resulting information is used to plan next steps in improvement within each provision and, collectively, as an Education Authority.

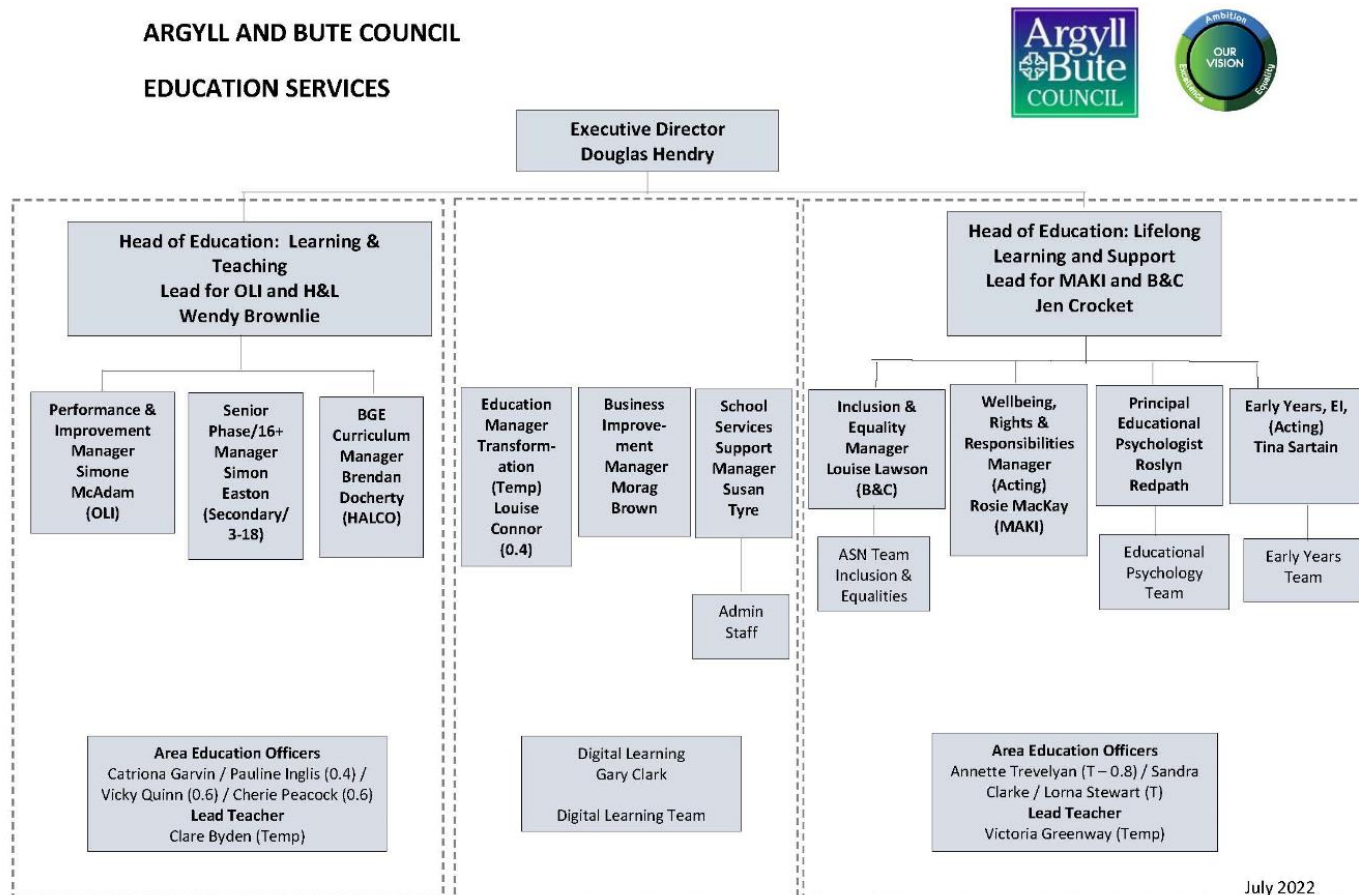
Gaelic Medium staff, across all sectors, are offered professional learning opportunities specific to GME each academic session – some delivered at an Argyll and Bute level and others at a national level. School Leadership Teams have an annual ‘business meeting’ with the Education Officer responsible for Gaelic to discuss school improvement strategies specific to GME.

3.5 Resourcing Our Plan: The Education Budget

The 2022/2023 budget for Community Services, Education is £92,153,164 as per Service Business Outcomes.

Service Business Outcomes		2022/23 Budget (£)
BO106	Our looked after young people are supported by effective corporate parenting	1,783,639
BO107	The support and lifestyle needs of our children, young people, and their families are met	8,114,216
BO108	All our children and young people are supported to realise their potential	81,822,094
BO116	We engage and work with our customers, staff and partners	33,333
BO117	We encourage creativity and innovation to ensure our workforce is fit for the future	35,215
BO999	Central/Management Costs	364,667
	Total	92,153,164

3.6 Education Service: Organisation Chart



This continues to be a time of significant change and challenge for Education Services. The ongoing impact of the global pandemic, the pace of change, the drive to improve services and the financial context combine to place increasing demands on the delivery of education. Scottish Education has been the focus of considerable scrutiny via the findings of a number of studies and reports over the period ranging from 2020 to 2022. Most notable among them is the report *Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence - Into the Future* by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which then prompted the Scottish Government-commissioned report *Putting Learners at the Centre - Towards a Future Vision for Scottish Education* by Professor Ken Muir. The former recommends a number of important reforms across Scottish Education, from the way it is governed to the way children and young people are assessed. The latter then advised the government on the processes required to bring about such reforms.

In Argyll and Bute, we are already paving the way for such changes and introducing our own set of reforms to “future proof” our Education Services in the light of national reforms and drivers. All such reports, and the reforms which are being implemented nationally and here in Argyll and Bute, are designed to ensure the best outcomes for our children and young people. Education is the most effective means that we have to improve the life chances of our learners. As we implement this Education Strategic Plan where we look to renew, refresh and re-imagine our service delivery, in light of the challenges and opportunities presented by the pandemic and the changes which are planned for Scottish Education, the health and wellbeing of all our children and young people and ensuring each one reaches his or her potential remain at the heart of what we do.

SECTION 4: THE POLICY CONTEXT FOR SCOTTISH EDUCATION

4.1 The National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education and the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000

The 2021 document, *The National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education: Achieving Excellence and Equity*, published in December 2021, replaces the 2017 document and sets out five national priorities for Education. They are:

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

The NIF documentation goes on to define the importance of the five national priorities to planning at local level, such as that contained within the later sections of this document, and in individual school improvement plans:

Local authority and school improvement plans should inform and reflect the NIF priorities and ensure the clear line of sight between local and national expectations, with further improvement priorities at school level based on local needs and self-evaluation. (Achieving Excellence and Equity: 2022 National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan; page 12)

These five priorities are set in the context of six National Improvement Framework *Drivers of Improvement*:

- School and ELC leadership
- Teacher and practitioner professionalism
- Parent/carer involvement and engagement
- Curriculum and assessment
- School and ELC improvement
- Performance information



In addition to the National Improvement Framework, statutory guidance issued following the changes to the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, stressed a number of other important elements which should be included within local authorities' annual improvement plans, i.e.:

“Education Authorities, in carrying out their school education functions, must have due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of educational outcome experienced by pupils as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, where:

- An education authority is making a decision of a strategic nature about the carrying out of its functions relating to school education, and
- An education authority is considering what steps to take to implement such a decision.”

- Audit Scotland Report
- Early Years expansion
- Equity Audit
- COP26 UN Climate Change Conference Glasgow November 2021

These are the driving forces behind the work of Education Services, reflecting national strategies such as the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education as well as local strategies for the delivery of services in Argyll and Bute.

The **Education Strategic Plan for 2022-2024 and Recovery, Impact and Progress Report 2021-22** has been prepared in compliance with the statutory guidance set out within the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000*, Published by Scottish Government in March 2017.

It brings together a range of information from each of the areas of the Education Service in Argyll and Bute. This reaffirms our shared vision for Education Services of **ambition**, **excellence** and **equality** for all. Our strategy for realising our shared vision is best explained by showing how our 6 key objectives link to each of the national drivers and improvement priorities.

Key National and Local Priorities and Drivers

National Improvement Framework (NIF) Key Priorities	National Improvement Framework (NIF) Key Drivers for Improvement	Our Children, Their Future Key Objectives
Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.	School and ELC leadership Teacher and practitioner professionalism Parent/carer involvement and engagement Curriculum and assessment School and ELC improvement Performance information	Ensure children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.		Ensure high quality partnership working and community engagement.
Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.		Use performance information to secure improvement for all children and young people.
Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.		Equip young people to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life.
Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.		Raise educational attainment and achievement for all.
		Strengthen leadership at all levels.

SECTION FIVE: ADDRESSING KEY ELEMENTS OF THE NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK

The following section of the plan details the progress that we have made in achieving key strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework - raising attainment and narrowing the poverty-related attainment gap, including through our use of Pupil Equity Funding (PEF), in meeting our statutory duties of reducing inequalities.

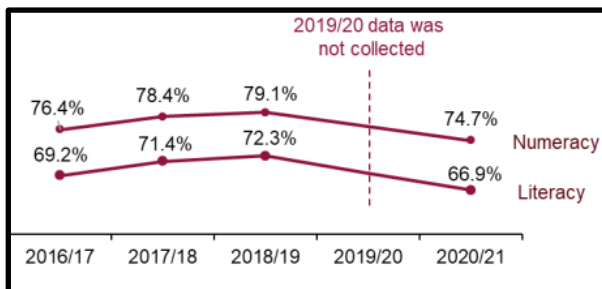
5.1 Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns, collection and publication of Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL) was cancelled in 2019/2020. ACEL data collation and publication was resumed for the 2020/2021 school year for Primary 1, 4 and 7, but was not resumed for S3. At a national level, achievement of a level in 2020/2021 shows decreased levels of attainment in Literacy and Numeracy.

National Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL) Data for Combined P1, 4 and 7 - Literacy and Numeracy

National ACEL Data for P1, 4 and 7

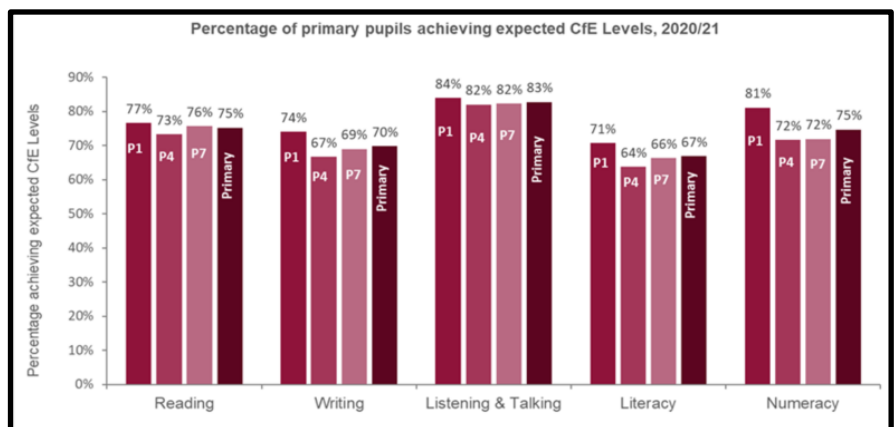
National ACEL Data 2020/21



This graphic illustrates the percentage of primary pupils across Scotland achieving the expected levels of attainment in Literacy and Numeracy. The proportion of primary school pupils achieving expected levels has decreased by 5.4 percentage points for literacy and 4.4 percentage points for numeracy in June 2021 compared to the June 2019 data.

National ACEL Data 2020/21 by Stage and Organiser

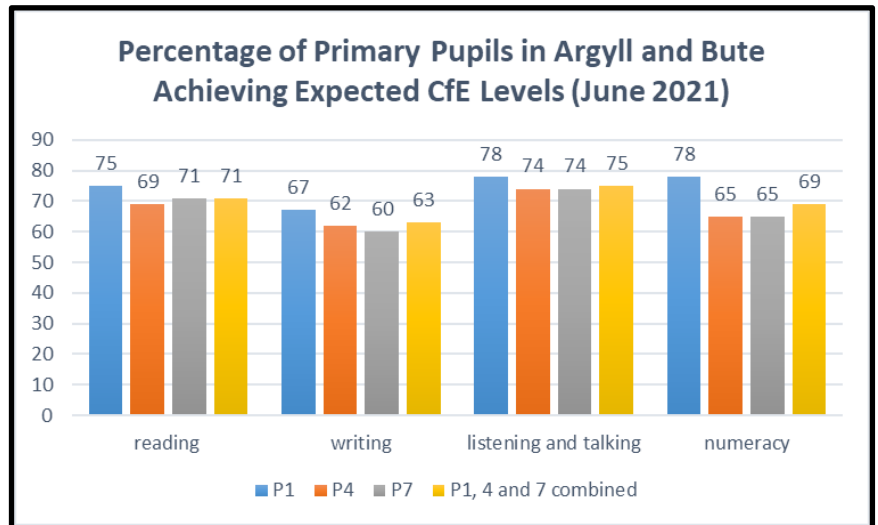
The information in this supplementary graph shows the percentage of pupils nationally who have achieved expected levels by primary stage and curricular organiser.



Argyll and Bute ACEL Data for Literacy and Numeracy

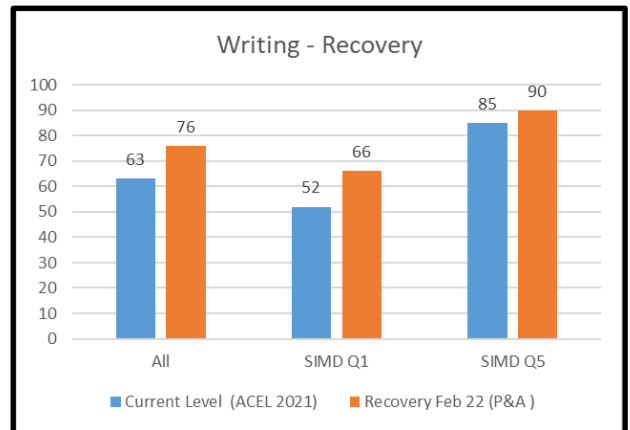
Argyll and Bute Percentage of Primary Pupils Achieving Expected CfE Levels June 2021

Across Argyll and Bute, we are seeing the impact of COVID-19 and the subsequent lockdowns, leading to remote learning for pupils, on 2020/2021 ACEL data with children achieving below national levels. In particular, the national data is showing that pupils in rural areas performed less well than pupils from urban areas. This points to a possible impact of connectivity and access to services that families in rural areas experience.



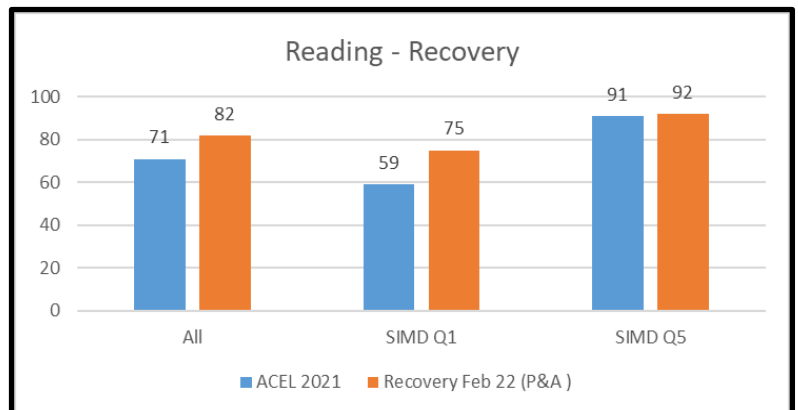
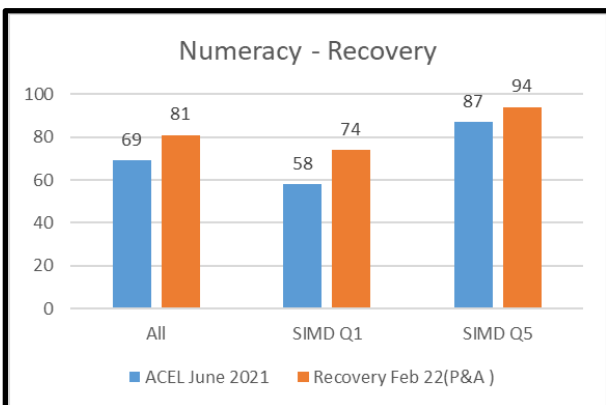
Argyll and Bute Progress and Achievement Writing June 2021 - February 2022

Tracking and monitoring of pupils' attainment has continued through the lockdowns and, although we predicted to see a drop in attainment for ACEL levels due to COVID-19, the Service was continuing to plan for recovery and renewal. In the monitoring periods since the June 2020/2021 ACEL data uplift, we are seeing a recovery of attainment across all stages.



Argyll and Bute Progress and Achievement Numeracy June 2021 - February 2022

Argyll and Bute Progress and Achievement Reading June 2021-February 2022

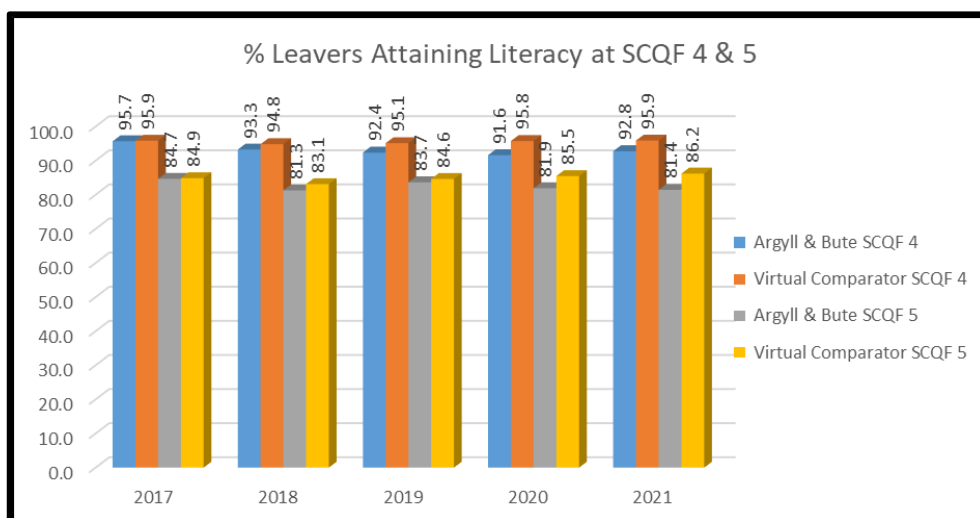


Secondary Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy (Senior Phase)

Assessment of young people’s attainment in the Senior Phase was affected by COVID-19 in both 2020 and 2021. On both occasions, examinations did not take place and awards were based on teacher professional judgement through the Scottish Qualifications Authority’s Alternative Certification Model. In both years, the processes of moderation, verification and support put in place by the council to ensure accuracy and consistency in awards were identified as being of high quality by Education Scotland.

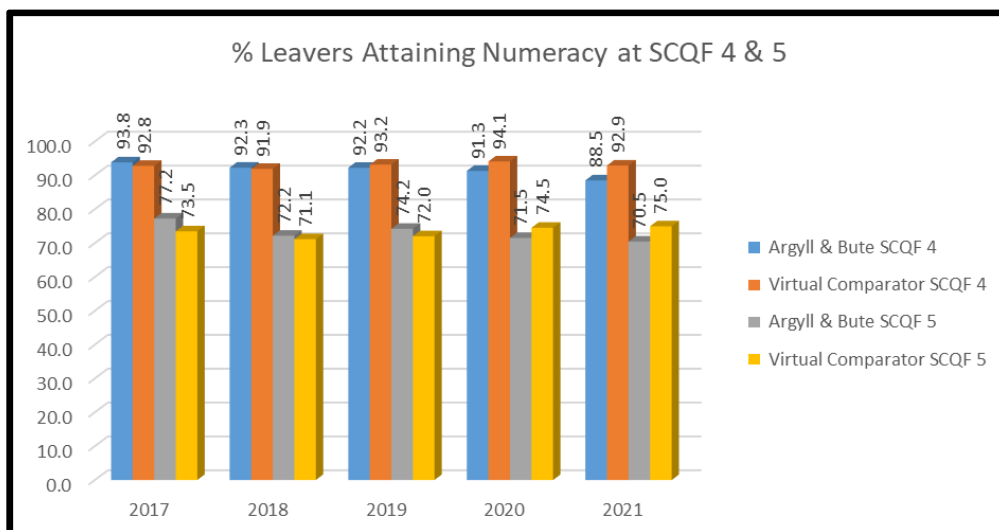
The following graphs demonstrate different aspects of the attainment of young people in Argyll and Bute, compared with previous years and groups of comparable candidates around the country (virtual comparator).

Argyll and Bute School Leavers Attaining Literacy at SCQF 4 and 5



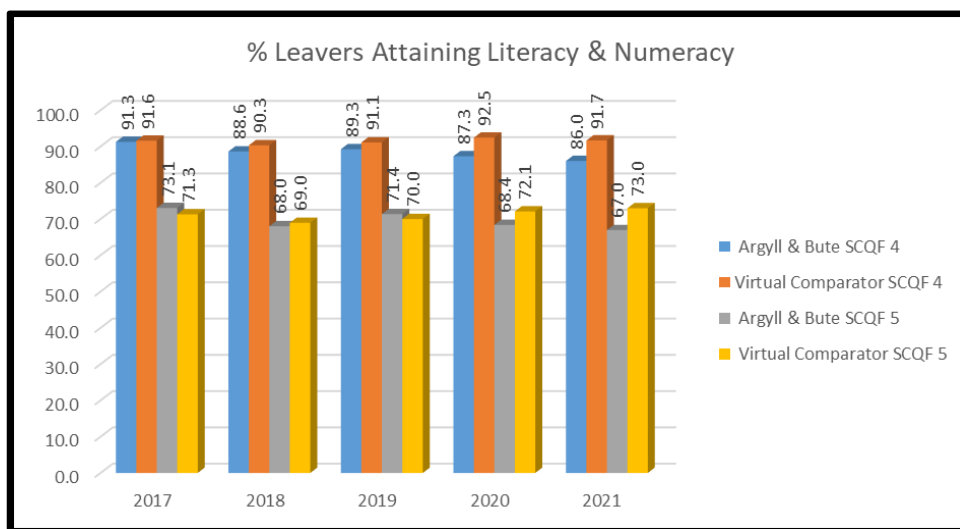
In 2021, the percentage of young people in Argyll and Bute leaving school having achieved Literacy at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 4 and 5 was below the Virtual Comparator for both measures. At SCQF Level 4 Literacy, the gap between the attainment of young people in Argyll and Bute and the Virtual Comparator decreased slightly between 2020 and 2021.

Argyll and Bute School Leavers Attaining Numeracy at SCQF 4 and 5



In 2021, the percentage of young people in Argyll and Bute leaving school having achieved Numeracy at SCQF levels 4 and 5 was below the Virtual Comparator for both measures.

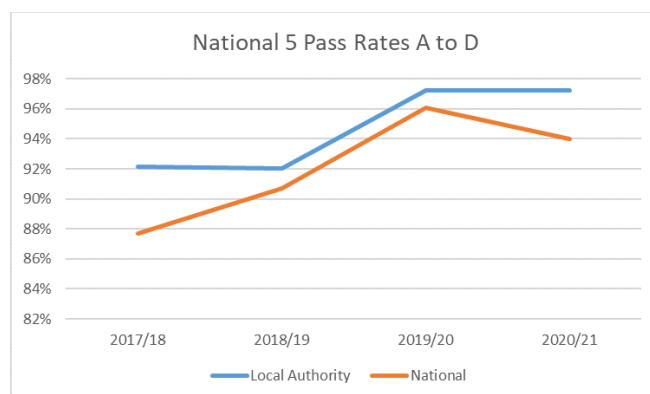
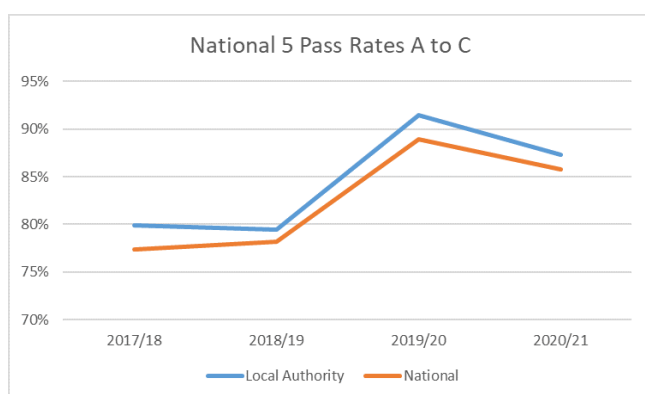
Argyll and Bute School Leavers Attaining Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF 4 and 5



In 2021, the percentage of young people in Argyll and Bute leaving school having achieved both Literacy and Numeracy at SCQF levels 4 and 5 was below the Virtual Comparator for both measures.

Outcomes in National Qualifications – 2018-2021

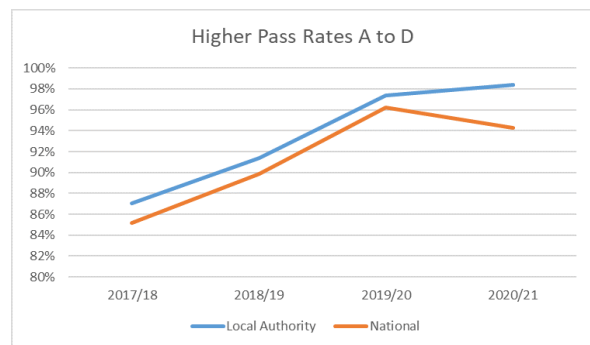
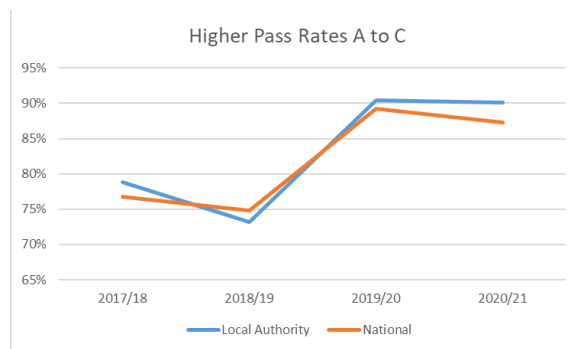
Argyll and Bute National 5 Pass Rates



National 5 A-C and A-D pass rates in Argyll and Bute remain above the national average. This continues the trend of the past four years. In 2021, the A-C pass rate followed the national trend of a slight fall from 2020, while the A-D pass rate in Argyll and Bute remained steady, despite a fall in the national figure.

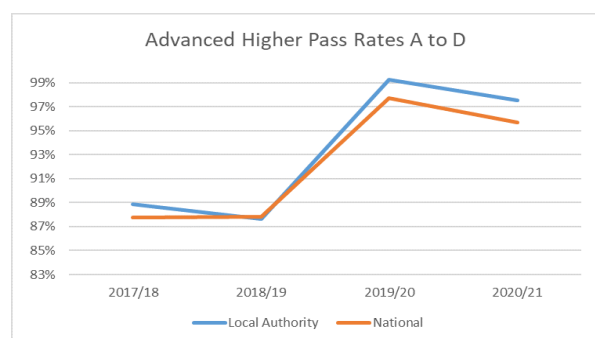
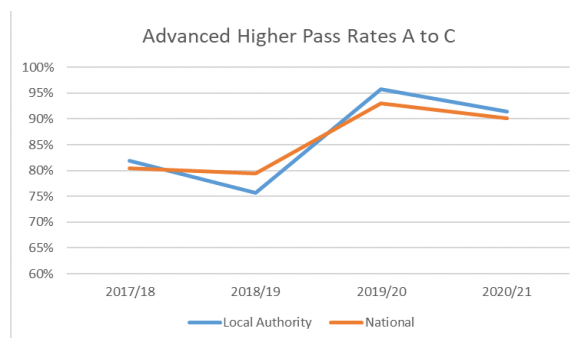
Higher

Argyll and Bute Higher Pass Rates



At both A-C and A-D, Higher pass rates in Argyll and Bute remain above the national average. Neither followed the national trend of a fall in the pass rate, with A-C pass rates remaining constant and A-D pass rates increasing.

Argyll and Bute Advanced Higher Pass Rates



Advanced Higher pass rates in Argyll and Bute for 2021 fell slightly in both A-C and A-D measures, this is in line with the national trend and can be amplified by the small numbers of pupils represented. Both pass rates remain above the national average.

5.2 Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children

Since the publication of the Scottish Attainment Challenge 5 Year Impact Report, Argyll and Bute Council has put measures in place to aid recovery and improve attainment. Due to the ongoing adverse effects of the pandemic in 2021 and resulting lockdowns, Argyll and Bute experienced a dip in attainment and a widening of the poverty related attainment gap in some areas. The Progress and Achievement (P&A) data uplift in February 2022 illustrated an increase in attainment and a narrowing of the poverty related gap. The information from the Progress and Achievement data set from February 2022 is reported further below.

We are committed to addressing these issues by developing the data analytical, evaluation and quality improvement skills of staff so evidence-based decisions resulting in the raising of attainment can be made. This approach forms an important element of schools approach to Pupil Equity Funding. We will see a particular focus on attainment in literacy and numeracy form part of our next steps as an Education Service.

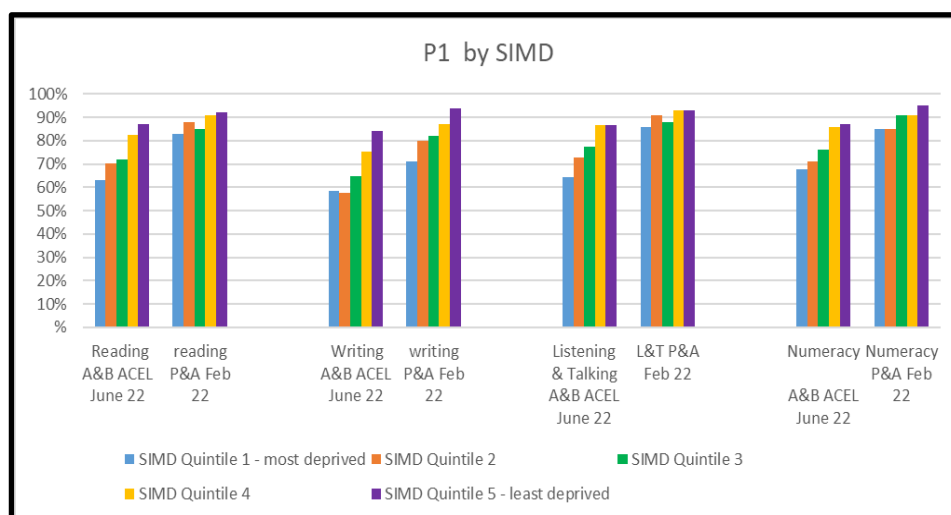
In collaboration with the Authority link Education Scotland Attainment Advisor, key strengths in our work on addressing the poverty related attainment gap have been identified as:

- A strategic and collaborative leadership approach to the Scottish Attainment Challenge, especially since 2018.
- A greatly increased awareness of and commitment to equity, both as a national priority and for its own sake. We have supported Head Teachers to have a high level of data-literacy and they apply this well to making improvements for equity.
- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, strong progress towards closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged learners in several measures, including attainment in Literacy and Numeracy in the Broad General Education, particularly in Primary 7 and in the Senior Phase, especially at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 4 and 6 had been made.
- Successes in narrowing the gaps between the most and least disadvantaged learners in relation to attendance, inclusion, and sustained positive destinations for school leavers.
- A strategic and collaborative approach to a culture of nurture to support children and young people affected by trauma, including (but not only) in the context of COVID-19. This approach includes a programme to train all Children’s Services staff in trauma-aware practices. The CECYP officer has worked very effectively with the Educational Psychology Service to bring about cultural change in this context. This programme is leading to tangible improvements for many vulnerable young people.

Pupils from lower SIMD quintiles (most deprived) are achieving less well than pupils from higher SIMD quintiles (least deprived), which is a trend that is echoed at a national level. Using the data gathered through the Education Service Progress and Achievement (P&A) tracking system, we are seeing a recovery in attainment for our pupils in lower SIMD quintiles and a smaller gap between our SIMD quintile 1 and quintile 5 pupils.

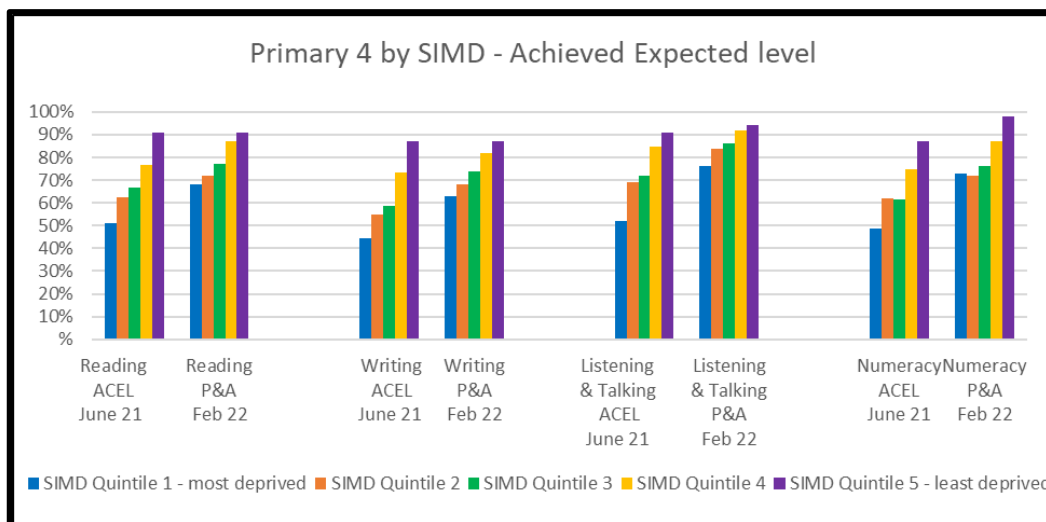
In the graphs below, you will see a comparison of data from June 2021 to February 2022 for reading, writing, listening, talking and numeracy. Each SIMD quintile is represented by a coloured bar. The data shown for February 2022 is referred to as the ‘recovery’ period. The data illustrated in the graphs below follows the same cohort of pupils who would be in Primary 1 in June 2021 and Primary 2 in February 2022.

Argyll and Bute Progress and Achievement - Primary 1 by SIMD Quintile



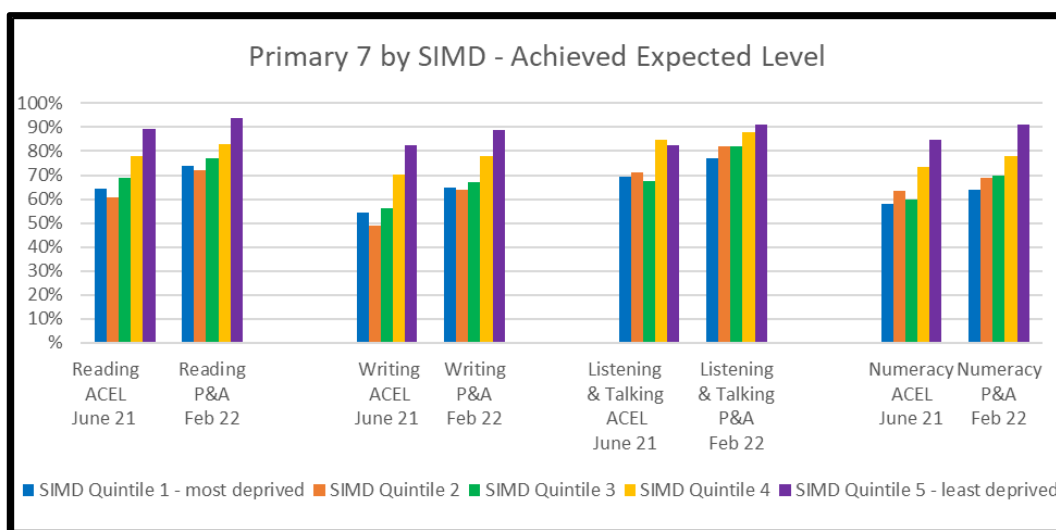
For Primary 1, the percentage of pupils achieving expected levels has increased across all organisers and SIMD quintiles. The gaps between SIMD quintile 1 and quintile 5 have reduced across almost all organisers. Although there has been recovery in writing for quintile 1, the gap between SIMD quintile 1 and 5 remains the same. SIMD quintiles 1 and 2 have shown significant recovery with an increase of 14 to 22 percentage points between June 2021 and February 2022. Attainment now shows pupils exceeding the 2021 national marker.

Argyll and Bute Progress and Achievement - Primary 4 by SIMD Quintile



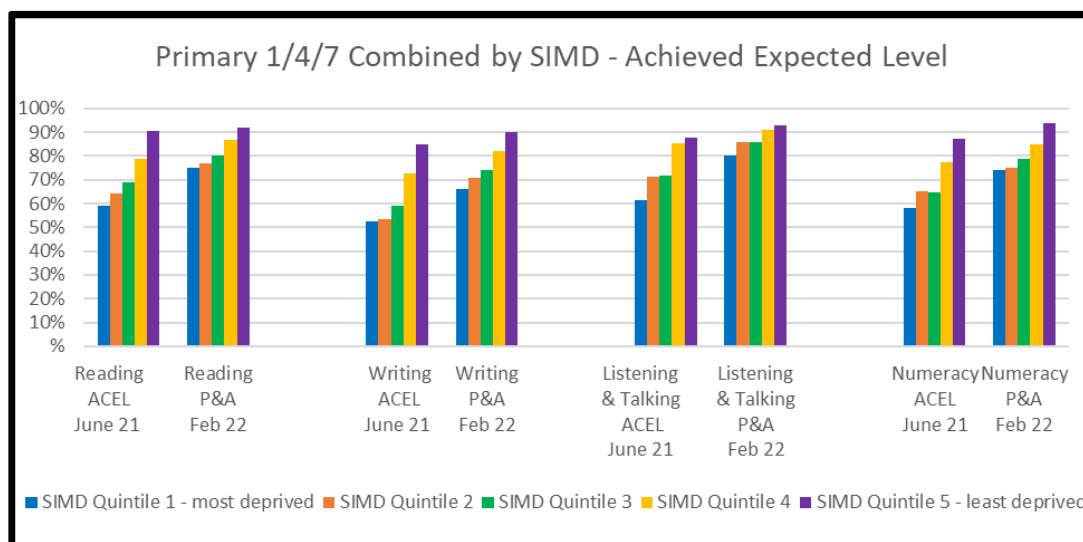
For Primary 4, the percentage of pupils achieving expected levels has increased across all organisers and almost all SIMD quintiles. The gaps between SIMD quintile 1 and quintile 5 have reduced across all organisers. Although there has been significant recovery in numeracy for quintile 1, the gap between SIMD quintile 1 and 5 remains the greatest. SIMD quintile 1 shows the greatest recovery in listening and talking, with an increase of 24 percentage points between June 2021 and February 2022. Attainment now shows pupils exceeding the 2021 national marker.

Argyll and Bute Progress and Achievement - Primary 7 by SIMD Quintile



For Primary 7, the percentage of pupils achieving expected levels has increased across all organisers and all SIMD quintiles. The gaps between SIMD quintile 1 and quintile 5 have reduced across almost all organisers. Although there has been recovery in numeracy for quintile 1, the gap between SIMD quintile 1 and 5 remains the same. SIMD quintiles 1 and 2 have shown significant recovery across the organisers, with an increase of 8 to 11 percentage points between June 2021 and February 2022.

Argyll and Bute Progress and Achievement Primary 1, 4 and 7 Combined by SIMD Quintile



The above table combines the nationally expected achieved levels for Primary 1, 4 and 7 across all 4 organisers. The table shows that the percentage of pupils achieving expected levels has increased across all organisers and all SIMD quintiles between June 2021 and February 2022. Furthermore, we can see that there has been a reduction in the attainment gap, between SIMD quintile 1 and quintile 5, for this cohort of pupils between June 2021 and February 2022 across all organisers.

As we strengthen our work towards reducing the poverty-related attainment gap, the Education Service will continue to support central staff and school leaders in comprehensive analysis of the reasons behind the real successes that are evident in reducing the poverty-related attainment gap, so that everyone may learn from what is working well and the successes can be extended to all children and young people. Working collaboratively with our Authority link Education Scotland Attainment Advisor, this will include an inward authority focus as well as looking outwards towards good practice happening nationally. We will continue to support Head Teachers in planning and evaluating Pupil Equity Fund interventions. Existing effective multi-agency approaches to supporting vulnerable young people and their families will continue to be nurtured. Embedding robust procedures for moderation of learning and assessment, tracking and monitoring learners' progress, and school improvement planning will complement our focus on reducing the poverty-related attainment gap.

Framework for Accelerating Progress - Scottish Attainment Challenge: Authority Stretch Aims

In March 2022, a refreshed plan for the Scottish Attainment Challenge was launched with the mission 'to use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty-related attainment gap'. Leadership, learning and

teaching, support for families and communities and targeted support for those impacted by poverty are the key levers in achieving this mission. The refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge also includes annual locally identified stretch aims to measure progress in recovering from the impact of COVID-19.

The Education Service worked closely with our link Education Scotland Attainment Advisor to look at collated data, both pre and post COVID-19, to develop stretch aims that are both ambitious and attainable. We worked with a Head Teacher focus group to further inform and refine our stretch aims and consulted more widely with Head Teachers at a virtual event, as well as providing the opportunity for feedback after the consultation event.

The stretch aims include six core aims, which include measures for overall progress as well as measures for narrowing the poverty-related attainment gap for 2022/2023. These core aims are:

- achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels - Literacy (P1, 4 and 7 combined)
- achievement of Curriculum for Excellence levels - Numeracy (P1, 4 and 7 combined)
- school leavers attaining 1 or more pass at SCQF level 5
- school leavers attaining 1 or more pass at SCQF level 6
- 16-19 year olds participating in education, employment or training
- attendance for pupils registered for free school meals

An additional stretch aim, referred to as a 'plus' stretch aim, which is specific to Argyll and Bute's context and data sets, was to be identified by the Authority.

Literacy (P1,4,7 Combined) Stretch Aim **DRAFT**

	Overall	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	GAP (Q1-Q5)
Current Level (ACEL June 2021)	59%	48%	81%	33pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	68.4%	60%	81.5%	21.5pp
Improvement (percentage point)	9.4pp	12pp	.5pp	11.5pp

Numeracy (P1, 4, 7 Combined) Stretch Aim **DRAFT**

	Overall	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	GAP (Q1-Q5)
Current Level (ACEL June 2021)	69%	58%	87%	29pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	75%	74%	87.5%	13.5pp
Improvement (percentage point)	6pp	16pp	.5pp	15.5pp

School Leavers with 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 5 DRAFT

	Overall	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	GAP (Q1-Q5)
Current Level (2021)	90%	85%	97%	12pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	91%	87%	98%	11pp
Improvement (percentage point)	1pp	2pp	1pp	1pp

School Leavers with 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 6 DRAFT

	Overall	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	GAP (Q1-Q5)
Current Level (June 2021)	7%	63%	90%	27pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	71%	64%	90.5%	27pp
Improvement (percentage point)	1pp	1pp	.5pp	.5pp

* Although stretch aims do not indicate significant improvement, due to an alternative certification model data from 2021 shows improvement from pre-COVID-19 data and a reduction in the poverty-related attainment gap. Securing this improvement is what the aim illustrates.

Participation Measure - 16-19 year olds in Education, Training and Employment DRAFT

	Overall	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	GAP (Q1-Q5)
Current Level (June 2021)	93.5%	90.6%	93%	2.4pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	94%	92%	94%	2pp
Improvement (percentage point)	.5pp	1.4pp	1pp	.4pp

Attendance Primary - Free School Meal registered and Non Free School Meal Registered

DRAFT

	Overall	FSM registered	Non FSM registered	GAP (FSM/non FSM)
Current Level (June 2021)	95.54%	92.55%	96.06%	3.51pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	96%	93%	96.06%	3.06pp
Improvement (percentage point)	.46pp	.45pp	0pp	.45pp

Attendance Secondary- Free School Meal registered and Non Free School Meal Registered

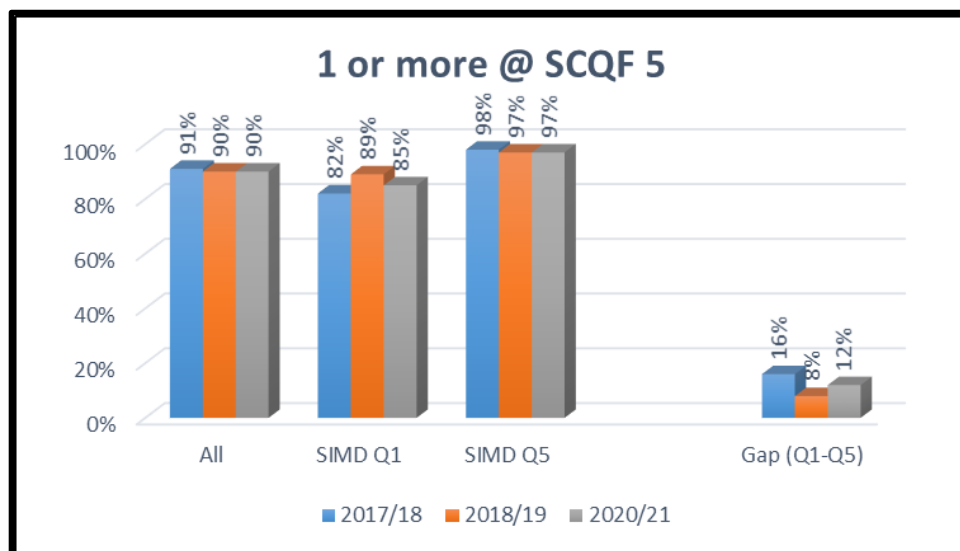
DRAFT

	Overall	FSM registered	Non FSM registered	GAP (FSM/non FSM)
Current Level (June 2021)	92.1%	86.83%	92.83%	6pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	93%	87.4%	93%	5.6pp
Improvement (percentage point)	.9pp	.57pp	.17pp	.4pp

Addressing the Attainment Gap in the Senior Phase

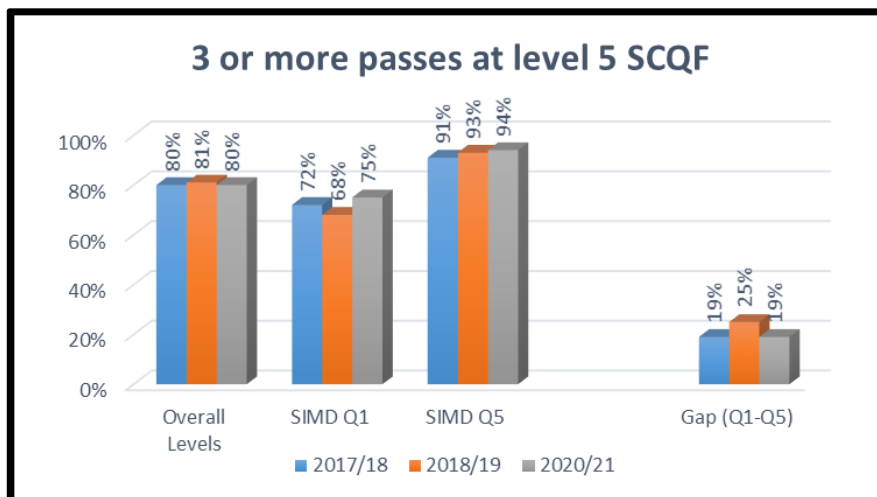
The following three graphs demonstrate key aspects of Argyll and Bute pupils' attainment in National Qualifications, in relation to their relative levels of deprivation as measured by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). Quintile 1 (Q1) represents the young people from the most deprived backgrounds, while quintile 5 (Q5) represents pupils from the least deprived backgrounds.

Argyll and Bute One or More SCQF Level 5 National Qualifications



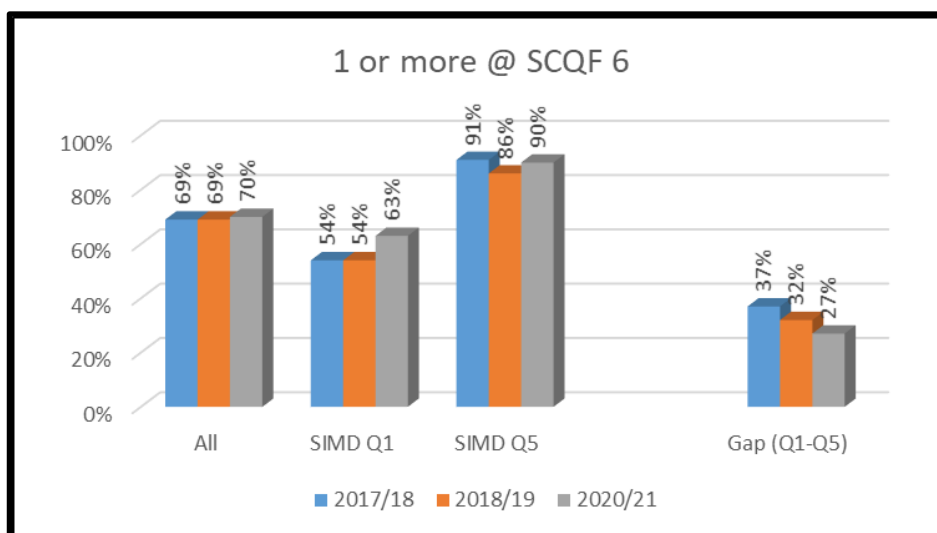
The above graph relates to candidates who achieved at least one National 5/SCQF 5 qualification. In 2021, 85% of pupils from the most deprived backgrounds achieved at least one qualification at SCQF 5, 12% less than the figure for the least deprived cohort. Although this gap has fluctuated over the last three years, the overall trend is a reduction in this attainment gap.

Argyll and Bute Three or More SCQF Level 5 National Qualifications



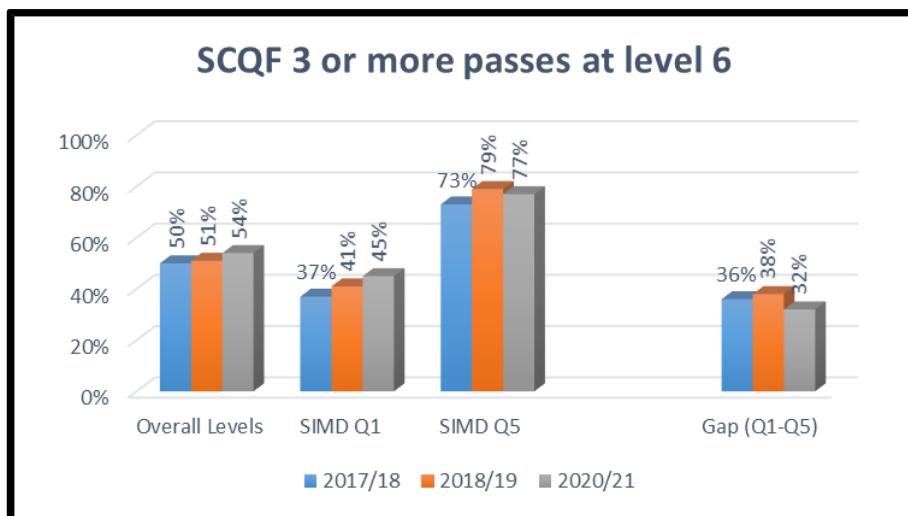
For young people in Argyll and Bute attaining at least three National 5/SCQF 5 passes, the attainment gap is also reducing - 19% in 2021 as opposed to 25% in 2020 - and the number of young people in both Q1 and Q5 achieving three passes is increasing. The recovery in 2021, both in terms of increasing passes and a falling attainment gap, despite the ongoing pandemic, points to the effectiveness of the support provided by schools during COVID-19 to the most vulnerable young people.

Argyll and Bute One or More SCQF Level 6 National Qualifications



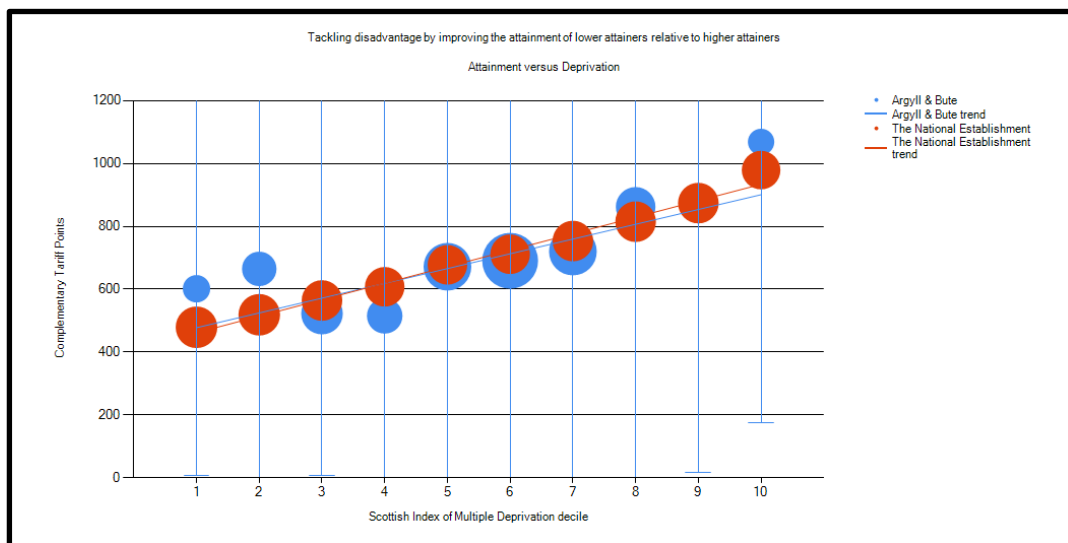
The above table relates to pupils achieving one or more passes at Higher/SCQF 6. It can be seen that the attainment gap has been reducing steadily over the last three years, and that 2021 saw a significant increase in the number of young people in Q1 gaining at least one higher pass. This can be attributed to the work done by schools to offer young people more varied and personalised learning pathways, therefore maximising attainment.

Argyll and Bute Three or More SCQF Level 6 National Qualifications



Three passes at Higher/SCQF 6 represents an aspirational level of attainment for many young people, particularly those from the least advantaged backgrounds. The above graph demonstrates a year-on-year increase in the number of pupils in Q1 achieving this level of attainment, and a reducing trend in the attainment gap can also be seen.

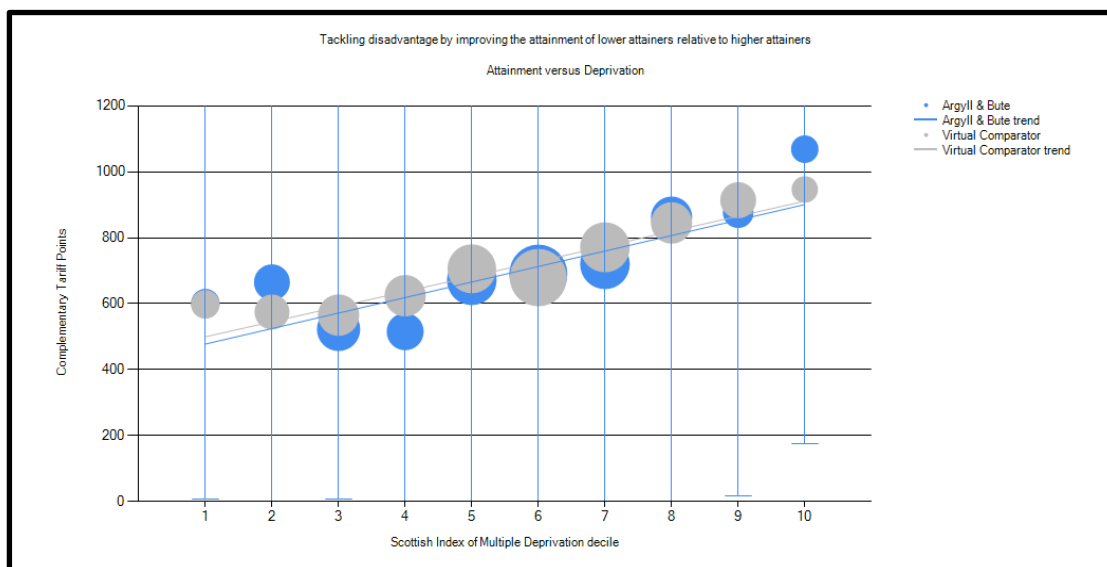
Argyll and Bute and National Average Tariff Points



Summary:

The 2021 data in the graph above shows the average tariff points (points allocated to pupil exam attainment) achieved by pupils in each of the 10 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) pupil groups in Argyll and Bute, compared with the national data. Group (decile) 1 represents the most disadvantaged pupils, while decile 10 represents the least disadvantaged. Argyll and Bute candidates in SIMD deciles 1 and 2 are outperforming young people nationally, indicating the effective provision to and support for the least advantaged and most vulnerable young people in Argyll and Bute. In SIMD deciles 3 and 4, young people’s performance in Argyll and Bute was marginally below the average national level. The overall trend in Argyll and Bute is almost identical to the national trend.

Argyll and Bute and Comparator Average Tariff Points



Summary:

The 2021 data in the graph above shows the average tariff points achieved by pupils in each of the 10 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) cohorts in Argyll and Bute compared with the Virtual Comparator data – pupils from similar backgrounds across Scotland. Again, pupils in SIMD 1 and 2 are matching or outperforming their Virtual Comparator equivalents, while pupils in SIMD 3 and 4 are not matching the attainment of the Virtual Comparator pupils. The overall trend in Argyll and Bute is, again, almost identical to the Virtual Comparator trend.

Attainment of Care Experienced Young People

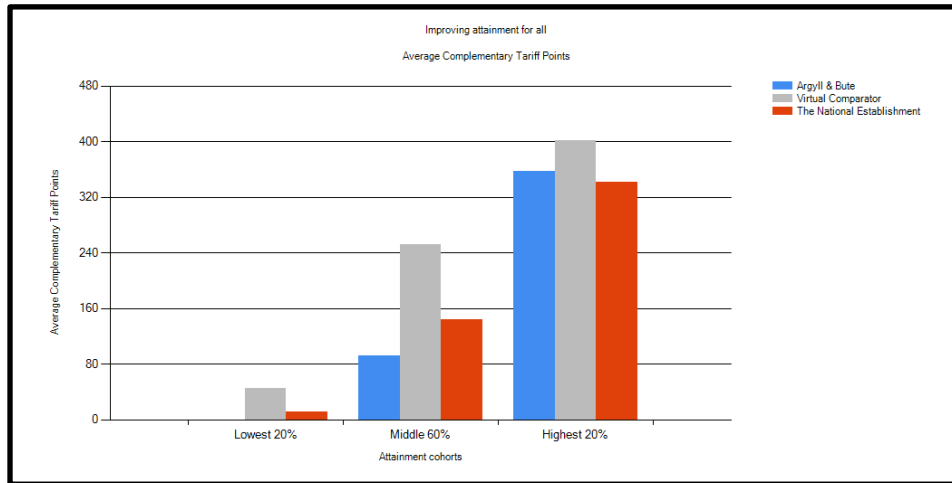
In Argyll and Bute, we recognise the obstacles that our care-experienced young people can encounter in their education, and track their progress carefully, intervening appropriately to support their wellbeing, progress and attainment.

As a Service, we identified areas for improvement within the attainment of our care-experienced pupils. In session 2021/2022, the Principal Teacher for Care Experienced Young People worked with schools to implement interventions to improve young people's attainment and achievement. This included working closely with the Educational Psychology Team to provide training on attachment to support schools to employ appropriate interventions at the right time for pupils. Additionally, Health and Wellbeing Liaison workers have worked closely with schools to apply bespoke interventions, like Suzanne Zeedyk's Teddy Bear Policy, to support the wellbeing of all pupils with particular impact for care-experienced young people. The data from 2021 was used to identify areas of risk and focus within the 2021/22 Education Service Plan. Identified outcomes, interventions and performance measures relating to this cohort will be used to support progress appropriate to each care-experienced young person.

The impact of these interventions, specifically the measures undertaken within the spending plans relating to the Scottish Government Care Experienced Fund Grant, are already visible, particularly in terms of the positive destinations being achieved by care-experienced young people (see 5.4 below). The outcomes will be reviewed and adapted in line with long-term strategic planning and will inform the 2022-2024 iteration of the plan.

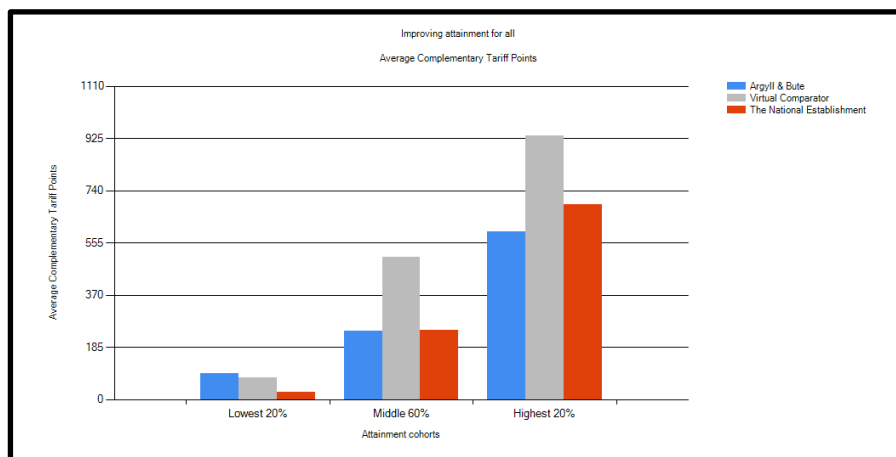
Care-experienced pupils represent a very small percentage of the whole pupil cohort, and therefore the statistics from year-to-year can vary significantly depending on the personal circumstances of individual young people.

Argyll and Bute S4 Average Tariff Points - Care Experienced Young People



The graph above demonstrates that, in S4 in 2021, the highest attaining 20% of care-experienced young people in Argyll and Bute have performed better than the national average and almost as well as the Virtual Comparator cohort. The middle-attaining 60% of care-experienced young people did not attain as highly as their peers nationally or within the Virtual Comparator. There were no results for any care-experienced young people in the lowest 20% of attainment, which can be attributed to the personal circumstances of perhaps a single candidate.

Argyll and Bute S5 Average Tariff Points - Care Experienced Young People

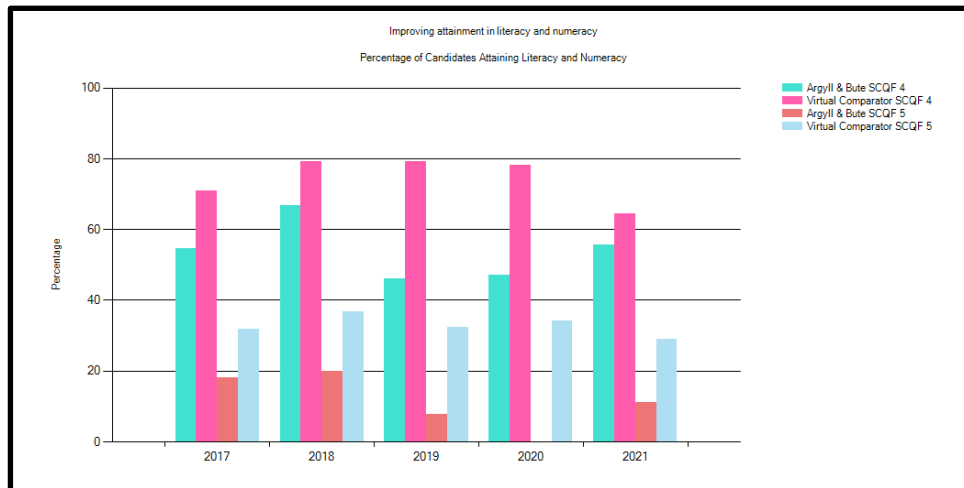


In S5, our most able care-experienced young people attained below both the Virtual Comparator and the national average. The middle 60% of attainers matched the national average, but were below the Virtual Comparator, while our lowest attaining care-experienced pupils outperformed their national and Virtual Comparator peers.

Attainment of Care Experienced Young People in Literacy and Numeracy (S4 and S5)

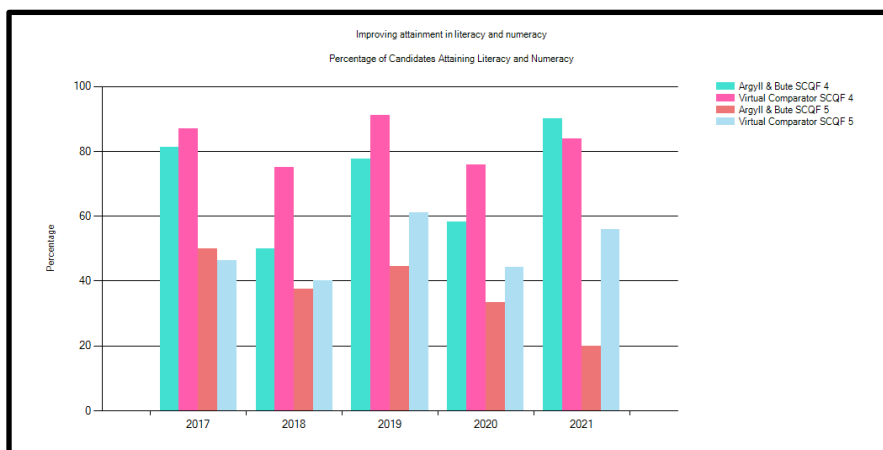
The graphs below illustrate the percentage of care-experienced young people who, in 2021, achieved both Literacy and Numeracy qualifications at SCQF levels 4 and 5 (equivalent to National 4 and National 5). The fact that the cohort of young people analysed is so small makes it difficult to attach significance to the trends over time noted below.

Argyll and Bute S4 SCQF 4 and 5 Attainment Literacy and Numeracy - Care Experienced Young People



In S4, it can be seen that the performance of our care-experienced young people in Literacy and Numeracy was lower than the Virtual Comparator level, although the gap at both SCQF 4 and 5 decreased in 2021.

Argyll and Bute S5 SCQF 4 and 5 Attainment Literacy and Numeracy - Care Experienced Young People



In S5, the 2021 attainment of our care-experienced young people in Literacy and Numeracy was above the Virtual Comparator, and the highest for five years at SCQF 4, but well below the Virtual Comparator at S5.

5.2 Improvements in children and young people's health and wellbeing

Effective interventions have continued to be delivered to support the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people across Argyll and Bute. The Educational Psychology Service has continued to lead *Our Children, Their Nurturing Education (OCTNE)* with a second cohort of schools enrolling in the programme in November 2021 and a third cohort, focusing on Early Years establishments beginning in April 2022. Leadership training has been developed to ensure that practitioners have appropriate professional learning in attachment, brain development and improvement science to ensure they are able to develop robust, evidence based whole-school approaches that are unique to their context.

There are now 29 schools engaging with OCTNE, with 5 already having achieved bronze accreditation (nurture committed) and 2 having achieved silver accreditation (nurture aware). The direct support to schools at the whole school level is resulting in more of our educational establishments being communities with nurture and relationships at their centre. The accreditation and moderation model is ensuring that there is a high standard and consistency across Argyll and Bute, from Early Years through to secondary schools. The success of this work was recognised in the Education Scotland publication, *Health and Wellbeing: A thematic review (March 2022)*.

A significant increase in school non-attendance has been noted both locally and nationally following the periods of lockdown necessitated by the pandemic. Those affected most include pupils with additional support needs, mental health problems and difficulties in the home and community. The Educational Psychology Service has progressed the work on Addressing Non-Attendance (ANA) through collaborative working with colleagues in Education and across partner agencies through the Maximising Attendance Working Group. A range of research based materials have been developed, including training sessions and workbooks, a professional practice guidebook, a guidebook for parents and guidebooks for children and young people who are having difficulties attending school.

Specific schools, and their partners, have now been identified to engage with training and support to develop processes of planning and implementation bespoke to their own communities. More robust understanding, assessment and intervention is being developed across schools to increase the effectiveness of engaging learners who are having significant difficulties attending school.

The Educational Psychology Service has supported the development of the Counselling in Schools Service in line with Scottish Government expectations. This service is directed at providing support for children and young people with mental health and wellbeing needs from the age of 10 years. Beginning in February 2021, the Counselling in Schools Service has been accessed by pupils from all secondary schools and 24 primary schools. Common reasons for referral include anxiety, depression, self-harm and relationship difficulties. The timing of this service has been critical in terms of responding to the increased need resulting from the pandemic.

Qualitative and quantitative information is gathered to evaluate the efficacy of counselling sessions. On the YP-CORE 10, young people who engaged with counselling reported an 18% reduction in scores. On the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, young people reported a 27% reduction in pre and post scores. The school counselling service has been an invaluable addition to the range of services across Education and the HSCP aimed at addressing mental health and wellbeing needs.

Seasons for Growth is an evidence-based peer education programme, which aims to support children and young people who have experienced change, loss or bereavement. This approach was initially funded in Argyll and Bute to support children from Armed Forces families, however the Seasons for Growth programme has an important role in supporting the COVID-19 recovery plan due to the extent of change and bereavement children have experienced. The Educational Psychology Service developed a model of implementation focusing on training, coaching of staff and evaluating impact. Within Argyll and Bute, there are now more than 80 trained members of staff and the reach of the programme has been extended to include schools in Bute, Oban, Islay and Cowal allowing more children and young people to access the programme as they require it.

A model which ensures fidelity of the programme has been introduced, which incorporates ongoing coaching of trained staff, links with social work, the school counselling service and third sector organisations to support delivery. An accreditation pathway for staff has been established and evaluation data from children, parents and staff is being collected. Both parents and children have reported positively on the support they have received through Seasons for Growth groups.

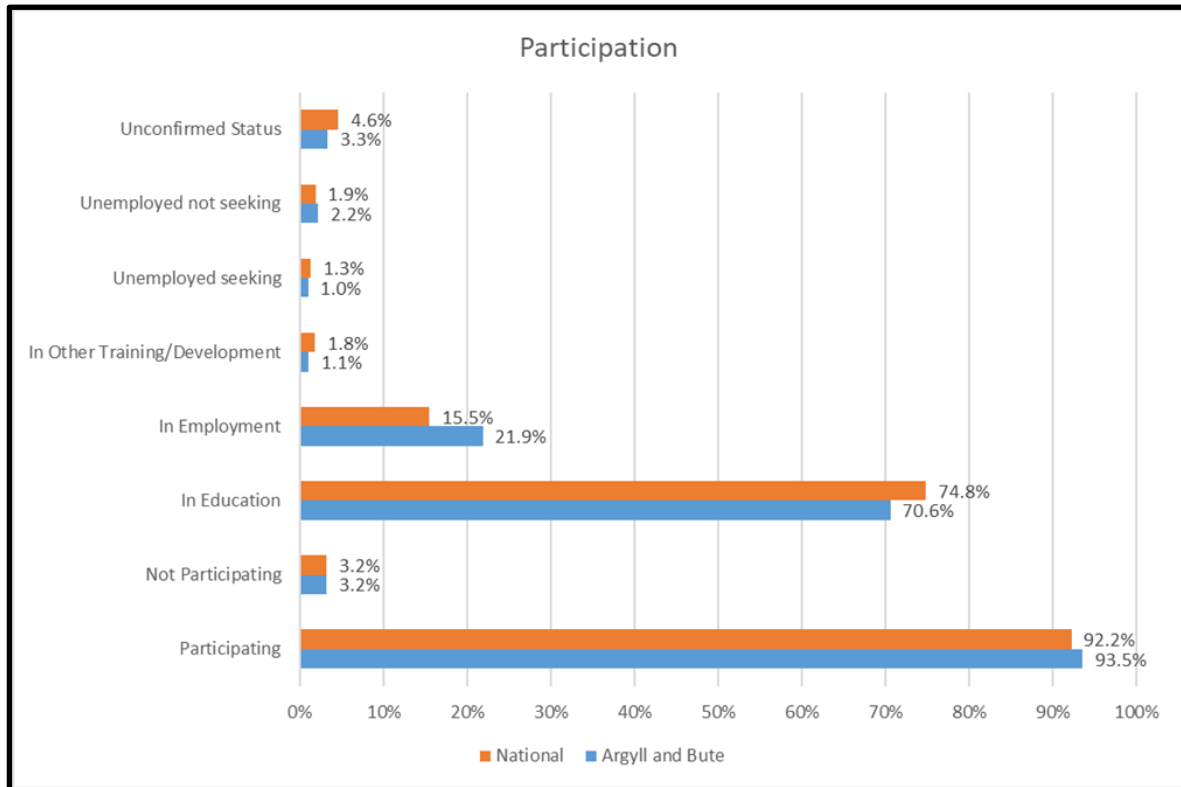
The Principal Teacher for Care Experienced Children and Young people has worked very effectively with the team of Care Experienced Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers to provide support and targeted intervention for children and their families.

The Inclusion and Equality team has been signposting and delivering appropriate professional learning resources to support wellbeing and remove barriers to learning and this has resulted in supporting schools to build resilience within their communities.

5.3 Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

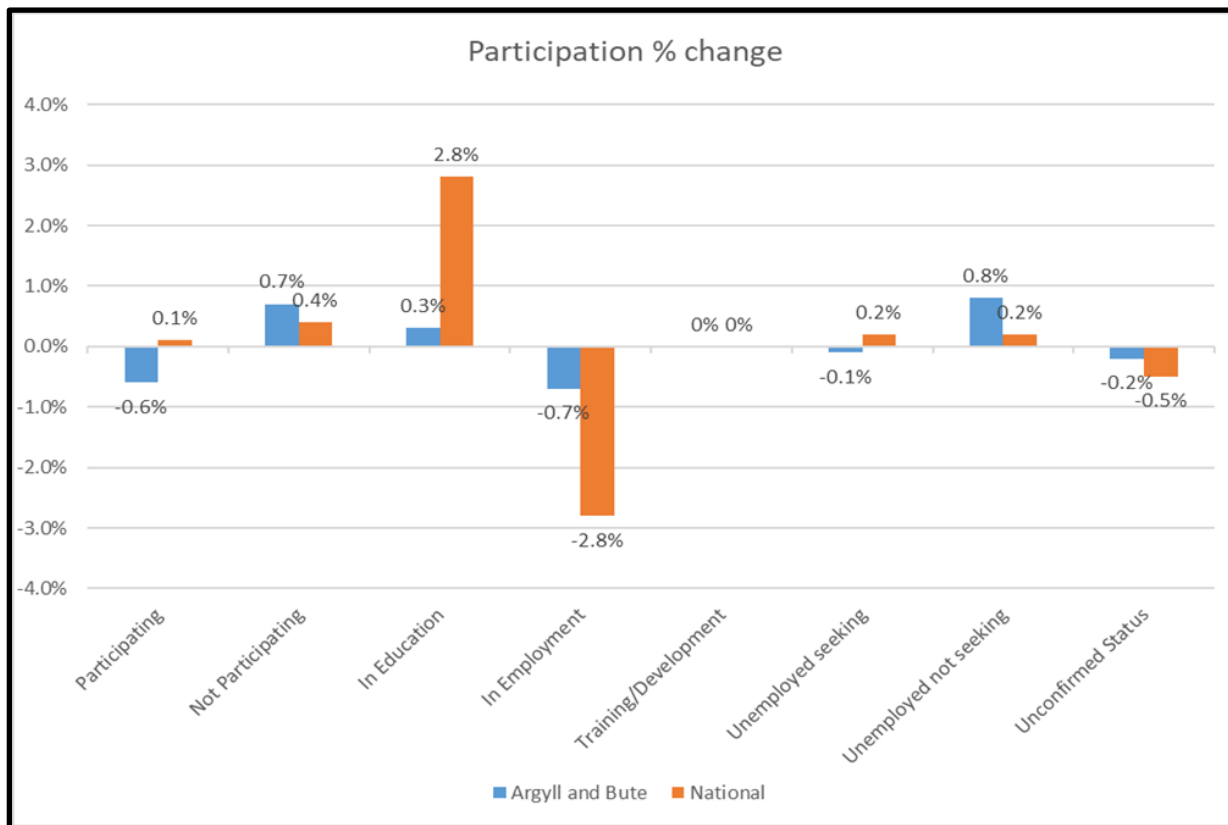
The 2021 Argyll and Bute Annual Participation Measure indicates a 0.6% decrease to 93.5% of 16 to 19 year olds in Argyll and Bute participating in education, employment and training, compared to 92.2% nationally. Despite a fall of 0.6% (equivalent to around 20 young people) in the number of young people participating last year, Argyll and Bute remains above the Scottish average in all three classifications and is ranked 10th in Scotland for participation across all local authorities. The table below breaks down into categories those participating and not participating in Argyll and Bute and Scotland as a whole.

Argyll and Bute and National Participation Measure



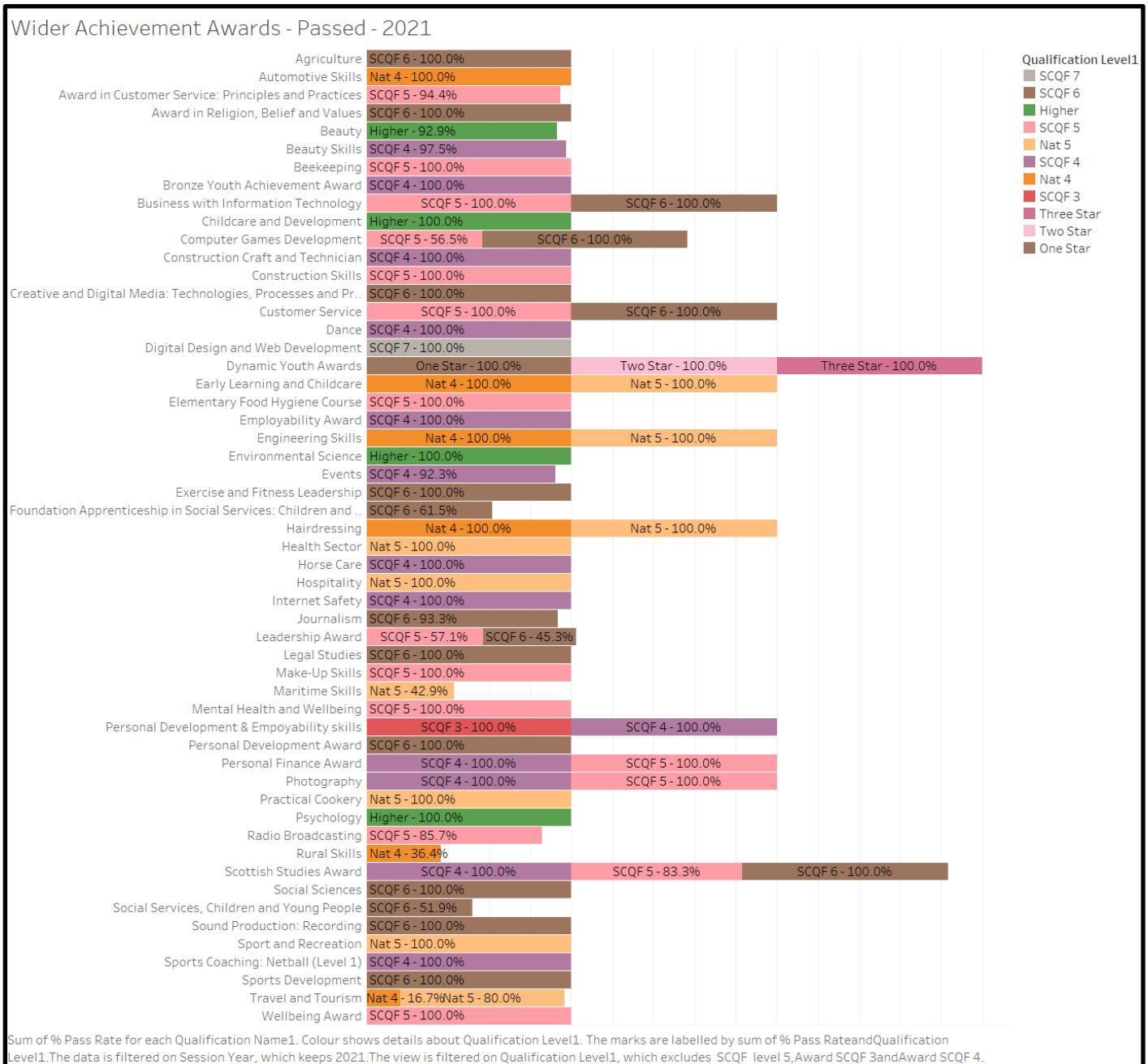
The number of 16 to 19 year olds in education - at school or in further or higher education - rose from 70.3% in 2020 to 70.6% in 2021. There was a decrease in the number of young people in post-school employment from 22.6% in 2020 to 21.9% in 2021. This, and the increase of 0.7% in unemployed young people from 2020 to 2021, is responsible for the overall drop in participation numbers among 16 to 19 year olds. As can be seen in section 5.4 below, the number of young people leaving school into employment has risen in 2021/2022. The above figures then point to issues with young people sustaining employment as they approach 18 and 19, which collaborative working between secondary schools, Skills Development Scotland, Community Learning and the Argyll and Bute Employability Partnership is seeking to address.

Argyll and Bute and National Participation Measure - Percentage Change



The achievement of children and young people across Argyll and Bute reflects a broad range of national and award-bearing wider achievement qualifications. Schools have worked well to develop a wide range of learning pathways for young people, which enables them to achieve a broad range of skills. The graph below illustrates the range and levels of achievement by Argyll and Bute young people in 2021, and the percentage of the entered candidates achieving the awards.

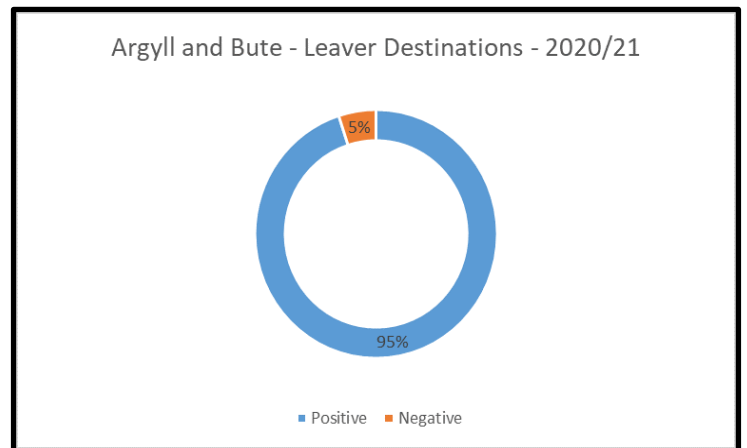
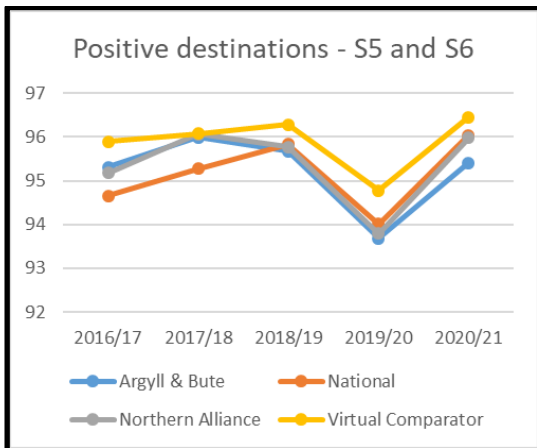
Argyll and Bute Wider Achievement Awards



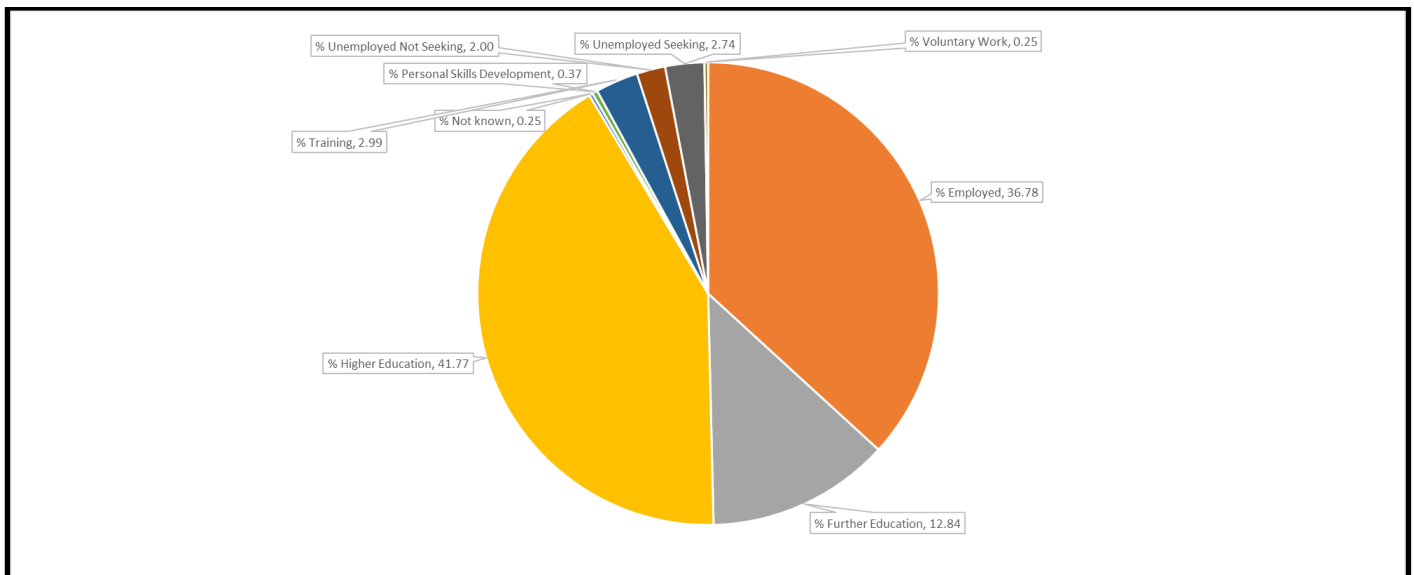
A high number of young people enhanced their achievement portfolio last session and this has contributed well to securing positive, sustained destinations for young people when they leave school. Our evidence tells us that we are achieving year on year improvements in positive destinations for the majority of school leavers in Argyll and Bute.

Alongside overall Participation data for all 16 to 19 year olds, which includes many young people still at school, another key measure relates to the number of young people leaving school into a positive destination. Such positive destinations include employment, further or higher education and further training. Recovery from the pandemic-related dip in 2020 is illustrated in the charts below, showing an increase from 93.6% to 95.4% in the percentage of young people in Argyll and Bute transitioning from school to a positive destination. This trend was also seen nationally, and in the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collective, as well as in the Virtual Comparator data.

Positive Destinations



Positive Destinations for School-leavers in Argyll and Bute - Breakdown by Destination



Compared to the 2020 figures, the number of school-leavers in Argyll and Bute entering further and higher education fell by 4.5% and 1.3% respectively in 2021. The number of young people moving into employment post-school rose from 28.9% in 2020 to 36.8% in 2021. Those leaving school and finding themselves unemployed fell by 2.3% in 2021.

The appointment in August 2021 of four Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Co-ordinators, funded by the Scottish Government, has positively impacted on a number of key areas of focus:

- DYW Co-ordinators have been responsible for identifying, nurturing and developing school-employer partnerships in the secondary schools for which they have responsibility. Such partnerships have increased in number and effectiveness, offering a greater number of possible work placements for young people and a corresponding increase in our ability to match work placements to young people’s career aspirations. An increasing number of such partnerships now conform to the Scottish Government’s “Engaging” or “Influencing” partnership gradings. After a cessation in work placements for young people, as a result of the pandemic, the number of pupils accessing such placements has increased across all secondary schools during the second half of the

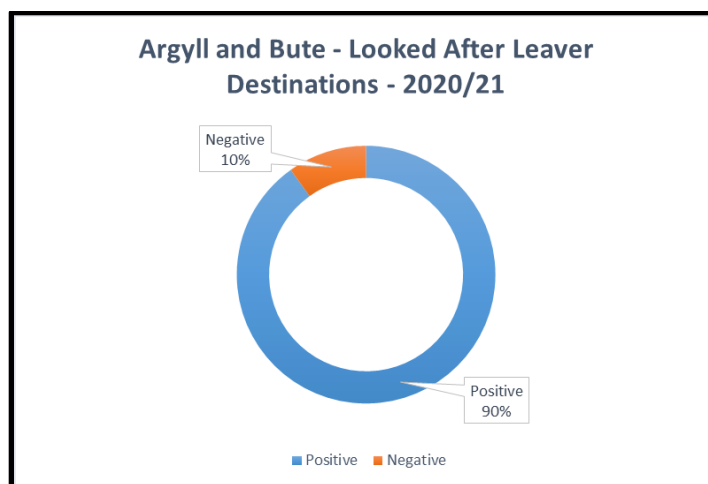
2021/2022 session.

- Opportunities for the development of young people's skills for life and work have increased through the work of the DYW Co-ordinators. High-quality careers events and skills development sessions have been held in schools across the Authority, with the active participation of partner employers central to such provision.
- DYW Co-ordinators have targeted those young people with the greatest obstacles to a successful transition into adult life. They have supported such young people in accessing work placements, developing key skills for life and work and forming links with employers.

Alongside the work of the DYW employers, schools have developed their practice in providing Flexible Learning Plans for senior pupils who are experiencing issues in engaging with school, and who require a bespoke learning pathway, incorporating both work on SQA and wider achievement accreditation and appropriate, targeted work experience. As a result, 36 young people have experienced a full and focused learning experience in the Senior Phase and have remained engaged through a blend of school-based and work-based activities. A number of Flexible Learning Plans have led to full-time employment for the young people involved.

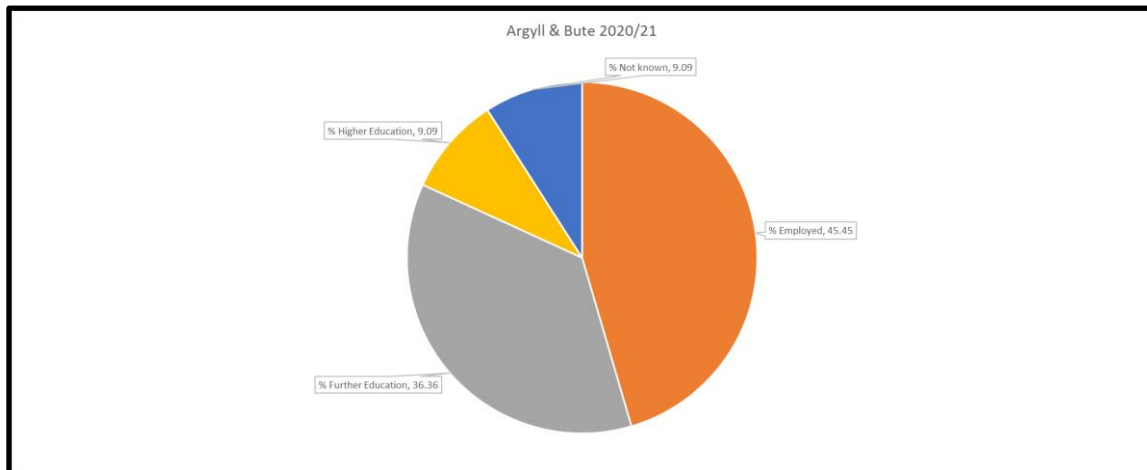
Developing school-college partnerships have enabled us to offer a range of work-based learning opportunities, including a number of SCQF level 3/4/5/6 Skills for Work courses, NPA SCQF level 4/5 courses and options to study single units from full-time courses. To support young people in developing industry experience, the range of Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) and number of young people participating has increased. FAs were delivered in Business Skills, Engineering, Social Services and Healthcare and Social Services Children and Young People.

Positive Destinations for Care-Experienced Young People in Argyll and Bute



90% of our care-experienced young people who left education in 2021 secured a positive and sustained post-school destination, as illustrated above. This represents a 23% increase over the 2020 figure for the number of care-experienced young people progressing to positive destinations post-school. Rigorous tracking of care-experienced young people's progress in school and post-school by the Local Authority Lead for Care Experienced young people and her team has ensured that some of our most vulnerable young people are fulfilling their potential as they move into the adult world. The breakdown of positive destinations for care-experienced young people is illustrated below:

Argyll and Bute Positive Destinations for Care Experienced Young People 2020/2021



The prime cause for the increase in positive destinations among care-experienced young people is the number of such young people finding employment. As a post-school destination, unemployment for this group of young people fell from 33.3% in 2019/2020 to below 10% in 2020/2021. The percentage of such young people leaving school into employment rose from 11.1% in 2020 to 45.5% in 2021. There were also increases in the number of care-experienced young people moving into further and higher education, of 3% and 3.3% respectively.

SECTION SIX: THE NATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK AND OUR CHILDREN, THEIR FUTURE

SELF-EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

The vision for Education in Scotland is excellence and equity - excellence through raising attainment and improving outcomes and equity ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed. Argyll and Bute's vision and strategy for Education, *Our Children, Their Future*, echoes this with the vision of making Argyll and Bute the best place to grow up.

NIF Priority 1	Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education
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What is this?

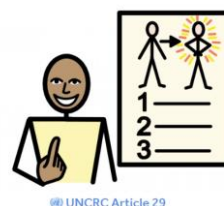
Improving children and young people's outcomes is at the heart of Education in Scotland. Everyone under 18 has the rights detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The UNCRC is based on four principles:

- **Non-discrimination** - which means all children under 18 have these rights and should not be directly or indirectly discriminated in the realisation of their rights.
- **Best Interests** - this means that adults should think about the best interests of children and young people when making choices that affect them.
- **The right to survive and develop** - which means that children and young people should grow up in conditions that don't impact negatively on their physical and mental wellbeing.
- **The right to have your views heard and taken seriously** - this means that the opinions of children and young people should be considered when people make decisions about things that involve them.

The National Improvement Framework promises to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of every child and young person and ensure that children and young people have an equal voice in being heard.

Why is this important?

Children's rights are all of the things that children and young people need in order to live a safe, healthy and happy life. This means that no matter where children and young people are from, what they believe or how they choose to live life they have these rights. Article 29 details that all children and young people have the right to an education which develops their mind, body and talents and builds a respect for other people and the world around them.



How this links to our Education Service Vision and Strategy:

Our Children, Their Future says that Education in Argyll and Bute will ensure that children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed and will equip young people with knowledge and skills to sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life.

What our improvement evidence for 2021-22 is telling us:

The Education Service has worked closely with partners across the Council to raise awareness of the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots Law and has provided expertise in child friendly versions of information in regards to the UNCRC as well as Children's Rights Wellbeing Impact Assessments.

With establishments, we continue to provide support and challenge to schools to ensure that a child centred and rights based approach informs our practice. We are committed to the work of Argyll and Bute Council in working towards the incorporation of UNCRC into Scots law. A number of schools are members of the Rights Respecting Schools Accreditation programme, with this number increasing year on year.



As a member of the governance team leading on the Authority wide Children and Young People's Service Plan, an Education Service led multi-agency improvement project on ensuring the voice of children and young people, was taken forward. This resulted in the establishment of a Youth Advisory Panel (YAP). The work undertaken by YAP was recognised with a Children and Young People's Improvement Collaborative Quality Improvement Award for Youth Improvers of the Year for the improvement taken forward in making sure the Children and Young People's Service Plan was accessible to young people. This was a new award category based on the group's nomination.

Work has taken place across the Service on developing models for children and young people to have their voices heard. In Community Learning and Development, the Principal Teacher for Care Experienced children and young people and the participation officer have taken forward work to gather the views of children and young people to feed into strategic plans.

Team members have also engaged in Education Scotland's Racial Literacy pilot programme. This has created the opportunity to cascade learning and will inform equalities training for practitioners, building on already strong Equalities practice.

What our improvement targets for 2022-2024 are:

Priority 1.1 We will protect and promote Children's Rights through the promotion of inclusion and celebration of diversity for all our learners. This will be achieved through high quality professional learning for school leaders and practitioners, policy development and partnership working.

NIF Priority 2

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

What is this?

We know that health and wellbeing is an important factor in children and young people's success. We have seen the impact that school building closures due to COVID-19 has had on children and young people. As part of the return to school and the recovery and renewal agenda, there has been a focus on supporting children and young people in maintaining their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Why is this important?

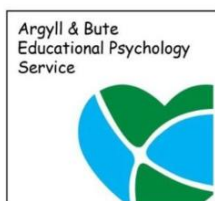
This is important because we have a number of reports which are identifying that during the COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequent lockdowns where children and young people were learning remotely, the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils was impacted negatively. The importance of tracking health and wellbeing is noted nationally within the 11 key measures and 15 sub-measures used to assess the progress in attainment and achievement of children and young people.

**How this links to our Education Service Vision and Strategy:**

Argyll and Bute identify that to raise educational attainment and achievement for all, improving literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people is core. To do this, the Education Service works with a number of key agencies and partners to provide, at the earliest opportunity, what pupils need most to support their health and wellbeing.

What our improvement evidence for 2021-22 is telling us:

In session 2021-22, key objective 3.1 identified that the Education Service will monitor both the short and longer term impacts of COVID-19 on our children and young people's health and wellbeing and take action as required to mitigate the effects and improve outcomes. We will focus on mental and emotional wellbeing, attendance exclusions and transitions between and across stages of learning.



The Educational Psychology Service Addressing Non-Attendance (ANA) strategy, in conjunction with the Maximising Attendance Working Group, has brought a coordinated, evidence-informed response to the significant increase in non-attendance at school following the pandemic. This has led to a systematic programme of training being delivered to pilot schools, with the aim to build the knowledge and skills essential to professionals working at all ages and stages of intervention and with all types of non-attendance.

The Counselling in Schools Service has delivered services to children and young people from the age of 10 years in line with Scottish Government expectations. This has ensured that vulnerable young people across all schools now have equal access to high quality counselling services, delivered by appropriately trained professionals. Over 350 young people engaged with the service as of April 2022.

The Educational Psychology Service carried out a survey across educational establishments to establish the mental health needs of children, young people, families and staff as perceived by Education colleagues. The results of this survey have been used to guide school based and Authority wide interventions.

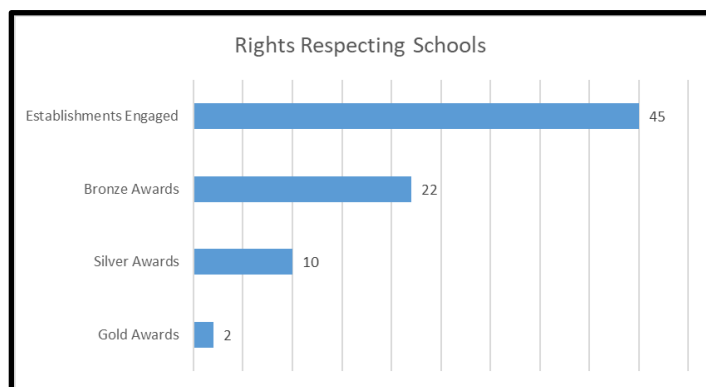
Transitions for our children and young people have been continually developed. For example, individual transition passports have been developed for our pupils with hearing loss and an Authority wide nursery to Primary 1 transition project has led to a more seamless transition for learners. This has resulted in receiving schools understanding pupils' needs more effectively and planning for any necessary staff training to ensure appropriate transitions with a continued pace of learning.

A pilot in two secondary schools, run in conjunction with partners, has provided baseline data in relation to the health and wellbeing of young people within Argyll and Bute Council and Scottish comparator figures. This work has led to partnership engagement from CLD and Active Schools in order to create a shared action plan that will help bridge community and school improvements.

With the easing of restrictions, schools have been supported in re-establishing relationships with partners who support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum in school. This has allowed young people to benefit from face to face delivery from a range of professionals such as the NHS, Rape Crisis and ADP.

Our Authority focus upon learning in the outdoors ensures that our practice is research based and focused upon the mental, physical, social and emotional wellbeing of learners. This focus has shown a positive impact on pupils' wellbeing and readiness to learn.

In session 2021-22, key objective 3.2 identified that the Education Service will declare our commitment to educating our children and young people around their right to be valued, respected and treated with dignity in alignment with the UNCRC legislation.



We maintain a focus on nurturing our learners across all stages and supporting their understanding of their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Within the Authority, there are 43 schools and 2 partner nurseries engaged with the Rights Respecting Schools Award. 2 schools have achieved Gold Accreditation, 10 have achieved Silver and 22 have achieved Bronze. This has resulted in an increase of understanding for pupils and families in regards to the rights of children under the UNCRC.

We have developed the work and membership of the Youth Advisory Panel to ensure that Young People are the central voice within the Children and Young People's Service Plan. We have continued to develop our practice across the Service to ensure that pupil voice is heard through consultation work.

We have delivered a training session to newly appointed Head Teachers in relation to pupil voice and parent/carer involvement and engagement. This has emphasised our commitment to ensuring that pupil voice is embedded into school improvement and results in meaningful change.

In session 2021-22, key objective 3.3 identified that the Education Service will continue to implement our strategy to build a trauma informed and responsive workforce across our Local Authority services to make a difference to the lives of children and young people, parents and carers and our staff.

The significant contribution to the Education and Health and Social Care trauma responsive workforce development has ensured a consistent approach to raising the awareness of all staff on the ways in which trauma impacts on children, young people and adults and is resulting in important changes to practice across agencies.

Our Children, Their Nurturing Education (OCTNE), the Authority wide education strategy that brings together nurture, adverse childhood experiences and trauma-informed practice has continued to support school staff, children and young people, with 29 schools now engaged with the intervention. This has resulted in more consistent, informed and sustained approaches to effectively meeting the needs of

children and young people experiencing distress.

The extension of the Seasons for Growth companion training and support has resulted in increased delivery of this evidence-based, peer education programme to support children and young people who have experienced change, loss or bereavement. The Seasons for Growth programme has an important role in supporting recovery post COVID-19 due to the extent of change and loss experienced by many children and young people and the impact this has had on their thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

In session 2021-22, key objective 3.4 identified that the Education Service will respond to the Scottish Government Plan which sets out a range of actions to address the findings of the independently chaired review of implementation of additional support for learning (Morgan Review).

We have further enhanced leadership opportunities for staff across the Authority in line with recommendations from the Scottish Government's Morgan Review 2020. This has resulted in the recruitment of 7 Lead ASN Assistants (Literacy Enhancement), seconded until the end of December 2022. The Lead ASN Assistants, trained in using assistive technology, will support schools in meeting the support needs of targeted groups.

What our improvement targets for 2022-2024 are:

Priority 2.1 We will support improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing through the use of targeted approaches and understanding of learning and learners to enhance learning in different contexts, which will support attainment and achievement across the four capacities. This will be achieved by identifying professional learning, in school development and work with partner agencies, both centrally and through school improvement priorities, to provide a wide range of experiences and opportunities for children and young people to achieve success.

NIF Priority 3

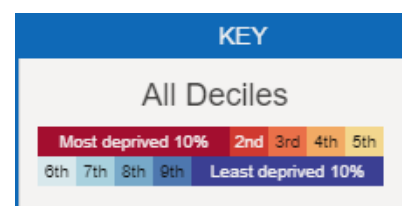
Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

What is this?

Across Scotland, disadvantage is measured by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). This is the official tool for identifying and comparing deprivation levels across Scotland. In looking at attainment results from Achievement of a Curriculum for Excellence Level (ACEL), SQA certifications and assessments and positive destination results it can be seen that pupils from lower SIMD quintiles, who experience more disadvantage, have lower achievement rates than pupils from higher SIMD quintiles, who experience less disadvantage. The difference between the achievement rates of pupils from higher SIMD quintiles and the achievement rates of pupils from lower SIMD quintiles is called the attainment gap.

Why is this important?

The Scottish Government's vision for Education in Scotland is that every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap. The Scottish Government thinks that this is so important that they have invested £1bn to support Education recovery and close the poverty related attainment gap. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Argyll and Bute data was showing that the poverty related attainment gap was closing, but due to the impact of COVID-19 we are seeing this gap increase.

**How this links to our Education Service Vision and Strategy:**

Argyll and Bute's key priority of 'Raise educational attainment and achievement for all' recognises the research and evidence that demonstrates the link between pupils experiencing poverty and lower rates of attainment and achievement. We want to improve the overall quality of learning experiences and improve literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing outcomes for all children and in doing so close our attainment gap.

What our improvement evidence for 2021-22 is telling us:

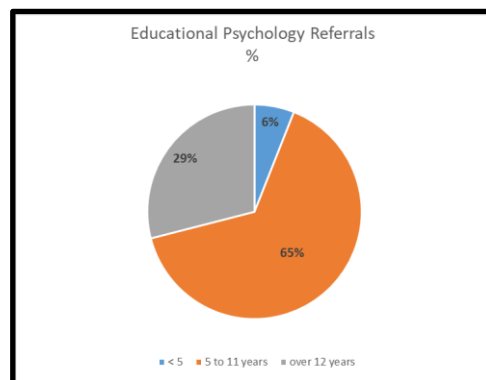
In session 2021-22, key objective 2.1 identified that the Education Service will continue to address disadvantage and deprivation to close the attainment gap by analysing data to inform a strategic overview of attainment for disadvantaged groups across the Local Authority and allow effective, targeted interventions. Through this approach, we will develop a shared understanding of how poverty is affecting families within their context and place.

We have ensured that there is excellent cohesion between School Improvement Planning (SIP) and targeted interventions to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged children and young people. This is achieved through specifically incorporating planning for Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) within the SIP template and the provision of high quality associated guidance documentation. This has resulted in a more consistent, rigorous and focused approach to planning for and reporting on progress in relation to this cohort of children and young people.

The analysis of Progress and Achievement and Developmental Milestone data supports the identification of disadvantaged groups and attainment gaps. The resulting analysis has led to a more focused and evidence-based approach to planning for effective and targeted interventions.

Targeted support has been provided to establishments where centrally collated data has demonstrated an attainment gap in Literacy and/or Numeracy. This has resulted in interventions being more targeted and more consistently applied across establishments. In turn, this has begun to lead to an increase in attainment for targeted pupils.

Educational psychologists have worked closely with school staff, partners and families across all educational establishments, which has allowed well considered targeted interventions to be directed to those children and young people with the greatest need. Over 150 referrals have been responded to over the last year with 6% under 5 years, 65% between 5 and 11 years and 29% over 12 years.



Research has found that mental health difficulties are more prevalent in the LGBTQ+ community, being disproportionately affected by suicidal ideation and self-harm behaviours, potentially due to perceived stigma. The Educational Psychology Service has worked with partners to seek the views of children and young people from the LGBTQI+ community in our secondary schools. This has resulted in greater understanding of the experiences of young people identifying as LGBTQ+, which will be used to inform best practice recommendations including changes to policy and guidance.

The service continues to build awareness, knowledge and understanding of how poverty affects pupils and families. Work with the Child Poverty Action Group has resulted in poverty awareness training and work with pupils and parents who have lived poverty experience. Access to free period products is a key component of our poverty awareness work and the appointment of a Period Products Lead Officer, and collaborative working with partners, has resulted in a community-based understanding of access to free products and educational materials to support understanding of environmentally friendly products.

Through analysis of data relating to learners most negatively affected by COVID-19 disruption, we established a programme of targeted supported study in addition to the school day and during the Easter Break. Secondary schools have been supported and funded to identify and engage targeted young people in this programme. As a result, all schools have implemented supported study opportunities for all Senior Phase young people, with particular focus on supporting recovery for the most disadvantaged.

In order to address disadvantage resulting from remote location and the associated impacts, we have developed our partnership with Argyll College by introducing 20 networked virtual learning courses offered to all young people in all secondary schools via the development of a shared timetable column. As a result, we have widened access to the Senior Phase curriculum and have increased the resilience of our Senior Phase offer in the face of challenges faced by localities in Argyll and Bute.

We have provided additional funding for island schools to widen access to vocational curriculum SQA courses. As a result, this has enhanced personalisation and choice for young people, specifically those disadvantaged by remote locations, and increased opportunities for post-school positive destinations.

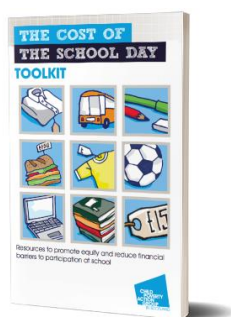
We have funded the procurement and installation of digital video conferencing equipment across all secondary schools. As a result, we are in a position to continue development of the expanded curriculum offer via digital platforms as appropriate. Consequently, young people disadvantaged by remoteness of locality have access to the same curriculum offer as those in more populous areas.

In the lead up to the SQA Qualifications examinations, key disadvantaged groups have been targeted for funded specific interventions in relation to examination preparation. As a result, young people across the Senior Phase have been supported to maximise their attainment regardless of place and context.

In session 2021-22, key objective 2.2 identified that the Education Service, with regard to PEF interventions, will continue to work with schools to further develop deeper analysis of what is working well and share this across our schools and ELC settings to the benefit of a greater number of children and young people. This will include both local and national intelligence around successful interventions.

We have worked with targeted establishments to identify need and tailor interventions accordingly, in line with international research and recommendations. Training has been provided within most of these establishments. As a result, interventions have become more focused and practitioners have reported increased levels of confidence in using them. This is beginning to have a positive impact on targeted pupils' attainment in Literacy and Numeracy.

The use of Accelerated Reader, as a reading intervention, has led to improvements in reading skills and increasing enjoyment of reading. As a result of staff training, primary teachers are using Accelerated Reader data to enhance their teaching and learning of reading; improve the support they are providing to children with literacy difficulties; motivate children to continue reading at appropriate levels of challenge and interest.



Individual schools across the Service have undertaken Cost of the School Day consultations, this has informed approaches to support pupils and families and specifically target allocations of PEF funding. Pilot project work across 2 secondary schools identified that a percentage of pupils do not participate in activities outside of school due to finance. In addition, pupils stated that due to their location, they rely on parents/carers for transport to activities. Schools continue to use PEF funding in a targeted way to address barriers and optimise access of opportunity for pupils.

In session 2021-22, key objective 2.3 identified that the Education Service will continue to work collaboratively with our Health and Social Care Partners (HSCP) to implement “The Promise Scotland” to support shifts in our policy, practice and culture for our care-experienced infants, children, young people, adults and their families so that every child grows up loved, safe and respected and able to realise their full potential.

The Educational Psychology Service has engaged with children and young people to seek their understanding and accessibility of available support for mental health and wellbeing and establish any gaps in provision. This work delivers on the expectations of The Promise that children, young people and their families will be listened to, respected, involved and heard in every decision that affects them. The work is providing a space where young people who are care-experienced will be listened to and provided with a shape of how Education services provide support.

Education and partners have worked across all agencies to embed the change in the language of care and to ensure the regular use of the key 15 words in practice, in meetings and in paperwork. This has resulted in a positive change in how young people are represented within the service as well as bringing a consistency of approach.

The role of the Care Experienced Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers' in supporting care-experienced children and young people within Education has become embedded, resulting in referrals from Social Work as well as Education leading to better targeted and timely support for care-experienced children and young people.

What our improvement targets for 2022-2024 are:

Priority 3.1 We will address disadvantage and deprivation to close the attainment gap by analysing data to inform a strategic overview of attainment for disadvantaged groups across the Local Authority and allow effective, targeted interventions. This will be achieved through the development and tracking of stretch aims and targeted use of Pupil Equity Funding and Scottish Attainment Challenge funding.

Priority 3.2 We will use a data and research informed approach to provide targeted support to establishments across the Authority. This will be achieved by working collaboratively to develop a range of effective approaches, which have a positive impact on closing the attainment gap. This will be further supported by a focus on effective moderation of standards to ensure consistency across establishments.

NIF Priority 4	Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people
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What is this?

The initial destination of young people relates to the activity young people are undertaking after leaving school. A positive destination for school leavers includes work, training and further study.

Why is this important?

This is important because the Scottish Government gathers data on the destinations of young people after leaving school, and it is one of the key measures used to determine the effectiveness and equity of educational provision. In our educational vision, set out in *Our Children, Their Future*, we seek to equip young people to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life.

Schools use information on positive destinations to help develop course offerings and wider attainment and achievement opportunities to ensure equity across gender, deprivation and other pupil characteristics.

We have seen an impact on young people's positive destinations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has meant that some opportunities often available to young people, such as apprenticeships and college courses, were delayed and employment opportunities normally available were not accessible due to the pandemic.

How this links to our Education Service Vision and Strategy:

Argyll and Bute want to grow the population through economic development. To achieve this, we need our young people to have the right skills, attitudes and capacities to enter into the local employment market as well as support business growth and innovation. We want our young people to be equipped to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life and we want them to be a part of building an economically successful Argyll and Bute within the local and global market. Through their chosen pathways, our young people will have opportunities locally to pursue training and academic pathways, develop entrepreneurial ambitions and skills and have an experience of the workplace.

What our improvement evidence for 2021-22 is telling us:

In session 2021-22, key objective 4.1 identified that in the senior phase (S4-S6) the Education Service will continue to review and refine learning pathways to ensure that we meet the needs of all learners and deliver personalisation and choice, which will support young people to transition to their identified positive destination. Through our Education Change programme, we will improve our capacity to use our digital networks and digital skills to develop and deliver a flexible curriculum to ensure equity for all learners regardless of place or context.

Enhanced learner pathways have been developed through our partnership with Argyll College. 20 networked virtual learning courses have been offered to all young people in all secondary schools via the development of a shared timetable column. As a result, the individual needs of all learners are being met by increasing personalisation and choice in the Senior Phase curriculum offer. This development offers a wider choice of SQA courses, which subsequently provide young people with access to a greater range of pathways to positive post-school destinations.

In order to support our development of the virtual learning common timetable, our partnerships with eSgoil and Northern Alliance and additional networked Argyll College Courses, we have funded the procurement and installation of digital video conferencing equipment across all secondary schools. As a result, we

have improved our capacity to use our digital networks and digital skills to develop and deliver a flexible curriculum to ensure equity for all learners regardless of place or context.

We have provided additional funding for island schools to widen access to vocational curriculum SQA courses. As a result, equity for Senior Phase learners regardless of place or context has been improved by enhancing personalisation and choice through a wider Senior Phase curriculum offer.

In session 2021-22, key objective 4.2 identified that to support our young people to their identified destination the Education Service will continue to ensure that skills for life, learning and work are a key feature of curriculum planning and delivery across all contexts for learning. Within this context, we will recognise, identify and share effective practice from within Argyll and Bute, the Northern Alliance and across Scotland to promote local and national opportunities for developing enterprise and entrepreneurial skills in schools.

Individualised Flexible Learning Plans (FLPs) for young people facing barriers to school engagement have been utilised more widely to offer work based vocational learning alongside curricular provision in schools. As a result, the individual needs of each young person are central to the bespoke provision offered in developing their skills for life, learning and work and ensuring a sustained positive post-school destination.



Four Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Coordinators have been appointed to work with secondary schools in establishing and developing school-employer partnerships to increase the range and quality of Work-Based Vocational Learning (WBVL) and work placements available to learners. As a result, young people are able to access placements more appropriate to their preferred occupation and employers are more closely involved with schools in planning and contributing to the skills development and employability curriculum.

We have revised and improved our Authority guidance on Work-Based Vocational Learning to ensure staff within schools are skilled and confident in supporting pupils into work placements, which reflect their interests and aspirations and which develop their skills for life, learning and work. As a result of this, DYW Leads have described their increased understanding of procedures and bespoke work placements for young people have become more accessible.

All schools have undertaken the Education Scotland Work Placement Benchmarking Exercise, a self-evaluation exercise analysing all aspects of a school's provision of Work-Based Vocational Learning. As a consequence, schools have identified the actions and supports required to improve their provision of work placements to young people.

In response to consultation with schools, a programme of professional learning for school staff has been established. This is allowing schools to better understand national guidance on Work-Based Vocational Learning, and to develop their employer partnership beyond the "Engaging" level to "Collaborating" or "Influencing" levels.

In session 2021-22, key objective 4.3 identified that in collaboration with our Arm's Length External Organisation (ALEO) partner, Live Argyll, the Education Service will implement the Community Learning and Development Strategic Plan to promote and foster the adoption of lifelong learning, whilst measuring and evaluating the impact of such learning in our families and communities.

Education has had involvement in the formulation of the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and has worked in partnership with Live Argyll and CLD, Developing the Young Workforce and other partners to support the delivery of Theme 3 – Health and Wellbeing. As a result, a range of targeted programmes in safe spaces in schools, and in the community, to support the health and wellbeing of learners have been established.

The responsibility for Community Learning and Development was transferred successfully to Live Argyll in June 2021. As a result, through the tracking of targeted outcomes via the CLD Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and associated annual action planning, there have been enhancements in areas such as volunteer development, literacy, health and wellbeing, community engagement and working with young people.

What our improvement targets for 2022-2024 are:

Priority 4.1 Through partnership working we will promote the development of skills, knowledge and understanding of learners to widen learning opportunities and career pathways for learners. This will be achieved through a focus on acquisition of skills and access to personalised learning pathways to support learners to develop all four capacities and become global citizens.

Priority 4.2 We will further enhance our partnership with Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) to ensure all young people have the opportunity and successfully develop the skills for life and work required to attain sustained, positive destinations post-school. We will achieve this through improved tracking of young people's pathways within school and in the period after leaving school to ensure appropriate support, guidance and opportunities are in place to gain and sustain positive destinations. We will also achieve this by broadening and improving work-based vocational learning opportunities for young people, improving vocational educational provision in schools and developing strong partnerships with employers and agencies who can contribute to the development of young people's skills and prospects.

NIF Priority 5

Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

What is this?

Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy is a key priority as nationally Achievement of CfE Levels data has shown a decline in attainment in literacy and numeracy. The Scottish Government wants to ensure there is a co-ordinated focus on attainment in literacy and numeracy across all local authorities.

Why is this important?

This is important because the data around the Achievement of CfE Levels shows that the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, resulting in children learning remotely, has negatively impacted attainment for pupils across Scotland. The Scottish Government wants every child and young person to achieve the highest standards of literacy and numeracy in order to have the chance to access opportunities throughout life.

How this links to our Education Service Vision and Strategy:

In Argyll and Bute, schools offer a broad range of experiences to help all children and young people develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work. Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing are the three pillars that underpin the 3-18 curriculum in all of our schools. We want to support schools to improve the attainment of literacy and numeracy in order for young people to attain their full potential and life success.

What our improvement evidence for 2021-22 is telling us:

In session 2021-22, key objective 1.1 identified that the Education Service *will track and monitor both the short and longer term impacts of COVID-19 on our children and young people's learning and take action through the use of data to mitigate the effects. We will continue to develop the data analytical, evaluation and quality improvement skills of our staff so they can make evidence-based decisions to raise attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.*



Support for schools in raising attainment in literacy and numeracy has been multifaceted with individual, cluster and Authority wide supports being made available in literacy and numeracy. This has resulted in a clearer understanding of pedagogical approaches and specific interventions to raise attainment in literacy.

Through the use of established Progress and Achievement collections and Early Years literacy and numeracy tracking systems, children and young people's progress is rigorously tracked and monitored in literacy and numeracy. The resulting data has facilitated analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on our learners both in the short and longer term, assisting establishments to identify and mitigate the effects and support recovery.

We have developed and provided Progress and Achievement data packs to all establishments at three key points throughout the session, which provide extensive data sets to monitor and measure progress in literacy and numeracy across the Broad General Education. This has resulted in the more purposeful use of data to inform improvement and has supported staff to make evidence-based decisions to improve outcomes for learners.

Through a planned programme of CLPL support for Progress and Achievement, we have provided regular opportunities to develop data analysis skills and promote the use of evidence-based judgements to inform improvement. This has resulted in increased levels of confidence in data analysis and a more developed understanding of how the data can be used to support improvement.

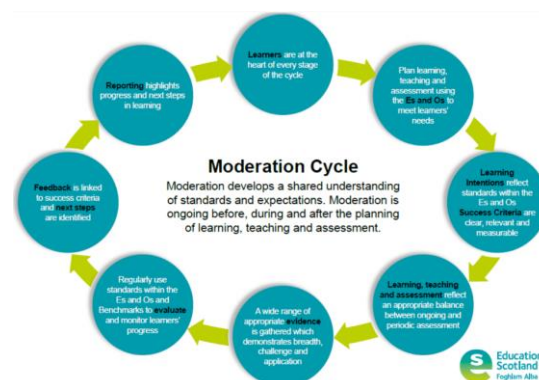
We have ensured that School Improvement Planning continues to be informed by and linked closely to *Our Children, Their Future* and Scottish Government advice and guidance provided as schools and local authorities plan to support recovery, renewal and improvement in the new school year and beyond. The recently reviewed School Improvement Planning process has ensured excellent cohesion between individual establishment plans and the local and national contexts.

Support and training in School Improvement Planning has been provided again in session 2021/2022 to further enhance the quality of these documents and stress their role as drivers for improvement. School Improvement Plans and Standards and Quality Reports are rigorously quality assured on an annual basis, resulting in confidence in establishments' self-evaluation and their use of data to identify relevant and focused priorities which are measured and evaluated throughout the session.

Through a planned programme of virtual quality improvement visits, and in response to feedback from HMIe and Care Inspectorate inspection visits, we have supported establishments' improvement in effective self-evaluation. Education Officers/Managers make effective use of a range of resources and evidence, including data sets available through Progress and Achievement. This has resulted in a more focused approach to the provision of challenge and support to drive school improvement with a more targeted approach to improvement priorities, which are evidencing impact on pupils' attainment and health and wellbeing.

We have identified target establishments, based on centrally collated data and given additional support, which has included professional discussions, training and professional learning. Head Teachers have reported that they now have a shared understanding of intervention approaches and consistent implementation. Support staff also report increased confidence in their understanding and delivery of targeted interventions. This focused work has resulted in improved attainment in literacy and numeracy for target groups.

The creation of our digital moderation platform, tailored by feedback from practitioners, is supporting establishments in effective moderation within the Gaelic Medium and English Medium primary sector. This has resulted in a clearer understanding of the moderation process at establishment level and improved confidence of teacher professional judgement of learners' progress. At secondary level, enhancement of the digital moderation platform within and between schools, schools' analytical evaluation and quality improvement skills and capacity to make evidence-based decisions relating to assessment has continually developed. This has led to increased staff confidence in understanding standards and accurate, reliable estimation of attainment as demonstrated by Education Scotland feedback on 2021 provisional SQA awards.



Through a planned programme of Professional Learning support, we have provided opportunities to use national and local resources (i.e. The BGE Benchmarking Tool, digital moderation platform, etc.) to further support the analysis of establishment data and linked training to support improvements for learners. This has led to increased levels of confidence in the use of resources and a more informed perspective of literacy and numeracy attainment.

Working in collaboration with colleagues from HMIe, we have supported those schools engaged in follow-through inspection activity as part of HMIe's phased programme of return. This has resulted in a positive outcome for all nine schools involved, having demonstrated their capacity to improve in response to original inspection findings. Seven require no further engagement and two require an LA follow-up report.

Working in collaboration with colleagues from HMIE, we have supported those schools engaged in thematic inspection activity as part of HMIE's phased programme of return. This has resulted in very positive feedback for the schools involved, as evidenced by the some featuring as case studies in the published reports.

In session 2021-22, key objective 1.2 identified that the Education Service will identify and offer high quality career long professional learning (CLPL) based on current research, alongside our Northern Alliance and Education Scotland partners, ensuring access for all practitioners to develop a shared understanding and delivery of high quality pedagogy and learning experiences.

Central Education Team Officers have supported professional development across the Service through a range of professional learning opportunities. Professional networks available through the Northern Alliance allow opportunities for practitioners to engage across local authorities. Access to and engagement with professional networks and professional learning has resulted in improved teacher confidence in classroom-based practices and pedagogies and has positively impacted on pupil attainment and motivation. For example, as a result of Quality Assessment and Moderation Officer Training (QAMSO) provided by Education Scotland, we now have a network of expertise at establishment and cluster level to support moderation. Through evidence-based professional learning on play pedagogy, there has been a clear evidenced impact on classroom pedagogical approaches and transitions into P1.

Opportunities for collaboration between practitioners has deepened the understanding of the progression of literacy skills. Gaelic Medium, English Medium and Early Years practitioners demonstrate increased consistency of approach when delivering the curriculum and a clearer understanding of standards of achievement.

The Local Authority achieved endorsement from GTCS and Education Scotland for our Guided Approaches to Pedagogical Enquiry (GAPE) professional learning programme, which focuses on a number of successful pedagogical approaches in the classroom. GAPE is designed to improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning across classes and schools. Schools participating in the programme have evidenced improvements in the quality of learning and teaching and increased practitioner understanding of pedagogical approaches.



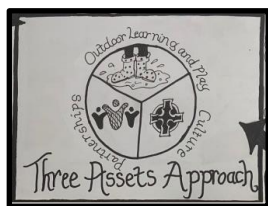
The Leadership Learning Pathway has been developed to support members of staff at all levels, in identifying local and national professional learning programmes that support the development of high quality learning experiences and pedagogy. This has resulted in a number of staff receiving accreditation, increasing leadership capacity at all levels across our establishments.

The Authority approach to Professional Review Development (PRD) was reviewed in the light of opportunities for professional learning during the pandemic and this has led to a more relevant and streamlined approach. The Authority also received GTCS Professional Update accreditation, which confirms the quality of policy and practice adopted consistently throughout schools in offering Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL).

To support our children and young people with additional support needs, a calendar of professional learning opportunities was offered throughout the session including deaf awareness training, British Sign Language, assistive technology training and CALM Theory and Physical Intervention training. These inputs resulted in more consistent approaches in supporting our children and young people with additional support needs and increased staff confidence in improving outcomes for pupils.

There is a particular focus for care-experienced young people at the secondary level on individualised approaches to curriculum, which include curricular and vocational activity. Improvement in attendance and attainment is beginning to show for this group of young people.

In session 2021-22, key objective 1.3 identified that the Education Service *will respond to the independent review of Curriculum for Excellence conducted and reported upon by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the SG implementation plan. We will also respond to the CfE implementation plan once published to deliver improvements across our schools reflecting the uniqueness of our communities.*



Through widespread delivery of our bespoke curriculum design model, The Three Assets Approach, we have supported our Early Years establishments to build an Early Level curriculum which is context specific and delivers coherence, relevance, personalisation and choice. This is leading to the emergence of diverse curricula, which supports learner wellbeing through the development of a sense of place, community and belonging.

Our Curriculum for Excellence professional learning for Early Years practitioners is building the knowledge of Curriculum for Excellence within the new cohort of practitioners delivering the 1140 hours expansion. This is building the foundations for a unification of understanding around the National Practice Guidance, 'Realising the Ambition' and the Curriculum for Excellence Refresh. This is resulting in the provision of high quality care and learning experiences for learners as outlined within the Blueprint for Expansion 2020.

In response to OECD recommendation 1.2, to 'find a better balance between breadth and depth of learning throughout CfE', we have implemented the next stage in our development of a Senior Phase commonality of timetable between all secondary schools. As a result, Senior Phase young people have access to broadened learning pathways and greater personalisation and choice in their curriculum offer. In particular, young people are now able to access an additional 20 networked virtual learning courses from our partner Argyll College.

In response to the OECD recommendation 1.3, 'adapt the Senior Phase to match the vision of CfE', we have increased our focus on Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), particularly through the work of DYW Coordinators, to enhance and increase employer partnerships and work-based vocational learning opportunities. As a result, we have increased emphasis on the development of young people's skills for life, learning and work in the Senior Phase.

In response to the OECD recommendation 3.1, 'provide dedicated time to lead, plan and support CfE at school level', we have conducted an analysis of the implications for secondary schools of implementing the Scottish Government's proposal for an additional 90 minutes of non-contact time for all teachers. As a result, we have clear insight into workforce planning requirements to meet this eventuality.

In session 2021-22, key objective 1.4 identified that the Education Service *will further develop our e-Learning model working with our College partners, Northern Alliance partners, e-Sgoil, and as part of the national e-learning Offer, widening access to the curriculum and increasing resilience in terms of teaching capacity and our ability to respond to any future crises. CLPL for our staff will continue to be integral to this development and will be planned and implemented as required.*

The creation of a Languages Professional Learning Teacher Hub supports sustainability in languages and has become a Northern Alliance wide initiative, resulting in increased teacher confidence and skills in leading language learning in the classroom.

Schools have engaged with the e-Sgoil offer to support and enhance learning in GME, particularly as part of the Recovery Curriculum. As a result, pupils have had increased opportunities to engage in an immersive Gaelic experience which has positively impacted on their fluency and understanding.

We have developed our e-Learning model by working with our partner Argyll College. In addition to existing individual college-school curriculum offers, we have developed our commonality of timetable by introducing 20 networked virtual learning courses offered to all young people in all secondary schools via the development of a shared timetable column. As a result, we have widened access to the Senior Phase curriculum and have increased the resilience of our Senior Phase offer in light of challenges faced by localities in Argyll and Bute.

We have provided additional funding for island schools to widen access to vocational curriculum SQA courses. As a result, this has enhanced personalisation and choice for young people, specifically in remote locations, which has increased opportunities for post-school positive destinations.

We have funded the procurement and installation of digital video conferencing equipment across all secondary schools. As a result, we are in a position to continue development of the expanded curriculum offer via digital platforms as appropriate.

In session 2021-22, key objective 1.5 identified that the Education Service will ensure that workforce development delivers the capacity to achieve our educational vision and strategy for all our children and young people. We will continue to collaborate for improvement with national, regional and local partners. To aid recovery we will monitor both the short and longer term impacts of COVID-19 on our staff's health and wellbeing and take action as required to mitigate the effects ensuring that staff are equipped to continue to undertake their professional duties.

Working with the Northern Alliance, Education Scotland and independent education advisors, we have offered practitioners a range of opportunities to collaborate with colleagues within establishments, across clusters, the Authority and the Northern Alliance. The impact of this has been increased collaboration between practitioners and consistency of pedagogical practice and assessment.

Through working with Education Scotland, Keeping Scotland Beautiful and Scottish Schools Education Centre, we have supported some establishments with Science, Engineering and Technology delivery, resulting in a clearer focus on improvement of STEM for those establishments.

Through consultation work that was completed with Head Teachers, coaching sessions have been made available to support the health and wellbeing of Head Teachers and senior leaders. This has allowed us to support senior leaders, ensuring that we have been able to maintain strong leadership and management in schools over this return to school period. This successful approach has resulted in senior leaders reporting an improved approach in considering and looking after their health and wellbeing.

In line with 1140 hours expansion requirements, we continue to build capacity within our ELC workforce through the funding and delivery of Early Years qualifications at all levels throughout the system, by our own Early Years Team, as we focus upon 'Growing our Own' and through collaboration with external training providers. This ongoing work ensures that in most settings learners experience high quality learning and development from an increasingly skilled and knowledgeable staff team.

What our improvement targets for 2022-2024 are:

Priority 5.1 We will provide targeted support to schools to improve learning and teaching in order to improve outcomes for children and young people and develop systematic evaluation and sharing of high-quality materials and resources to support continuing professional development to support practitioners in addressing barriers and raising attainment in literacy and numeracy for our children and young people. This will be achieved through establishments and the Central Team working in partnership to engage in strategic planning, implementation and evaluation which promotes a culture of continuous school improvement, the continued support in schools use of the BGE moderation platform as well as moderation through the Senior Phase and through the development of an Argyll and Bute Teaching and Learning policy.

Priority 5.2 We will track and monitor children and young people's Literacy and Numeracy attainment, support the data analysis skills of practitioners and increase the use of data to improve outcomes for children and young people. This will be achieved through a programme of universal and targeted professional learning based on the needs of establishments.

Priority 5.3 We will respond to the report from Ken Muir - Putting Learners at the Centre - and the subsequent Scottish Government response to take account of and embrace educational reform in relation to approaches to inspection, curriculum development and qualifications. This will be achieved by working collaboratively with colleagues at national, Northern Alliance and local level to ensure our establishments are supported to take account of and adapt to resulting change.

Priority 5.4 We will further enhance leadership opportunities for staff across the Authority in line with the recommendations from the Scottish Government's Additional Support for Learning Review 2020.

CONCLUSION

This Education Plan has been prepared in compliance with the requirements set out in the Statutory Guidance, accompanying the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000, taking full account of the requirement to:

- Put in place the necessary arrangements to analyse the outcomes of the 2021/22 Annual Education Plan and report on progress;
- Publish the Education Strategic Plan for 2022/24 responding to the requirements of the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for Scottish Education;
- Implement the Education Strategic Plan for 2022/24 incorporating our local plans and priorities as set out in **Our Children, Their Future**

SECTION SEVEN: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ASL	Additional Support for Learning
ASN	Additional Support Needs
Aifl	Assessment is for Learning
BGE	Broad General Education
BWG	Education Service Budget Working Group
CEYP	Care Experienced Young People
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
CLD	Community Learning and Development
CLPL	Career Long Professional Learning
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
DSM	Devolved School Management
ELCC	Early Learning and Childcare Centres
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
FE	Further Education
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GIRFEC	Getting It Right for Every Child
GTCS	General Teaching Council (for Scotland)
HE	Higher Education
HGIOS4	How Good Is Our School 4
HGIOELC	How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare
HMIE	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education
LAC	Looked After Children and Young People
NAR	National Assessment Resource
NIF	The National Improvement Framework
NPF	National Performance Framework
PATHS	Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies
PEF	Pupil Equity Funding
PSE	Personal and Social Education
SAC	Scottish Attainment Challenge
SCEL	Scottish College for Educational Leadership
SCQF	Scottish Credit Qualifications Framework
SCRA	Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
SRA	Shared Risk Assessment
SSSC	Scottish Social Services Council
SVQ	Scottish Vocational Qualification
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
UNCRC	United Nations Convention Rights of the Child
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment
VSE	Validated Self Evaluation

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 – SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides details of the outcome and findings of the statutory consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the formal proposal to close Skipness Primary School as detailed in the published Consultation Report (Appendix A); and in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

1.2 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee members:

- (a) Note the contents of the Consultation Report (Appendix A); and
- (b) Approve the implementation of the following proposal:

- i. Education Provision at Skipness Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 1st December 2022.
- ii. The pupils of Skipness Primary School's catchment area continue to receive their education at Tarbert Primary School on a permanent basis with effect from 1st December 2022.
- iii. The delineated catchment area of Tarbert Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Skipness Primary School from 1st December 2022.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 – SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 When considering the future of a rural school the Education Authority must meet the preliminary requirements of s.12A the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.
- 2.2 The Council is required to prepare and publish a Proposal Paper which clearly sets out the proposal on which the Council is consulting. The Proposal Paper must include details of the proposed date for implementation, the educational benefits statement, a summary of the consultation process and details of the supporting evidence or information used to formulate the proposal.
- 2.3 The 2010 Act also requires that at the close of the consultation process, Education Scotland must consider the educational aspects of the Council's proposal and prepare and submit a report to the Council for consideration by the Council when preparing its final Consultation report.
- 2.4 The Council is then required to prepare and publish its final Consultation Report taking into consideration the report from Education Scotland and all other responses received within the consultation period.
- 2.5 The Consultation Report must explain how the Council has reviewed the proposal, a summary of the points raised during the consultation period and the Council's response to them, details of any alleged inaccuracies or omissions, and, for rural schools, an assessment of rural school factors.
- 2.6 The Council will then make a decision on whether or not to implement the proposal.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee members:

- (a) Note the contents of the Consultation Report (Appendix A); and
- (b) Approve the implementation of the following proposal:
 - i. Education Provision at Skipness Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 1st December 2022.
 - ii. The pupils of Skipness Primary School's catchment area continue to receive their education at Tarbert Primary School on a permanent basis with effect from 1st December 2022.
 - iii. The delineated catchment area of Tarbert Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Skipness Primary School from 1st December 2022.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 This report provides details of the outcome and findings of the statutory consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the formal proposal to close Skipness Primary School as detailed in the published Consultation Report (Appendix A); and in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.
- 4.2 In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended, a report was produced by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal (Appendix B). The Education Scotland Report supports the proposal in that it has clear educational benefits for current and future pupils of Skipness Primary School; the support from stakeholders; lack of viability due to insufficient children within the catchment area; and the delivery of best value. Argyll and Bute Council are committed when taking forward the proposal to work with the Skipness community.
- 4.3 Having considered the report from Education Scotland and all other responses received within the consultation period, officers carried out a further review of the proposal and a Consultation Report was thereafter prepared and published for public scrutiny on the Councils website ([School consultations and proposals \(argyll-bute.gov.uk\)](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) from 4th August 2022. This provided a full three week period prior to a final Committee decision on 25th August 2022, in compliance with Section 9 (3) and Section 11 of the 2010 Act as amended.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Consultation Report for Skipness Primary School has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.
- 5.2 Following the outcome of the statutory consultation exercise detailed in the Consultation Report (Appendix A), having due regard to relevant written and oral representations as well as Education Scotland's Report, and following a further review of the proposal and reasonable alternatives having regard to rural school factors, it is recommended that the decision to implement the proposal that education provision at Skipness Primary School be permanently discontinued; the pupils of Skipness Primary School's catchment area continue to receive their education at Tarbert Primary School on a permanent basis; and the delineated catchment area of Tarbert Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Skipness Primary School with effect from 1st December 2022.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy - An authority that is formulating a rural school Consultation Report must Satisfy the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.
- 6.2 Financial – there are financial implications for each option.
- 6.3 Legal – The Consultation Report for Skipness Primary School has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.
- 6.4 HR - none
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: none at present
 - 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – none at present
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – none at present
 - 6.5.3 Islands – none at present
- 6.6 Climate Change – neutral impact due to proposed changes
- 6.7 Risk – none at present
- 6.8 Customer Service – none at present

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne Mcneilly - Policy Lead for Education

14th July 2022

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Consultation Report – Skipness Primary School

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Argyll and Bute Council: Education

CONSULTATION REPORT

Report on the outcome of the consultation relating to the proposal to close Skipness
Primary School

August 2022

This document has been issued by Argyll and Bute Council in regard to a proposal in
terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* as amended.

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1. Summary of the Proposal

- 1.1 It is proposed that education provision at Skipness Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 1st December 2022.
- 1.2 The pupils of Skipness Primary School's catchment area will continue to receive their education at Tarbert Primary School.
- 1.3 The delineated catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Skipness Primary School.

2. Reasons for the Proposal

- 2.1 The above is considered to be the best option to address the reasons for the proposal which are:
 - Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for five years. The school roll is low and not predicted to rise in the near future. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is £1,293.
 - Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing this Consultation Report there are 8.49 fte (full time equivalent) vacancies for primary teachers and 7.0 fte vacancies for Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute.
 - Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for maintenance.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 This is a Consultation Report prepared in compliance with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* as amended (the 2010 Act) on the above proposal.
- 3.2 The purpose of this Report is to:
 - Provide a record of the total number of written responses made during the statutory consultation period;
 - Provide a summary of the written responses;
 - Provide a summary of oral representations made at the public meeting held on 10th November 2021 at 6.00 pm;
 - Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
 - Provide the full text of Education Scotland's report and a statement of the Council's response to this report;
 - State how the Council reviewed the proposal following the representations received during the statutory consultation period and receipt of the report from Education Scotland;

- Provide details of any omission from, or inaccuracy in, the Proposal Paper and state how the Council acted upon those;
- State how the Council has complied with Sections 11A to 13 of the 2010 Act when reviewing the proposal; and
- Explain the opportunity that may arise to make representations to the Scottish Ministers in connection with Section 15(4) of the 2010 Act.

4. Background

- 4.1 On 8th September 2016, the Community Services Committee of Argyll and Bute Council approved the mothballing of Skipness Primary School. The Council agreed that in the event there are no registered pupils by the commencement of session 2017/18, the school be considered for formal closure through the statutory process.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s112449/Skipness%20PS%20Mothballing.pdf>

- 4.2 On 5th September 2019 the Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the required preliminary consultation and an Options Appraisal for Skipness Primary School.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s140258/Schools%20Consultation%20Scotland%20Act%202010%20-%20Skipness%20Primary.pdf>

- 4.3 A report providing details of the Options Appraisal, which was carried out in accordance with Section 12A of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* as amended, was tabled at the Community Services Committee held on 10th December 2019, where the Committee agreed to note the outcome of the preliminary requirements and requested that officers formulate a draft closure proposal.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s143434/Skipness%20cover%20report.pdf>

- 4.4 At the Community Services Committee held on 12th March 2020, Members considered and agreed to adopt the draft proposal as a “relevant proposal” that would proceed to a statutory consultation under the 2010 Act. This statutory consultation opened on 19th March 2020 and was originally due to end on 15th May 2020. A public meeting was also arranged for 6th May 2020 at 7pm in Skipness Village Hall.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s155449/Schools%20Consultation%20Skipness%20Primary%20Cover%20Report.pdf>

- 4.5 However, shortly after commencement of the consultation the Coronavirus outbreak caused schools to be closed and restrictions on public gatherings were enforced as part of the “lockdown” measures. It was therefore clear that the consultation exercise would not be able to proceed as originally planned.
- 4.6 On 16th April 2020 the Business Continuity Committee met to deal with several items of Council business to be addressed during the pandemic, including the above. The Committee agreed to officers’ proposals to extend the consultation period from 15th May 2020 to 31st August 2020 and to cancel the public meeting scheduled for 6th May 2020, with a new date to be set once the regulations imposing restrictions of public gatherings allowed it to proceed. Notification of the consultation extension and cancellation of the public meeting was distributed to all relevant consultees with notification of the new date also to be issued to them in due course.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s156194/Skipness%20PS%20-%20BCC%20160420%20v2.pdf>

- 4.7 However, restrictions on public gatherings continued as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic “lockdown” measures. It was therefore clear that the consultation exercise would not be able to proceed as planned within the initial extension period and on 27th August 2020 the Community Services Committee met and agreed to officers’ proposals to extend the consultation period from 31st August 2020 to 18th December 2020 with a new date for the public meeting to be set once the regulations imposing restrictions of public gatherings allowed it to proceed. Notification of the further extension was distributed to all relevant consultees.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s165606/518442%20-%20Skipness%20PS%20-%20CSCOMMITTEE%20270820.pdf>

- 4.8 Due to Covid-19 restrictions on the holding of a public meeting and the extended timeframe of consultation on the Proposal this resulted in a necessary correction to the date of implementation noted in the Proposal. On November 1st, 2021 consultees were notified of the correction on the date for Proposal for closure via written communication. The notification of the correction on the date for implementation of the Proposal was also posted on the Argyll and Bute Schools Consultation webpage.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals>

- 4.9 Due to continued restrictions arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, on 8th December 2020 the Community Services Committee met and agreed to officers’ proposals to further extend the consultation period from 18th December 2020 to 31st May 2021. A new date for the public meeting was to be set once the

regulations imposing restrictions of public gatherings allowed it to proceed. Notification of the further extension was again distributed to all relevant consultees.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s169276/SKIPNESS%20PRIMARY%20SCHOOL.pdf>

- 4.10 However, due to a further increase nationally in Coronavirus cases in the latter part of 2020, restrictions on public gatherings being continued and/or re-imposed rather than relaxed, it was clear that the consultation exercise would not be able to proceed as planned within the extension period. Therefore at the meeting of Community Services Committee on 10th June 2021 a further extension to the consultation period to 23rd December 2021 was agreed.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s175291/SKIPNESS%20PRIMARY%20SCHOOL.pdf>

- 4.11 Changes to the restrictions on public gatherings allowed for a public meeting to be held on 10th November 2021 at Skipness Village Hall.
- 4.12 Full details of the proposal, reasons for the proposal, the reasonable alternatives to the proposal that were identified, an assessment of the proposal and each of the reasonable alternatives, and an assessment of the educational benefits to the proposal and each of the alternatives are set out in the Proposal Paper, which is attached as **Appendix 1**.

5. Equality and Socio-Economic Impact

- 5.1 The Council as a public authority has a duty under the *Equality Act 2010*, the *Public Sector Equality Duty 2011*, the *Fairer Scotland Duty* and the *Islands (Scotland) Act 2018* to have due regard to their provisions when making strategic financial decisions. This is done through assessing the potential impact of the decision on equality through Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (EQSEIAs). The full EQSEIA in respect to the proposal to close Skipness Primary School is attached as **Appendix 2**.
- 5.2 The EQSEIA identifies no negative impact.

6. The Consultation Process

- 6.1 Following the Council's decision of 12th March 2020, where it agreed to adopt the proposal as a "relevant proposal" in terms of the 2010 Act and issue it as a basis for consultation, the Proposal Paper was made available on the Argyll and Bute Council website:

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals>

6.2 A summary of that document was also provided to:

- The Parent Councils of the affected schools
- The parents of the pupils at the affected schools
- Parents of children expected to attend an affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of the Proposal Paper
- The pupils, deemed to be of suitable age and maturity to be able to communicate a view on the proposal, at the affected schools
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools
- The trade unions representatives of the above staff
- Argyll and Bute local Ward Councillors
- Tarbert and Skipness Community Council
- Community Planning Partnership
- Relevant users of the affected schools
- The Constituency MSP
- List MSPs for the area
- The Constituency MP
- Chief Superintendent, Police Scotland
- Chief Executive, NHS Highland
- Chief Executive Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT)
- Area Commander, Fire Scotland
- Education Scotland

6.3 A copy of the Proposal Paper was also available from:

- Council Headquarters, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT
- Education Offices, Argyll House, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ
- Tarbert Public Library, Barmore Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TW
- Lochgilphead Service Point, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD
- Tarbert Primary School, School Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TE
- Skipness Village Hall, B8001, Tarbert, PA29 6XT

6.4 The document was available in alternative formats or in translated form for readers whose first language is not English.

6.5 If members of the public wanted the document in another language or format, or if they required the services of an interpreter, this was made available.

6.6 Copies of the Proposal summary as well as the full Proposal were posted as well as emailed to notify consultees of the Proposal. These were sent to notify Education Scotland and all of the relevant consultees (as prescribed by Schedule 2 of the 2010 Act) of the proposal and invited them to make representations as part of the consultation process.

6.7 The consultation ran from 16^h March 2019 until the close of business on 23rd December 2021 – well over the minimum of six weeks including at least 30

school days, as required by Section 6(4) of the 2010 Act. As detailed in Section 4, above, the various extensions to the consultation period were due to issues arising from the Coronavirus pandemic which were outwith the control of the Council.

- 6.8 A public meeting was held at Skipness Village Hall on 10th November 2021 at 6.00pm. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting and participate was welcome to do so. Advance written notice of this meeting was given to all the “relevant consultees” in terms of the 2010 Act. The meeting was convened by the Education Authority who presented reasons for bringing forward the proposal. There was an opportunity for questions to be asked and comments to be made.
- 6.9 This Consultation Report is the Council’s response to the issues raised regarding the proposal during the consultation period. It will be published on the Council’s website for a period of no less than 3 weeks prior to final consideration of the proposal by the Council’s Community Services Committee on 25th August 2022.

7. Pupil Engagement

- 7.1 The proposal to close Skipness Primary School could have an impact on pupils, parents and the community. Pupils’ views are a significant part of the consultation process of this proposal. To that regard, pupils that had attended Skipness Primary School prior to its mothballing took part in a focus group with officers from the Education Service to share their views on the proposal.
- 7.2 The focus group consisted of 3 pupils from Tarbert Academy that had previously attended Skipness Primary School and was held on 19th August 2019.
- 7.3 Primary pupils at Tarbert Primary School, deemed to be of suitable age and maturity to be able to communicate a view on the proposal, were provided with a PowerPoint that was presented by their class teacher and were offered an opportunity to give their views and have these recorded as part of the consultation process.
- 7.4 The pupils were given information regarding the Council’s proposal and asked for their thoughts and ideas through a series of questions.
- 7.4 Pupils in the focus group had previously attended Skipness Primary School but said:
- *“There were only 3 pupils and we were all siblings.”*
 - *“The education at Skipness was amazing. We would go out and learn about things like the birds and bring things back to the classroom.”*
 - *“I found it easy to come to Tarbert, I enjoyed company of new friends transition was ok.”*

- *“I understand there’s no point keeping a school open if there isn’t anyone in the classrooms.”*

7.4 Pupils at Tarbert Primary School, deemed to be of suitable age and maturity to be able to communicate a view on the proposal, said:

- *“If just a few pupils, they would not be able to do big group things, fun things and trips.”*
- *“Small numbers at Skipness might mean pupils would be lonely or sad.”*
- *“If there are only a few pupils in Skipness, they are paying quite a lot of money to heat the school so that it is usable.”*
- *“[It’s] longer travel for pupils to Tarbert.”*

7.6 A summary of the pupil focus group responses is attached as **Appendix 6**.

7.7 A summary of the responses from pupils at Tarbert Primary is attached in **Appendix 3**.

8. Responses to the Consultation Exercise

8.1 There were 3 written responses received during the consultation period which were emailed to argyllhouse.reception@argyll-bute.gov.uk and an additional 3 written responses sent to the paper’s named Education Officer (6 written responses in total). A summary of the responses can be found in **Appendix 3**. Oral responses to the proposal were gathered at the public meeting held at Skipness Village Hall on 10th November 2021. Eight representatives from the local community attended along with officers from the Education Authority and a local Councillor. Also in attendance and Chairing the meeting was Education Policy Lead, Councillor Yvonne McNeilly. Minutes of the public meeting are attached as **Appendix 4**. The 8 members of the public present intimated that they were in favour of the proposal and identified the potential of the vacant Skipness Primary School to be used as an asset for the community.

8.2 The written and oral responses to the consultation can be grouped broadly as follows:

- Views were expressed that Skipness Primary School should not be reopened for education provision.
- Views were expressed that a consideration to the change of the catchment area for Tarbert Primary School be considered to benefit another small school on the edge of that catchment area.

8.3 The Education Authority identified and assessed a number of reasonable alternatives to the proposal in its Proposal Paper and as part of the preliminary requirements. No further reasonable alternatives to the proposal were submitted as part of the public consultation process.

9. Education Authority Response to Written/Oral Representations

9.1 Questions raised through the consultation process fell into five main themes: receiving school capacity, transport, processes and timelines, community interest and the role of young people in the process.

9.2 Receiving School Capacity

Question: What are the considerations for capacity in the receiving school, Tarbert Primary School?

Response: The Education Service maintains projected school roll figures up to 2030. Further to this, models for school roll projections for Tarbert Primary have been developed for the next 5 years. Class sizes and structures are managed by the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher at Tarbert Academy is responsible for nursery, primary and secondary education within the establishment and this allows for flexibility to manage fluctuations in capacity. Projected school roll figures for Tarbert Primary show a more than sufficient capacity for pupils from the current catchment area for Skipness Primary as well as increased numbers of primary aged pupils joining the Tarbert Primary catchment area.

9.3 Transport

Question: What is a reasonable travel time for pupils transported from Skipness to Tarbert Primary?

Answer: With the distances in the case of transport to Tarbert Primary School, there is an obligation on the Council to offer free school transport for children travelling to that school from the existing Skipness Primary School catchment area. Due to the rural geography of Argyll and Bute, many children across the authority make journeys by bus to school. The travel time to Tarbert Primary is 25 minutes by car and is 37 minutes by the service bus used by school transport that services the village of Skipness. This is considered a reasonable distance and many children within Argyll and Bute travel these distances on a daily basis. Any specific concerns parents may have regarding transport can be raised with the receiving school.

9.4 Processes and Timelines

Question: The date of implementation is December 1st 2022, why is this and what will happen then?

Answer: The *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* sets out the specific statutory requirements which the Council are required to follow and this includes the timeframes for reports to be produced and agreed by the Council and Education Scotland. The proposed implementation date of 1st December 2022 date allows for this process to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the legislation.

If a decision is made in agreement to the proposal to discontinue education at Skipness Primary School the catchment area of Tarbert Primary School will be

such that it encompasses the existing catchment area for Skipness Primary School. Any pupils living in Skipness at that point and in the future would attend Tarbert Primary School as their catchment area school unless a placing request for another school was lodged.

9.5 Community Interest

Question: What will happen with the building if closure of the school is taken forward?

Answer: The Council would be happy to hear from any group or individual within the community that come forward with proposals for the future of the building. If there is an interest in the community taking over the building discussions can be opened up in anticipation of the proposed closure. If there is a clear expression from the Community to take over the building then that is a route which can be taken forward. The council have transferred a previous school building over to the community following its formal closure.

9.6 The role of young people in the process

Question: Were children consulted in this process?

Answer: Yes, both children previously in attendance at Skipness Primary School and pupils at the receiving school were consulted on the proposal. The consultation took the form of focus groups as well as whole class presentations and feedback sessions. See also, Section 7, above.

10. Education Scotland Report

- 10.1 In accordance with Section 8(2) of the *Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act* 2010, a report was produced by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal.
- 10.2 In preparing their report, Education Scotland considered all relevant documentation in relation to the proposal. They also visited Tarbert Primary School via virtual means to seek the views of relevant consultees.
- 10.3 The Education Scotland report is reproduced in full at **Appendix 5**.
- 10.4 This report supports the proposal and is summarised below:
- a) Education Scotland agrees that the proposal by Argyll and Bute Council will result in educational benefits for the children in the Skipness Primary School catchment area. This includes social benefits and access to wider opportunities at Tarbert Primary School.
 - b) Education Scotland found that stakeholders were in agreement with the proposal and could identify the benefits children would gain in attending Tarbert Primary School.

- c) Education Scotland notes that should the Council decide to implement the closure proposal, it should continue to engage with the Skipness community to explore options for the future use of the school building.

11. Education Authority Response to Education Scotland Report

- 11.1 The Council welcomes the report from Education Scotland and agrees with its findings.
- 11.2 The Council's response to the findings contained within the Education Scotland Report is as follows:

Finding of report:

- a. Education Scotland agrees that the proposal by Argyll and Bute Council will result in educational benefits for the children in the Skipness Primary School catchment area. This also includes social benefits and access to wider opportunities at Tarbert Primary School.
- The Council agrees that the educational benefits for current and future pupils are clear. Children benefit from enhanced transitions between nursery and Primary 1 and also Primary 7 to S1. Children also benefit from opportunities to work with a wider number of peers and children at other stages, helping to develop social skills. The access to a range of extracurricular activities is also a benefit that children experience at Tarbert Primary School. There are also educational benefits that result from school staff being a part of a larger staff group which enhances opportunities for professional learning and moderation of children's work. Stakeholders have identified the strength of the educational benefits and opportunities for pupils at Tarbert Primary School.
- b) Education Scotland suggests that should the Council decide to implement the closure proposal, it should continue to engage with the Skipness community to explore options for the future use of the school building.
- Argyll and Bute Council is open to engaging with the local community, on any plans to develop a sustainable community facility via a possible community asset transfer.

12. Rural Schools – Compliance with Section 9(1) of the *Schools (Scotland) Act 2010*

- 12.1 After the Education Authority received Education Scotland's report, officers carried out a further review of the proposal following the close of the consultation, having regard (in particular) to:

- Written representations received by the Authority (from any person) during the Consultation period;
- Views of Tarbert Primary pupils as gathered during the consultation exercise,
- Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting, and
- Education Scotland's report.

- 12.2 In addition, officers carried out a further assessment of the proposal and each of the reasonable alternatives to it as set out in the Proposal Paper, having particular regard to the preliminary requirements for rural school closures as set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act. As mentioned previously, no further reasonable alternatives to the proposal were identified or advanced by officers or stakeholders during or following the consultation exercise.
- 12.3 The feedback from the Consultation was considered by officers. Data and factual information was checked where required and advice sought from other Council services where necessary. This ensured that the Council met the requirements to review the proposal under Sections 9(1) and 13(5) of the 2010 Act.
- 12.4 Officers of the Education Authority have listened carefully to the points made at the public meeting and have considered equally carefully the Education Scotland report and the online and written representations. The proposal was reviewed to consider whether any of the representations led the Council to reconsider any other options as being reasonable alternatives to the proposal to close Skipness Primary School. None of the representations led officers to conclude that any of these options should be reconsidered as reasonable alternatives. The Educational Benefits were reviewed in respect of the Education Scotland report and representations made. There were no factors included in the Education Scotland report or representations made requiring any aspect of the Educational Benefits to be reconsidered. Further consideration was also given to the likely effect on the local community, and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements. Having reviewed the Education Scotland report and feedback from consultees in respect of the proposal and each of the reasonable alternatives, officers concluded that the proposal continues to be the most appropriate response to the underlying reasons for its formulation.
- 12.5 Officers concluded that the educational benefits of the proposal far outweigh any potential disadvantages. Formal closure of the school will allow plans to acquire the building to be progressed by the local community, which in turn will increase the availability of the premises to the community and even benefit the sustainability of the community. The proposal will have a neutral impact on travelling arrangements, as these have been in place since the mothballing of Skipness Primary School in 2016. The overwhelming majority of consultation responses, community groups and pupils whose views were gathered are not in support of the school being reopened for education provision. Education Scotland's report is also supportive of the Council's proposal being implemented

and it also notes that the current and predicted number of children within the Skipness Primary School catchment area is insufficient to make the school viable.

- 12.6 Therefore, the Council has had regard to the points made at the public meeting, the written consultation responses and Education Scotland's report. It thereafter carried out a review of the proposal and all the reasonable alternatives and has concluded that the proposal remains the best solution to address the reasons for the proposal as set out at Section 2 of this Report. Implementation of the proposal will allow children to have access to increased learning opportunities, wider experiences and better socialisation through being part of a larger school. The current number of children within the Skipness Primary School catchment area is insufficient to make the school viable. If the school were to remain mothballed this would be a continuing drain on the Council's resources. The proposal will assist the Council to deliver 'Best Value' through making more efficient and effective use of its resources. Furthermore, the Council will follow up on working with the Skipness community to explore options for future use of the mothballed school should they wish to progress this.

13. Alleged Omissions or Inaccuracies

- 13.1 Section 10(3) of the 2010 Act places a requirement on the Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission in the Proposal Paper which has either been identified by the Council or raised by consultees. This provision also requires the Council to provide a statement on the action taken in respect of the inaccuracy or omission, or if no action was taken, to state that fact and why.
- 13.2 In the course of the statutory consultation, there were no areas identified by the respondents as being inaccurate or omitted from the Proposal Paper. One area of inaccuracy identified by the Council is in regard to the implementation date of 28th October 2020, as stated in the Proposal Paper. Shortly after the publication of the Proposal Paper and at the beginning of the consultation period the global Covid-19 pandemic caused schools to be closed and restrictions on public gatherings were enforced as part of the 'lockdown' measures. The consultation period was therefore extended several times until an in-person meeting was able to take place, thus affecting the proposed implementation date.
- 13.3 At the point where an in-person public meeting was able to be held there was a notification to the distribution list of all "relevant consultees" under the Act which included a notice of correction for the proposed closure date. Accordingly a revised implementation date of 1st December 2022 should be noted in order to allow for more than the full 8 week statutory period prior to implementation of the proposal within which it can be called-in by the Scottish Ministers.
- 13.4 A second area of inaccuracy identified by the Council in the Proposal Paper was regarding the travel time from Skipness to Tarbert Primary School. The Proposal Paper states that this is 25 minutes (Proposal Paper paragraph 18.12) which is correct for driving time between the two points. However, the travel time via

service bus from Skipness to Tarbert Academy is 37 minutes with scheduled pick-up at Skipness Castle at 8:09am and drop off at Tarbert Academy at 8:46am. This correction has now been identified and the slightly longer travel time should be noted. However, in the view of the Council, it does not materially impact any aspects of the proposal as these particular travelling arrangements that have been in place for a number of years now.

14. Opportunity to Make Representations to the Scottish Ministers

- 14.1 If the Education Authority makes a closure decision, it shall notify the Scottish Ministers within 6 working days of that decision and publish the fact that the Scottish Ministers have been notified, and that representations can be made to them. The Education Authority would also be required to publish a notice on its website of the decision to implement the proposal and why it has been satisfied that closure is the most appropriate response to the reasons for formulating the proposal.
- 14.2 The Scottish Ministers will have a maximum of 8 weeks to call in any closure decision made by the Education Authority in certain circumstances. This 8 week timeframe would consist of an initial 3 weeks from the date of decision, during which representations can be made to the Ministers, and a further 5 weeks for the Scottish Ministers to decide whether to issue a call in notice. During this period the Education Authority will not proceed to implement any closure decision.
- 14.3 If the Scottish Ministers call in a closure proposal, it is referred to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels. The Convener must constitute a School Closure Review Panel within 7 days for determination. The Education Authority may not implement a closure decision in whole or in part until the Panel has made its determination. It will usually issue a decision within 8 weeks of the Panel being constituted.
- 14.4 If the School Closure Review Panel refuses to consent to the closure decision, or following publication of the Consultation Report the Education Authority decides not to implement the closure proposal, the Education Authority cannot publish a further closure proposal in relation to the school for 5 years, unless there is a significant change in the school's circumstances.

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 It is proposed that education provision at Skipness Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 1st December 2022. Pupils of Skipness Primary School's catchment area will continue to be educated at Tarbert Primary School. The catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Skipness Primary School.

15.2 This is considered to be the best option to address the reasons for the proposal which are:

- Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for 5 years. The school roll is very low and not predicted to rise in the near future.
- Whilst Skipness Primary School is a sound building, it will deteriorate during mothballing with limited budgets for maintenance. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is £1,293;
- Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing this consultation paper there are 8.49 fte (full time equivalent) vacancies for primary teachers and 7.0 fte vacancies for Head Teachers in Argyll and Bute; and
- The Council needs to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all of its services.

16. Recommendation

16.1 On the basis of the consultation responses received, Education Scotland's report, and having particular regard to the specific factors for rural school closures, it is recommended that education provision at Skipness Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 1st December 2022. The pupils of Skipness Primary School's catchment area will continue to receive their education at Tarbert Primary School. The delineated catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Skipness Primary School.



Argyll and Bute Council

Education



PROPOSAL DOCUMENT: MARCH 2020

Review of Education Provision

Skipness Primary School

SUMMARY PROPOSAL

It is proposed that education provision at Skipness Primary School be discontinued with effect from 28th October 2020.

The catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Skipness Primary School.

Reasons for this proposal

This is the best option to address the reasons for the proposals which are;

- Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for 3 years. The school roll is very low and not predicted to rise in the near future. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is £1,641.
- Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 12 fte vacancies for teachers in Argyll and Bute.
- Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budget for maintenance.

This document has been issued by Argyll and Bute Council in regard to a proposal in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. This document has been prepared by the Council's Education Service with input from other Council Services.

DISTRIBUTION

A copy of this document is available on the Argyll and Bute Council website:

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals>

A summary of this document will be provided to:

- The Parent Councils of the affected schools
- The parents of the pupils at the affected schools
- Parents of children expected to attend an affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this Proposal Document
- The pupils, deemed to be of suitable age and maturity to be able to communicate a view on the proposal, at the affected schools
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools
- The trade unions representatives of the above staff
- Argyll and Bute Councillors
- Tarbert and Skipness Community Council
- Community Planning Partnership
- Relevant users of the affected schools

- The Constituency MSP
- List MSPs for the area
- The Constituency MP
- Chief Superintendent, Police Scotland
- Chief Executive, NHS Highland
- Chief Executive Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT)
- Area Commander, Fire Scotland
- Education Scotland

A copy of this document is also available from:

- Council Headquarters, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT
- Education Offices, Argyll House, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ
- Tarbert Public Library, Barmore Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TW
- Lochgilphead Service Point, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD
- Tarbert Primary School, School Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TE
- Skipness Village Hall, B8001, Tarbert, PA29 6XT

This document is available in alternative formats or in translated form for readers whose first language is not English.

If you would like this document in another language or format, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please apply to the Executive Director, Argyll and Bute Council Headquarters, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT.

Jezeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymaO ten dokument w innym jzyku lub w innym formacie albo jeeli potrzebna jest pomoc Uumacza, to prosimy o kontakt z nami.

本文件可以翻譯為另一語文版本，或製作成另一格式，如有此需要，或需要傳譯員的協助，請與我們聯絡。

Ma tha sibh ag iarraidh an sgrìobhainn seo ann an cànan no riochd eile, no ma tha sibh a' feumachdainn seirbheis eadar, feuch gun leig sibh fios thugainn.

यह दस्तावेज़ यदि आपको किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये, या आपको आनुवाद-सेवाओं की आवश्यकता हो तो हमसे संपर्क करें

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ਜੇ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਫਿੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੈਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔

1 Introduction

- 1.1 On 8th September 2016, Argyll and Bute Council approved the mothballing of Skipness Primary School. The Council agreed that in the event there are no registered pupils by the commencement of session 2018/19 the school be considered for formal closure through the statutory process.

Skipness Primary School – Mothballing Decision:-

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=7207&Ver=4>

- 1.2 On 5th September 2019, the Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the required preliminary consultation and an options appraisal for Skipness Primary School.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=8381&Ver=4>

The Community Services Committee received a report on 10th December 2019 providing details of the Options Appraisal for Skipness Primary School; carried out in accordance with the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010, as amended. The Committee agreed to note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements and requested that officers formulate a draft proposal for consideration at the meeting of the Community Services Committee on 12th March 2020 which, if approved, would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=8513>

- 1.3 The statutory process for the closure of a rural school is laid out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Act, as amended, introduced a presumption against closure of a rural school and details specific requirements which the education authority is required to follow if they are formulating a proposal to close a rural school. This includes the introduction of certain preliminary requirements which must be satisfied prior to the formulation of a proposal.
- 1.4 In addition, the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 sets out a new right for community organisations to request the transfer of local assets into local community ownership/management. This may be something that the Community wish to consider as part of or as a consequence of this process. Public bodies including Councils must consider such requests and make a decision within six months of receiving a valid request.
- 1.5 Skipness Primary School has had zero pupils enrolled since elected members approved the mothballing.
- 1.6 There is a requirement to have special regard to the rural schools factors prior to formulating a proposal to close a rural school. In particular it is necessary to consider any reasonable alternatives before considering closure. It is also necessary to consider the impact on the wider community of a potential closure and the impact of any different travel arrangements. These factors have been considered in the preliminary requirements which were undertaken prior to this proposal being written. A full assessment of the preliminary requirements is set out in the Options Appraisal, which is attached as **Appendix 5**.

1.7 The Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan identifies Argyll and Bute as an area of Scotland with outstanding places, people and potential for a prosperous future for everyone. Our Council, along with our Community Planning Partners, is committed to ensuring that Argyll and Bute's economic success is built on a growing population.

1.8 Over the next five years, our agreed priorities are to ensure that:

- The education we provide meets the needs of all our young people and their families
- We make the most of our assets to build the local economy
- We support individual and community wellbeing
- We strengthen and empower our communities
- We ensure there are homes for all, we tackle poverty and build opportunity
- We have greener and cleaner communities
- We are an employer of choice
- We manage our finances prudently

1.9 The Council, as an Education Authority, has a statutory duty in terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand. This is reflected in "Our Children, Their Future" which is the Education Vision and Strategy for Argyll and Bute Council.

2 Proposal

2.1 It is proposed that education provision at Skipness Primary School be discontinued with effect from 28th October 2020. The catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Skipness Primary School.

Reasons for this proposal

2.2 This is the best option to address the reasons for the proposals which are:

- Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for 3 years. The school roll is very low and not predicted to rise in the near future. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is £1,641.
- Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 12 fte vacancies for teachers in Argyll and Bute.
- Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budget for maintenance.

Additional Considerations

- The Council needs to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all of its services;
- This proposal will bring educational benefits and assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future. This proposal document contains an Educational Benefits Statement;

- The costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high;
- Schools in the Council area are expensive to maintain and operate. Retaining unnecessary accommodation is a serious drain on the resources of the Council and diverts spending from areas that directly affect the educational attainment of pupils; and
- There is no realistic possibility at present of the Council being able to bring its whole school estate up to a satisfactory condition. The present condition is unsustainable and can only be improved by reducing the extent of the estate.

3 Preliminary requirements

- 3.1 The Council is required to consider the future of Skipness Primary School, as it has been mothballed for over 3 years. The Council have considered the reasons for making this proposal, and have also considered other viable alternatives, the likely effect on the community and the likely effect of different travelling arrangements as a consequence of this proposal. Financial implications were also considered. Some of these figures have been recalculated since the Options Appraisal was produced.
- 3.2 The Council considered how the implementation of this proposal would impact on the education of the children affected. The Council also considered the impact on the children who currently live in the catchment area but attend other schools, as well as children who may potentially live in the catchment area in the future.
- 3.3 The place of the school in the community was also considered, in terms of the impact this proposal would have on the sustainability of the community itself. Since the mothballing of the School, the community has continued to have use of the School grounds, and this was also taken into consideration as part of the pre-consultation process.
- 3.4 Impact on the environment was taken into account during the initial pre-consultation process. This included a consideration of the transport implications if this proposal was to be implemented, as children would have to travel by bus to attend Tarbert Primary School.
- 3.5 Four options were presented to the local community by the Council for consideration during the pre-consultation phase, as required by section 12A of the 2010 Act.
- 3.6 Of the four options which were considered by the community and the Council; (d) is the favoured option by the Council, as it was considered it most adequately addressed the reasons for the proposal.
- a) Re-open Skipness Primary School,
 - b) Continued Mothballing of Skipness Primary with pupils zoned to Tarbert Primary School,
 - c) Re-open Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area,
 - d) Close Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area to Tarbert Primary School (The Proposal).

When considering the above options; the positive educational benefits of Tarbert Primary School alongside the factors of projected low pupil numbers, the challenges in recruiting teaching staff and the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard at Skipness Primary School, in addition the lack of local support for reopening Skipness Primary

School, option (d) was considered the most appropriate response to the underlying reasons behind consideration of this proposal.

- 3.7 Following from an initial options appraisal which was presented to the Council's Community Services Committee on 10th December 2019, it was agreed that the preliminary requirements were satisfied enabling the draft proposal to be formulated, with the option to close Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area to Tarbert Primary School being identified as the most adequate means of addressing the reasons for possible proposal.
- 3.8 During the preliminary consultation regarding the future options for Skipness Primary School there were a range of viewpoints gathered from parents, young people and members of the community.
- 3.9 The community reflected that Skipness Primary School had been an integral part of the community, and there were contrasting views on the proposals for the future of Skipness Primary School. However there is a will that the school be retained for community use and not be allowed to fall into disrepair. Skipness community are pursuing options for use of the building as a community hub.
- 3.10 Closing the school would have no impact on staff or pupil travel from the current arrangement. There would be no alteration to the current environmental impact.

Alternatives to the Proposal

- 3.11 The community engagement process prior to the drafting of this proposal considered the views of members of the community and also considered any other alternatives to the closure of Skipness Primary School. Full details from the community engagement and the findings from the preliminary requirements, to include the alternative proposals are attached as **Appendix 5** and are also available here to read:

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=8513>

- 3.12 In conclusion, after the pre-consultation with the community, the Council feels that the proposal to close Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area to Tarbert Primary School is the most reasonable means to address the underlying reasons for considering the future of Skipness Primary School. Further detail is provided in relation to educational benefits, travel, environmental impact, community impact and financial impact below.

4 Assessment of the Proposal

- 4.1 It is proposed that education provision at Skipness Primary School be discontinued with effect from 28th October 2020. The catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Skipness Primary School.
- 4.2 Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for over 3 years. The school condition will deteriorate with limited budgets for maintenance. The school roll is currently zero and is not predicted to rise in the near future. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is £1,641.
- 4.3 Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 12 fte vacancies for teachers in Argyll and Bute.

- 4.4 The Council needs to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all of its services.
- 4.5 This proposal will bring educational benefits and assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future.
- 4.6 The costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high.
- 4.7 Schools in the Council area are expensive to maintain and operate. Retaining unnecessary accommodation is a serious drain on the resources of the Council and diverts spending from areas that directly affect the educational attainment of pupils.
- 4.8 There is no realistic possibility at present of the Council being able to bring its whole school estate up to a satisfactory condition. The present condition is unsustainable and can only be improved by reducing the extent of the estate.
- 4.9 As part of the preliminary requirements in the drafting of this proposal, the Council considered four options. The favoured option by the Council is (d), as it was considered it most adequately addressed the reasons for the proposal.
- a) Re-open Skipness Primary School;
 - b) Continued Mothballing of Skipness Primary with the pupils zoned to Tarbert Primary School;
 - c) Re-open Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area;
 - d) Close Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area to Tarbert Primary School (The Proposal).
- 4.10 Having considered these other alternatives the Council has made a decision that these are not viable alternatives to the closure proposal, and will proceed with the option to consult on the proposal to close Skipness Primary School and extend the catchment area of Tarbert Primary School to include the current catchment area for Skipness Primary School.
- 4.11 The Council has undertaken an appraisal on impact if this proposal was to be implemented.
- 4.12 This includes an assessment of:
- The school roll and predicted school roll;
 - Teacher numbers; and
 - The condition of the building.

This assessment includes a description of what (if any) steps the Council took to address the underlying reasons for the proposal prior to formulating it.

- 4.13 The Council has also undertaken an assessment of likely educational benefits or effects which this proposal may have if implemented on:
- The pupils of any affected school;
 - Any other users of the school's facilities;
 - Any children who would (in the future but for implementation) be likely to become pupils of the school; and
 - The pupils of any other schools in the Council area.

- 4.14 In addition, the Council has also considered how to minimise or avoid any adverse educational effects that may arise from the implementation of this proposal.
- 4.15 The Council has also taken special regard to the following factors if this proposal was to be implemented, as Skipness Primary School is classified as a remote rural school.
- Likely effect on the local community to be assessed by reference to:
 - The sustainability of the community; and
 - Availability of the school's premises and other facilities for use by the school community.
 - Likely effect caused by different travelling arrangements by reference to the effect caused by such arrangements on:
 - Environmental impact; and
 - The schools pupils and staff and other users of the schools facilities.
- 4.16 Finally, the Council has also considered the financial implications of implementation of the proposal and information on this is set out later in this document.

5 School roll

- 5.1 The information in relation to the school roll as shown below is drawn from the yearly pupil census, which takes place in September each year. School rolls by their very nature may fluctuate slightly on an ongoing basis due to changes in pupil numbers as a result of pupils moving to and from the catchment area.

The school roll of Skipness Primary School has seen a steady decline since 2007.

Table 2:	Skipness PS	Tarbert PS
Capacity	26	130
	Roll	Roll
2005-06	7	100
2006-07	7	91
2007-08	7	89
2008-09	7	92
2009-2010	6	95
2010-2011	1	92
2011-2012	3	88
2012-2013	3	83
2013-2014	4	79
2014-2015	3	81
2015-2016	3	83
2016-2017	0	94
2017-2018	0	93

2018-19	0	96
2019-20	0	102

Predicted Roll

Table 3:	Skipness PS	Tarbert PS
Capacity	26	154
	Roll	Roll
2020 -2021	1	109*
2021 -2022	1	106*
2022-2023	1	103*

* A prediction based on information available July 2019.

- 5.2 In 2019-2020 there are zero school aged children who live in the Skipness Primary School catchment area and who attend other schools.
- 5.3 There are currently zero school aged pupils who live in the Skipness catchment area who attend Tarbert Primary School.
- 5.4 The school roll is not predicted to rise significantly in the future. The area around Skipness is a small settlement and is not identified for growth in the Local Development Plan: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp>.
- 5.5 There are no housing allocations and only two live planning permissions for residential development within the Skipness catchment area.

6 Teacher numbers

- 6.1 Teacher numbers are improving nationally, with a 1.23% decrease in the number of teachers nationally from 2014 - 2019. In Argyll and Bute there has been a 3.7% reduction in the fte number of teachers from 2014 - 2019.
- 6.2 As the school has been mothballed for over 3 years, the issue of recruitment of staff has not improved. At the time of writing this report there are 12 fte vacancies for class teachers in Argyll and Bute. Despite a sustained effort to secure permanent staff, there is no reason to think that staffing would not continue to be a considerable challenge for Skipness Primary School
- 6.3 At the current time, if the proposal was to be accepted, there would be no impact on staffing levels at Tarbert Primary School.

7 Condition of the building

- 7.1 Argyll and Bute Council's School Estate Management Planning process identified in 2016 that the condition of Skipness Primary School was satisfactory and graded a B. Outlined in

the Options Appraisal (**Appendix 5** – section 6.3) are the full financial details in reference to costs for the re-opening the building or continuing to retain the building as mothballed.

- 7.2 As part of the consultation process the Council would be open to discussion with the community in regard to the future of the building. This might involve the transfer of the building to a recognised community group through the provisions of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 or some other agreed mechanism. This may provide the community with an opportunity to utilise the building as a driver for community benefit and potential regeneration that could also enhance the sustainability of the community.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

8 Assessment of likely educational benefits on pupils

- 8.1 If this proposal is implemented, the Council believes that there will be considerable educational benefits arising from this. These centre around;
- Learning and teaching;
 - Meeting learners needs;
 - Broadening the range of opportunities; and
 - The environment for learning.
- 8.2 This statement focusses on Tarbert Primary School, which is the school pupils from the Skipness Primary School catchment area have previously attended from October 2016, although there are currently no school aged pupils in the Skipness Primary School catchment area.
- 8.3 The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening Skipness Primary School as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children, however the closure of the School and continued attendance of pupils at other schools allows children to experience a curriculum which is matched to their needs.
- 8.4 Skipness and Tarbert Primary Schools are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Although there are currently no school aged children in the Skipness Primary School catchment area, children from Skipness Primary School area who previously attended Tarbert Primary School continued to benefit from education in a locality familiar to them, and still relatively close to home.
- 8.5 The co-location of the Early Learning Centre (ELC) and the primary classes at Tarbert Primary School enables a strong transition process between the ELC and school and includes joint early level learning every week.

9 Learning and Teaching

- 9.1 The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, to help every child and young person to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work. In Tarbert Primary School, children are encouraged to be eager and active participants who are engaged,

resilient and highly motivated during their learning. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon.

- 9.2 The learning environment encourages high level of achievement, providing a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential within the four contexts of learning. In Tarbert Primary School children may be taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children, take part in team activities and move with their peers to secondary school.
- 9.3 There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of curriculum for excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.
- 9.4 The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community.
- 9.5 At Tarbert Primary School, staff are challenged and supported through a range of continuous professional development and review opportunities gained by working and learning with a range of colleagues. Tarbert Primary School is part of the Mid Argyll and Kintyre Cluster, which means that staff can be supported together, moderation and tracking of pupil progress is enabled and staff work across stage appropriate groups. Colleagues within Tarbert Primary School are able to support and challenge each other on a daily basis. The whole staff are able to bring a range of talents and skills to benefit outcomes for learners.
- 9.6 Tarbert Primary School encourages nurturing and positivity. One aspect of this work is a successful Buddy System. Children from different stages work and learn together. This vertical support is particularly evident on sports day and in the dining room when groups of children are together in a social context. This system develops and benefits both the 'buddy' and the 'buddied'. This system works well and benefits the wide range of children in the school.

10 Meeting learners' needs

- 10.1 Through the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC), practice model, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority and teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Careful tracking and monitoring procedures are in place to evidence pupil progress. This includes professional dialogue with teachers, learning discussions with children, classroom observations, assessment and looking at pupil work.
- 10.2 The school also has planned meetings and discussions with parents. These discussions between home and school improve parental engagement whilst focussing on next steps for learning. Where appropriate, intervention is put in place, while working effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure the needs of each child are met. In the primary classes, standards of attainment have been maintained over the last three years. Almost all children are achieving national expectations in reading, writing, listening, talking and numeracy. Health and Wellbeing continues to develop within the Promoting Alternative Thinking

Strategies (PATHS) programme, which supports positive behaviours and relationship within the school.

- 10.3 The staff, parent body and partner groups also bring opportunities for increased collaborative working. This applies both in terms of the wider curriculum and within aspects of the curriculum that may be enhanced by staff individual expertise e.g. PE, language, science, expressive arts teaching.
- 10.4 A 'Respect Me' policy is built into class lessons and permeates the whole school ethos through assemblies and class work on rights and responsibilities.

11 Broadening the Range of Opportunities

- 11.1 Children are offered a range of active, planned experiences which help them develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing both now and in the future.
- 11.2 There is also a strong transition planning process between Tarbert Primary School and Tarbert Academy, which involves increased opportunities for children to participate and to make new connections.
- 11.3 Children are provided with a variety of experiences to develop their sense of responsibility, independence, confidence and enterprising attitude.
- 11.4 Across the school children are engaged with learning and contribute well in lessons. Staff promote positive relationships at all levels and also through the Young Sports Leaders programme, the impact of this being that children enjoy good relationships with their peers, young leaders feel confident and entrusted to take these developments forward.

12 Environment for Learning

- 12.1 Tarbert Primary School is a suitably-equipped and well supported school, situated in the village of Tarbert. The entire building is well maintained and along with the surrounding scenery provides attractive accommodation for the Tarbert Primary School. The school has an all-weather pitch adjacent to the school, which is well utilised. The building has facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs.
- 12.2 The children maintain links with friends who live in their own village as well as creating links with children from other rural communities.
- 12.3 Any mitigating effects around the adverse weather and transport issues are outweighed by the benefits of this proposal.
- 12.4 In summary, there are a range of educational benefits for pupils if this proposal was to be implemented, as summarised in the paragraphs above. There are benefits for the development of social and emotional skills, as well as the educational benefits resultant from access to a more diverse curriculum. The learning environment in Tarbert Primary School also offers children the opportunity to participate in a wider range of active learning strategies.

13 Assessment of likely educational benefits on other users of the school's facilities

Implications for staff

- 13.1 If this proposal is implemented, there will be no new implications for teaching and ancillary staff in Tarbert Primary School.
- 13.2 If this proposal is implemented, the Council does not envisage any adverse effects from the proposal in respect of staffing. Should issues arise however, these will be mitigated through the Council Educational Management Team support structure.

Early Learning Centre Users – Pre Five Children

- 13.3 The co-location for the Early Learning Centre (ELC) and the primary classes at Tarbert Primary School enables a strong transition process between the ELC and the school and includes joint early level learning every week.

14 Assessment of likely educational benefits on any children who would (in the future but for implementation) be likely to become pupils of the school.

Existing and future pupils

- 14.1 Children who may live in this catchment area in the future will benefit from the broad range of educational opportunities which are presented through this proposal, as detailed above.
- 14.2 There would be positive educational benefits associated with this proposal. The management arrangements of the school would be strengthened and there would be opportunities for increasing the range of the curriculum and increasing the use of active pedagogies.
- 14.3 The proposal could increase the roll of Tarbert Primary School and would thus extend the peer group for all pupils, present and future. The larger school should be able to support a wider range of social and extra-curricular activities.
- 14.4 Pupils who would otherwise have attended Skipness Primary School, which consists of one classroom, a dining area and school office, would benefit from daily interaction in a larger peer group and from improved educational arrangements as described above. Pupils in the combined school will have more shared experiences and opportunity for friendships. This will enhance their confidence and make the transition to secondary easier. Larger year groups make the provision of specialist services more viable and provide enhanced opportunities for school trips. Tarbert Primary School meets all the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

15 Assessment of likely educational benefits on the pupils of any other schools in the Council area

- 15.1 The current mothballing of the school has had an indirect effect on other pupils in Argyll and Bute. The reduction in the running costs for the school means that this is a saving to the Council, which is not taken from elsewhere.
- 15.2 There are no other significant impacts from this proposal on other pupils in the authority or who attend other schools, in either a positive or a negative way.

Placing requests

- 15.3 This proposal will not affect the right of parents to request that their child attend a school of their choice rather than the designated school in whose catchment area the family lives as provided by the Education (Scotland) Act 1980.

16 Consideration of how to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the implementation of this proposal

- 16.1 The main adverse effect from this proposal would be the length of the journey to school for children who live in the Skipness Primary School catchment area. However, children who previously lived in this catchment area and attended Tarbert Primary School made this journey, and families in the area do not feel this is a major consideration. Funded school transport would also continue to be provided for pupils should this proposal be implemented.

17 Summary of educational benefits statement

- 17.1 Educational benefits of this proposal, such as the ability for children to participate in a broad range of experiences, the development of the strategic leadership of the head teacher in taking forward improvements in learning and teaching, and the ability to meet the educational, social and emotional needs of the children are significant benefits to this proposal. During the pre-consultation phase, these benefits were explored in detail and details from the community engagement and the findings from the preliminary requirements, to include the alternative proposals and the authority's assessment of other likely effects of the proposal and the reasons for that assessment are attached as **Appendix 5**.
- 17.2 Whilst the positive educational benefits are numerous, there is one negative aspect identified which arises from the children attending Tarbert Primary School. This negative aspect is principally around the fact that children have to travel by either bus or car to school. However it is considered that the positive aspects of this proposal outweigh the negative aspect of some travelling for children.

18 Factors for rural school closures

- 18.1 The Council has taken special regard to the following factors in relation to this proposal as Skipness Primary School is classified as a rural school.

The likely effect on the local community if this proposal is implemented

- 18.2 The Council has made an assessment on the sustainability of the community should this proposal be implemented and considers that this may have a positive impact.
- 18.3 The Scottish Government focuses on four key areas of importance to rural communities;
- a strong and diverse rural economy, harnessing traditional strengths and with an appetite for change,
 - thriving rural communities where everyone can enjoy a decent quality of life, where the young are not forced to leave their communities to get on and where the vulnerable are no longer excluded,
 - strong, community focused public services that are accessible, of the highest possible quality and with the greatest possible choice,
 - a rural Scotland whose natural and cultural heritage flourishes in all its diversity

- 18.4 In rural communities, the challenges and opportunities are largely defined by the local area and can often best be met by a bottom-up, community-led response. Strong community leadership is vital to articulating local priorities and driving forward change and growth.
- 18.5 There is the potential if this proposal is implemented to capitalise on the existing will and drive in this community, with opportunities for local leaders to enable them to organise, motivate and inspire their neighbours. The opportunity for the local community to acquire this building could be key to helping to make this community an independent, resilient place to live. Management of assets such as Skipness Primary School may be an important step in building community confidence, promoting growth and enabling communities to realise their aspirations.
- 18.6 Research¹ has shown that when communities feel empowered, there is:
- greater participation in local democracy;
 - increased confidence and skills among local people;
 - more people volunteering in their communities; and
 - greater satisfaction with quality of life in the neighbourhood.
- 18.7 Within Skipness there is Skipness Village Hall which is used for community events. Almost all people who attended the preliminary consultation strongly stated the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair.
- 18.8 It is considered that formal closure of this school could have a positive impact on the wider community, and may lead to an increase in other users of the facility which may lead to an improvement in economic growth.
- 18.9 Indeed, the school closure may help to empower the local community should the community wish to undertake an asset transfer process for the building. This could have a positive impact on community sustainability. Formal closure would mean that these plans could potentially be progressed by the community who are already considering future uses for the building. This may enhance community life by giving a community enterprise focus.

On the availability of the school's premises and its other facilities for use by the community

- 18.10 During the pre-consultation phase, almost all members of the community supported closure of the school with the suggestion that the building and adjoining grounds could potentially be retained for community use. Within Skipness there is Skipness Village Hall which is used for community events. All people who attended the pre-consultation meeting felt that the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the aesthetic of the community.
- 18.11 It is accepted that a school closure may have an adverse effect on a community, but a community hub could be an asset to the community. If the local plans for the building progress, this could have a positive impact on the sustainability of the community and in particular the availability of the school's premises and other facilities for use by the community. Formal closure of the school would mean that these plans could potentially be progressed by the community.

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/>

The likely effect caused by any different travelling arrangements

- 18.12 The travel distance from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles on the B8001/A83. Travel time is approximately twenty five minutes. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Skipness community.
- 18.13 Implementation of the proposal would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff and pupils. The closure of Skipness Primary School, in terms of current travel arrangements would have a neutral effect on the environment. There is no current annual transport cost for pupils to travel to Tarbert Primary School.
- 18.14 It is anticipated that the effect on the travel arrangements of staff and other users of the facility would not differ materially from that of the pupils accessing the school.

Environmental impact

- 18.15 Currently no pupils travel to Tarbert Primary School from the Skipness Primary School Catchment area. Therefore, this option would have a neutral environmental impact on the current position and would have no impact on the current travel arrangements for staff and pupils.
- 18.16 If this proposal was to be implemented there would be little or no impact on the natural environment.

19 Financial Impact

- 19.1 The full breakdown of the financial analysis is detailed in **Appendix 4**. Some of this information has been recalculated since the Options Appraisal was prepared. In particular the annual cost of mothballing the school has been recalculated from £1,644 to £1,641. This information gives details on the estimated cost if Skipness Primary School was still to be an occupied and operational establishment. However, as Skipness Primary School is currently mothballed, the cost for the mothballing is estimated at £1,641 per year. Should the school be reopened, occupied and operational, the running costs per year are estimated at £143,666.
- 19.2 Column 2 of Table 1 at **Appendix 4** shows the projected annual running costs of Skipness whilst Column 3 shows the additional impact on Tarbert Primary as the receiving school. The annual recurring savings (or costs) are shown in Column 4.
- 19.3 The main elements included within a school budget are teacher employment costs (i.e. basic salary costs plus related employer's National Insurance and Superannuation contributions plus any relevant individual allowances); Local Government employee costs and an allocation for discretionary expenditure incurred by the school (i.e. educational equipment, materials, staff travel, etc.). Teacher staffing budgets are calculated on an annual basis and within the primary sector are determined, taking cognisance of the SNCT class size maxima, by the number of classes required to provide for the specific number and age of the pupils in each school. When a school ceases to be operational the teacher staffing budget is adjusted (at the appropriate time), per entitlement information from Education HR, with the staffing budget resulting in a nil value.
- 19.4 In line with the national priority of maintaining teacher numbers, the Education Service operates on the basis that supernumerary teachers are redeployed and therefore their salary

costs still exist with an increase to the receiving school's budget. Some of the costs noted in column 3 of Table 1 will not directly impact on Tarbert Primary School but they will be a cost to the Authority as a whole, for example school transport, and the costs of maintaining the teachers employed in Skipness Primary School.

- 19.5 There are currently no annual transport costs for pupils to attend Tarbert Primary School. Transport costs per year to attend Skipness Primary School, if it were to be reopened, are estimated at £14,282 per year. Transport costs per year to attend Tarbert Primary School would be £14,282 although use of the service bus would incur no additional transport costs.
- 19.6 Table 2 contains the notional 30 year lifecycle costs that would arise based on the GIA of the various schools irrespective of the number of pupils accommodated. Lifecycle costs are representative of the cost needed to keep the building in a good state of repair. The cost over the next thirty years therefore to maintain Skipness Primary School is £133,686 and for Tarbert Primary School this is £1,023,865
- 19.7 Table 3 contains the annual running costs during mothballing of Skipness Primary School and these are estimated at £1,641 per year. This includes non-domestic rates, utility costs, insurances, etc. If the school was to be formally closed, this would allow the Council to take steps towards selling the school to a third party or local community.
- 19.8 The transfer of pupils from Skipness to Tarbert Primary School would impact on the council's Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE) allocation for Tarbert Primary School Teaching Staff as there would be a reduction in the Percentage of Primary Pupils in Small Schools. This reduction is estimated at £4,000. However Argyll and Bute Council is supported through the floor mechanism so would not see a reduction in their overall funding.

20 Equality and Socio Economic Impact

The Council as a public authority has a duty under the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty 2011, the Fairer Scotland Duty (Part one of the Equality Act) and the Islands (Scotland) Act (2018) to have due regard to their provisions when making strategic financial decisions. This is done through assessing the potential impact of the decision on equality through Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments (EQSEIAs).

The Council will undertake the process of assessment during the consultation process in respect of this proposal to ensure that due regard is given to such matters in the decision making process.

21 Consultation arrangements

- 21.1 Prior to formulating a rural school closure proposal under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act* 2010 (the 2010 Act), as amended, the Education Authority must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act. The Authority has previously identified its reasons for formulating a possible proposal, considered whether there were any reasonable alternatives to the possible proposal as a response to those reasons, and assessed each of the options in accordance with Section 12A(2)(c) of the 2010 Act. After considering a paper addressing these preliminary requirements, the Education Authority decided on 10th December 2019 that, having specific regard to the reasons for formulating a prospective closure proposal, the option to close Skipness Primary School and redraw its catchment area to Tarbert Primary School is the most appropriate response to the specific reasons for the potential proposal.

- 21.2 This document was considered by the Council as Education Authority on 12th March 2020 when it was agreed that it should be adopted as a relevant proposal and issued as a basis for consultation. No decision will be taken by the Council on the proposal contained in this paper until after the end of the consultation period. The Council will then receive a report on the consultation and will reach a view on the proposal.
- 21.3 A summary of this document will be issued free of charge to all of the consultees listed on page 2 of this document and it will also be published on the Council's website:
- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals>
- 21.4 As part of a consultation process, the Education Authority must publish the proposal paper, advertise it and notify Education Scotland and all of the relevant consultees as prescribed by Schedule 2 of the 2010 Act, inviting them to make representations on the proposal. The consultation period will be from 19th March 2020 until the close of business on 15th May 2020 which lasts for a minimum of 6 weeks and includes at least 30 school days.
- 21.5 A public meeting will be held at Skipness Village Hall on 6th May 2020 at 7.00pm. Anyone wishing to attend the meeting and participate is welcome to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Education Authority and the Education Authority will present reasons for bringing forward the proposal. There will be an opportunity for questions to be asked and comments to be made. A note will be taken so that comments can later be summarised and considered. However, the Education Authority will also consider written comments which should be sent to Education Services, School Consultations, Argyll & Bute Council, Argyll House, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ and should be received no later than 5.00pm on 15th May 2020.
- 21.6 Written representations may be made on the proposal and the alternatives to the proposal. Written representations may also suggest other alternatives to the proposal.
- 21.7 Following the close of the consultation, the Education Authority will provide Education Scotland with copies of the written representations submitted, a summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting and any other relevant documentation. This will allow Education Scotland to prepare a report on the proposal within a period of 3 weeks.
- 21.8 After receiving Education Scotland's report, the Education Authority will then prepare and publish a Consultation Report in accordance with Sections 9, 10 and 13 of the 2010 Act. The Education Authority will thereafter make its final decision on whether to implement the proposal. The decision will be published a minimum of 3 weeks after publication of the Consultation Report. If the Education Authority makes a closure decision, it shall notify the Scottish Ministers within 6 working days of that decision and publish the fact that the Scottish Ministers have been notified, and that representations can be made to them. The Education Authority would also be required to publish a notice on its website of the decision to implement the proposal and why it has been satisfied that closure is the most appropriate response to the reasons for formulating the proposal.
- 21.9 The Scottish Ministers will have a maximum of 8 weeks to call in any closure decision made by the Education Authority in certain circumstances. This 8 week timeframe would consist of an initial 3 weeks from the date of decision, during which representations can be made to the ministers, and a further 5 weeks for the Scottish Ministers to decide whether to issue a call in notice. During this period the Education Authority will not proceed to implement any closure decision.

- 21.10 If the Scottish Ministers call in a closure proposal, it is referred to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels. The Convener must constitute a School Closure Review Panel within 7 days for determination. The Education Authority may not implement a closure decision in whole or in part until the Panel has made its determination. It will usually issue a decision within 8 weeks of the Panel being constituted.
- 21.11 If the School Closure Review Panel refuses to consent to the closure decision, or following publication of the Consultation Report the Education Authority decides not to implement the closure proposal, the Education Authority cannot publish a further closure proposal in relation to the school for 5 years, unless there is a significant change in the school's circumstances.

22 Conclusion

- 22.1 It is proposed that education provision at Skipness Primary School be discontinued with effect from 28th October 2020. The catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Skipness Primary School.
- 22.2 It has been assessed that the proposal is the most appropriate means of addressing the underlying reasons for formulating it, which are:
- Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for three years. The school condition will deteriorate with limited budgets for maintenance. The school roll is currently zero and is not predicted to rise significantly in the near future. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is £1,641;
 - Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 12 fte vacancies for teachers in Argyll and Bute; and
 - The Council needs to allocate its resources in a way that ensures the quality of all of its services.

Other Considerations

- This proposal will bring educational benefits to all present and future users of the affected schools and assist in ensuring that the Education budget is more sustainable into the future;
- The costs per pupil in under-occupied schools are excessively high;
- Schools in the Council area are expensive to maintain and operate;
- Retaining unnessecary accomodation is a serious drain on the resources of the Council and diverts spending from areas that directly affect the educational attainment of pupils;
- There is no realistic possibility at present of the Council being able to bring its whole school estate up to a satisfactory condition. The present condition is unsustainable and can only be improved by reducing the extent of the estate.

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Louise Connor
Head of Education: Learning & Teaching

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Policy Lead for Education

For further information contact:

Simone McAdam
Education Manager
simone.mcadam@argyll-bute.gov.uk

January 2020

APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Consultation Letter
Appendix 2- Response form
Appendix 3 - Maps
Appendix 4 - Financial template
Appendix 5- Options Appraisal

APPENDIX 1Argyll and Bute Council

Comhairle Earra Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Executive Director: Douglas Hendry

**Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA318RT**

Telephone: 01546 605522 Fax:

Our Ref:**Ref:****If phoning or calling please ask for:****e-mail:** simone.mcadam@argyll-bute.gov.uk**Council Website:** www.argyll-bute.gov.uk**Skipness Primary School**

Dear Consultee,

Review of Education Provision**Notice and Summary of Proposal for closing Skipness Primary School****Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010****Background**

Argyll and Bute Council, through its Education Service, aims to realise ambition, excellence and equity for all.

The Council is consulting on a proposal to close Skipness Primary School. This notice provides a summary of a proposal that you may have an interest in or are required to be notified of, giving you key information about the proposal.

The Council is conducting a public consultation process. This will commence on 19th March 2020 and will conclude on 15th May 2020. This is the period within which you will be able to make written representations to the Council in respect of the proposal. If you wish your view to be taken account of in the consultation exercise you must submit your written representation within this period. This notice and summary provides further information on where a full copy of the proposal may be obtained or referenced and also advises on how you can make written representations to the Council.

The Council will hold a meeting where officers will be able to provide information on the proposal. The details of the public meeting are contained in this notice and summary.

It is important that everyone we are consulting tells us what they think of the proposal. Please read this notice and summary and then consider the contents of the proposal document. You can then tell us what you think of the proposal by making written representation and/or by attending the public meeting. This notice and summary tell you how to do that.

The Proposal

It is proposed that education provision at Skipness Primary School be discontinued with effect from 28th October 2020. The catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Skipness Primary School.

Reasons for this proposal

This is considered to be the best option to address the reasons for the proposals which are;

- Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for over three years. The school condition will deteriorate with limited budgets for maintenance. The school roll is zero and is not predicted to rise in the near future.
- Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. At the time of writing there are 12 fte vacancies for teachers in Argyll and Bute.
- Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for maintenance.

The Council's education strategy Our Children Their Future

Together we will realise ambition, excellence and equality for all.

- Raise educational attainment and achievement for all,
- Use performance information to secure improvement for children and young people,
- Ensure children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed,
- Equip young people to secure and sustain positive destinations and achieve success in life,
- Ensure high quality partnership working and community engagement,
- Strengthen leadership at all levels.

Alternatives to the Proposal

The following alternatives to the proposal were considered at the preliminary pre-consultation stage of this process;

- a) Re-open Skipness Primary School,
- b) Continued Mothballing of Skipness Primary with the pupils zoned to Tarbert Primary School,
- c) Re-open Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area,
- d) Close Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area to Tarbert Primary School (the Proposal).

Written representations may be made on those alternatives as well as on the proposal.

Written representations on the proposal may suggest other alternatives to the proposal.

What will we do?

We will consult with people by:

- Providing a notice of the consultation and a summary of the proposal to the relevant consultees **this is that notice and summary**

- Placing an advert in the local press
- Putting information on our website <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals>
- Holding a public meeting to explain the proposal
- Ask parents, carers, children, young people, teachers, support staff and others to tell us what they think of the proposals.

What to do now?

- Please read the full proposal document
- Please attend the Public Meeting which will be held on 6th May 2020 at 7.00pm in Skipness Village Hall.
- Let us know what you think by:
Letter to: Education Services
School Consultations
Argyll & Bute Council
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon
PA23 8AJ

Returning the attached response sheet by post or by;

Email to: argyllhoureception@argyll-bute.gov.uk

What next?

Whilst the Council is engaging in a consultation process in relation to this proposal that does not mean that the proposal will go ahead. It does mean that the Council is engaging in a consultation process to seek your views on the proposal.

All the points raised during the consultation will be carefully considered and Elected Members will then decide if the plan should go ahead.

If the suggestion goes ahead, any children from Skipness Primary School catchment area would be educated at Tarbert Primary School.

Please note that this summary document is for convenience only. Full details of the consultation can be obtained from:

- Council Headquarters, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT
- Education Offices, Argyll House, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ
- Tarbert Public Library, Barmore Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TW
- Lochgilphead Service Point, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD
- Tarbert Primary School, School Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TE
- Skipness Village Hall, B8001, Tarbert, PA29 6XT

It is also available electronically via our website:

- <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/school-consultations-and-proposals>

Yours faithfully,

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director with responsibility for Education



Argyll and Bute Council
Education

RESPONSE FORM

I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Elected Members and Council Officers of Argyll and Bute Council.

Proposal

It is proposed that:

Education provision at Skipness Primary School be discontinued with effect from 28th October 2020. The catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Skipness Primary School.

This part of the form must be completed for a valid response:

Name: (please print)

Address:

Post Code:

I agree/do not agree (delete which does not apply) that my response can be made publicly available

Signature:

Date:

YOUR INTEREST: (please tick)

Parent <input type="checkbox"/>	Child / Young Person <input type="checkbox"/>	Staff <input type="checkbox"/>	Other * <input type="checkbox"/>
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Elected Member / MSP / MP

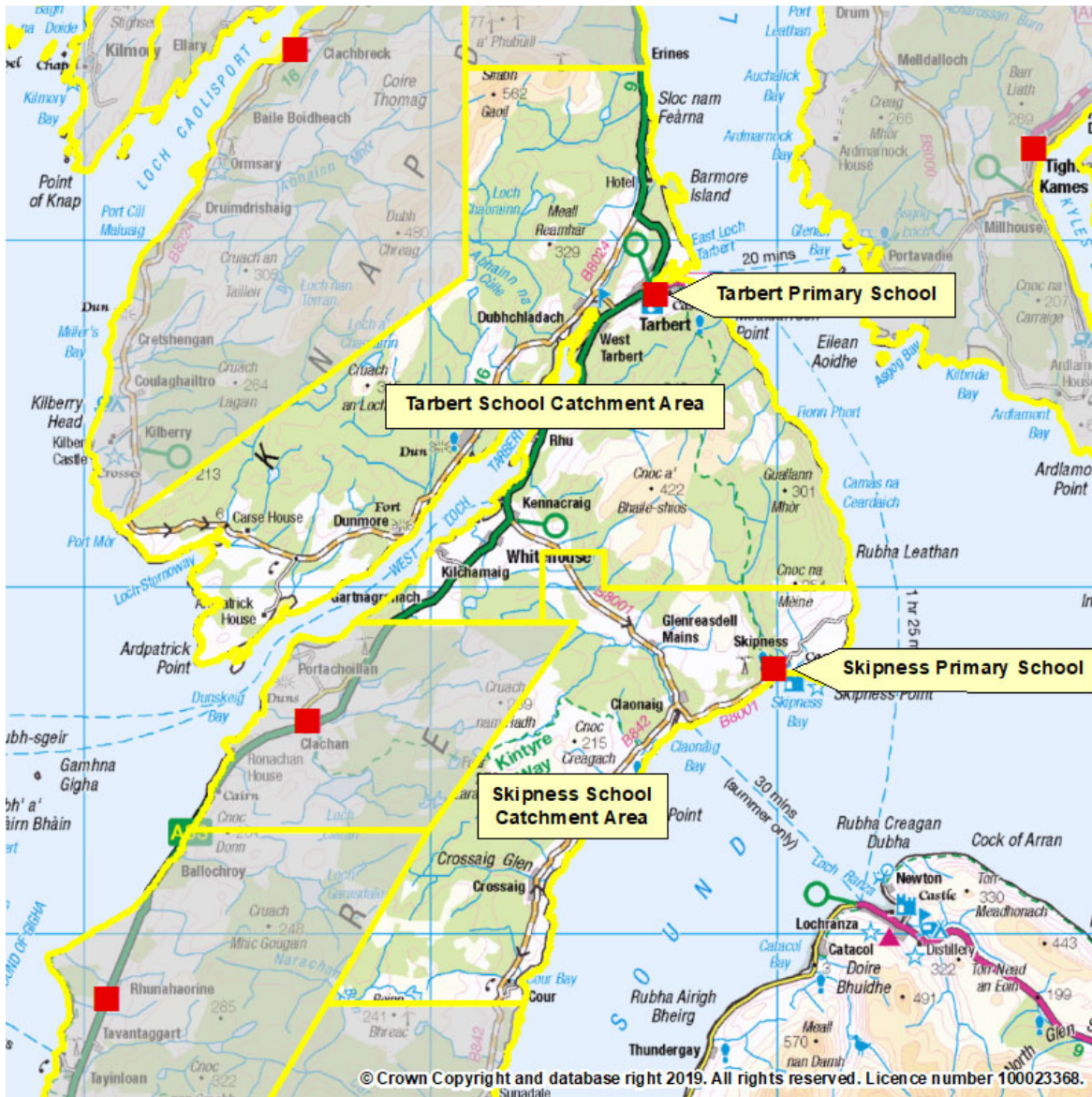
Member of Community Council

*Other: (please specify)

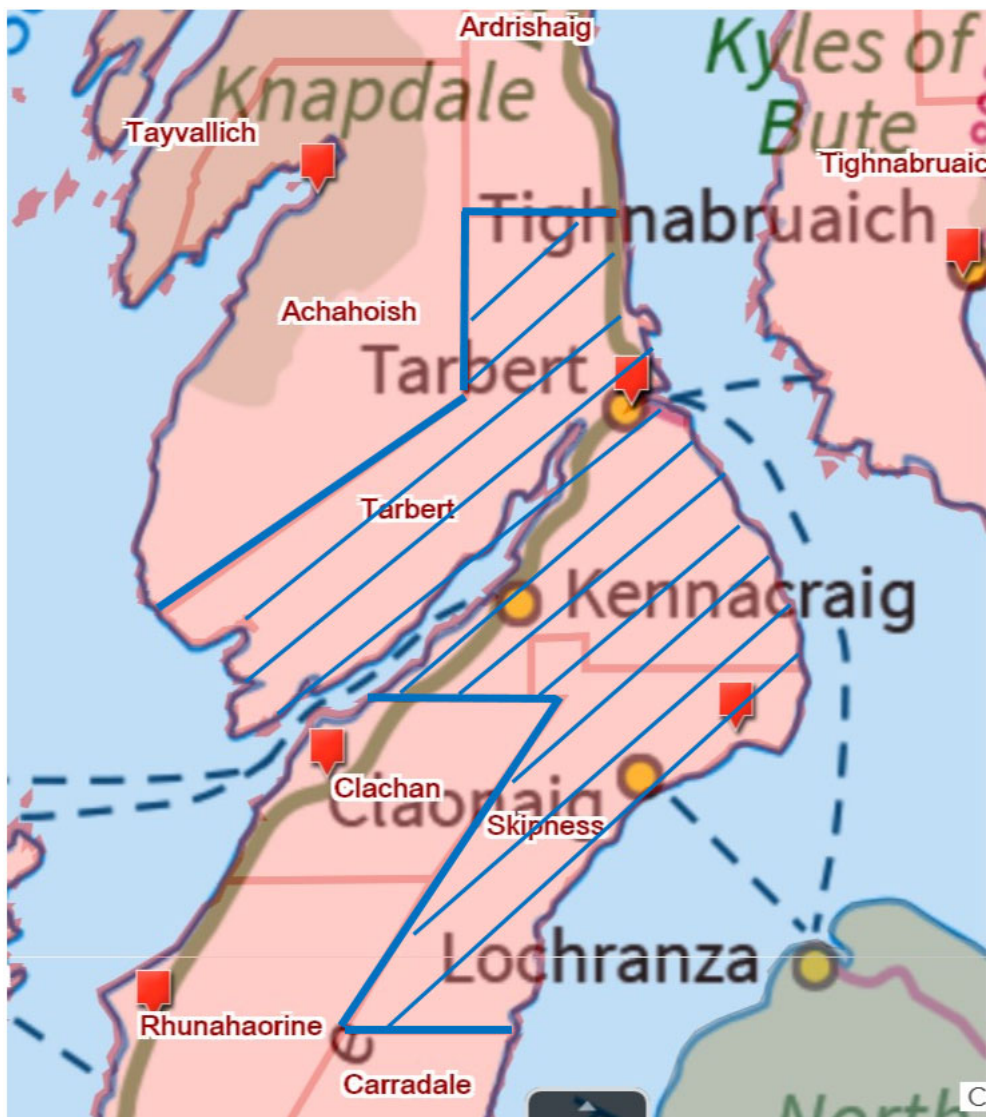
Please state your views on the proposal (continue overleaf if necessary)

APPENDIX 3 - MAPS

MAP OF CURRENT PRIMARY SCHOOL CATCHMENT AREA



MAP OF PROPOSED CATCHMENT AREA



APPENDIX 4 – FINANCIAL TEMPLATE

Table 1¹

Name of School	Projected annual costs for full financial year 2019/20	Additional financial impact on receiving school Tarbert Primary	Annual recurring savings (column 2 minus column 3)
Skipness Primary			
School costs			
<i>Employee costs -</i>			
teaching staff	98,567	98,569	0
support staff	15,522		15,522
teaching staff training (CPD etc)			
support staff training			
Supply costs	2,681		2,681
<i>Building costs:</i>			
property insurance	226		226
non domestic rates	325		325
water & sewerage charges			0
energy costs	1,966		1,966
cleaning (contract or in-house)	261		261
building repair & maintenance	4,190		4,190
grounds maintenance	142		142
facilities management costs	163		163
revenue costs arising from capital			0
other - refuse collection; telephones	556		556
<i>School operational costs:</i>			
learning materials	2,823	67	2,756
catering (contract or inhouse)	12,911	475	12,437
SQA costs			0
other school operational costs (e.g. licences)			0
<i>Transport costs:</i>			
home to school			
other pupil transport costs		14,282 ²	-14,282
staff travel			0
SCHOOL COSTS SUB-TOTAL	140,335	113,392	26,942
Income:			

¹ These figures have been calculated based on Skipness Primary school roll the last full year prior to mothballing.

² This figure is based on current financial costs if transport was necessary to be provided.

Sale of meals	-17	-17	0
Lets			0
External care provider			0
Other			0
SCHOOL INCOME SUB-TOTAL	-17	-17	0
TOTAL COSTS MINUS INCOME FOR SCHOOL	140,318	113,376	26,942

UNIT COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR	46,773¹	37,792	3,368
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Table 2

Capital costs	School proposed for closure	Receiving school
	Skipness Primary	Primary
Capital Life Cycle cost	133,686	1,023,865
Third party contributions to capital costs	0	0

Table 3

Annual Property costs incurred (moth-balling) until disposal	
property insurance	226
non domestic rates	325
water & sewerage charges	
energy costs	350
cleaning (contract or in-house)	
security costs	
building repair & maintenance	450
grounds maintenance	7
facilities management costs	283
other	
TOTAL ANNUAL COST UNTIL DISPOSAL	1,641

¹ This figure has been calculated based on Skipness Primary school roll of the last full year prior to mothballing.

Table 4

Non-recurring revenue costs	
	0
TOTAL NON-RECURRING REVENUE COSTS	

Table 5

Impact on GAE	
<p>The Primary Indicator determining the GAE allocation for Primary School Teaching Staff is based on the number of primary school pupils with the Secondary Indicator being the percentage of pupils in small schools (roll < 70 pupils averaged over 2 years). The pupils from Skipness are designated to attend which has a roll of > 70 pupils. The additional pupils from Skipness will maintain the roll of above the small school threshold. There will be a loss of small school GAE for those pupils attending Skipness equating to approximately £4,000. Argyll and Bute Council, however, is supported by the floor mechanism therefore any calculated reduction in GAE would not have an actual impact on the overall GAE allocation.</p>	4,000
GAE IMPACT	4,000

APPENDIX 5 – OPTIONS APPRAISAL



EDUCATION

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 8th September 2016, Argyll and Bute Council approved the mothballing of Skipness Primary School. The Council agreed that in the event there are no registered pupils by the commencement of session 2018/19 the school be considered for formal closure through the statutory process.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=7207&Ver=4>

On 5th September 2019, the Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the required preliminary consultation and an options appraisal, for Skipness Primary School. The Community Services Committee received a report presenting and outlining details of a potential formal consultation under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* (as amended) and a broad timeline of this process.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=8381&Ver=4>

The statutory process for the closure of a rural school is laid out in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* as amended by the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

The Act, as amended, contains a presumption against closure of a rural school and details specific requirements which the education authority is required to follow if they are formulating a proposal to close a rural school. This includes the introduction of a preliminary consultation process.

In addition, the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015* sets out a new right for community organisations to request the transfer of local assets into local community ownership/management. Public bodies, including councils, must consider such requests and respond to them within a reasonable timescale.

Skipness Primary School has had zero pupils enrolled since elected members approved the mothballing.

On 5th September 2019, Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the preliminary requirements in relation to considering a rural school closure and look at an options appraisal for Skipness Primary School. This review will enable the Education Service to identify and consider the options put forward.

The 2010 Act makes special arrangements in regard to rural schools that is in effect a presumption against their closure. There is a requirement to have special regard to the rural schools factors prior to formulating a proposal to close a rural school. In particular, it is necessary to consider any reasonable

alternatives before considering closure. It is also necessary to consider the impact on the wider community of a potential closure and the impact of any different travel arrangements. These factors have been considered in this options appraisal.

2. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

2.1 An authority that is contemplating formulating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in section 12A of the 2010 Act before starting to prepare its proposal paper. In particular, it must identify the underlying reasons why the future of the School is being considered, which are as follows:

1. Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for three years. The school roll was very low and not predicted to rise in the near future. This continues to be the situation.
2. Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. In September 2019 there were 18.5 fte vacancies for both Head Teachers and Teachers.
3. Whilst the School is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for maintenance.

The Council is therefore considering the future of Skipness Primary School. The various options are explored within this paper.

3. BACKGROUND

Argyll and Bute is an area of outstanding natural beauty sitting within an ancient landscape with a strong cultural identity. Today, the culture of Argyll and Bute is reflected in its traditional industries of fishing, farming and crofting, sports such as shinty and in its world class musicians and artists as well as its modern commercial industries such as wind turbine production and fish farming.

Argyll and Bute is geographically the second largest authority in Scotland. Education is delivered in a range of settings including schools, partnerships and youth services.

3.1 Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan

The Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan identifies Argyll and Bute as an area of Scotland with outstanding places, people and potential for a prosperous future for everyone. Our Council along with our Community Planning Partners, is committed to ensuring that Argyll and Bute's Economic Success is built on a Growing Population.

This strategic approach embraces the vision for our area, our communities and our people as outlined in the Corporate Plan. Our key service priorities support

the delivery of our commitments in the plans, helping to focus on local outcomes that will achieve meaningful improvements for the area, our local communities and our citizens.

Councils have a statutory responsibility in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to achieve best value. Our Community Services Asset Management Plan provides a review of the property assets used to deliver services. It incorporates the School Estate Management Plan which reflects the local implementation of Building Better Schools: Investing in Scotland's Future, the national school estate strategy developed by the Scottish Government in conjunction with local authorities.

The aspirations, guiding principles and objectives contained within Building Better Schools are reflected throughout Education and Children's Services Asset Management Plan (SAMP) for schools and public buildings, both in the management of the existing assets and in the design and construction of developments.

3.2 Our Children Their Future

Councils, as an Education Authority, have a statutory duty in terms of the *Education (Scotland) Act 1980* to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand. This is reflected in Our Children, Their Future: Education Vision and Strategy.

3.3 Skipness and the Local Area - the Skipness Primary School Setting

Skipness is a scenically beautiful area situated on the most North Westerly point of the Kintyre peninsula. Skipness is a small and picturesque village overlooking the Kilbrannan sound towards the Isle of Arran, whose name means 'point of the ships' in ancient Nordic tongue. The Kintyre Way passes through the village of Skipness on its way from Tarbert to Southend, encouraging outdoor enthusiasts to take in the natural beauty of the area. Skipness village is home to the historic attractions of the 13th Century Skipness Castle and Kilbrannan Chapel from the same time period which are open to the public and attracts visitors throughout the year.

3.4 The School within the Community

Skipness Primary School was very active within the community. It was a focus for social and educational events. The pupils invited the community to attend events on many occasions every year. Whilst being mothballed, the school no longer continues to be used for meetings. With Skipness Village Hall, a community managed charity that host various community events and can be hired privately, being the hub of the village.

3.5 Population

Argyll and Bute has an average population density of just 0.13 persons per hectare. This coupled with the changing demographic profile of the area presents one of our greatest challenges. The table below refers directly to the Skipness area showing the changing population from census 2001 to census 2011:

Table 1: Population Information

Skipness Area Census Ref : 60QD000575					
2001			2011		
Total Population	Resident	140	Total Population	Resident	136
% under 16		25.7 1	% under 16		15.4
% 16 – 64 (pensionable age)		55.7 1	% 16 – 64 (pensionable age)		66.2
% pensionable age and over		18.5 7	% pensionable age and over		16.8

It is recognised that the census area and the catchment area of Skipness Primary School differ slightly. Currently there are 34 permanent community members in the village of Skipness.

3.6 Development and House Building

The current Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted in March 2015. A new Local Development Plan (LDP2), which will set out planning and development proposals for the next 10 years from 2020 and a vision for 20 years, is currently being prepared. The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan provides the local planning framework for the Council area, excluding the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area. The Plan is divided into the written statement and proposals maps. The written statement provides the general policy context against which planning applications for new development proposals should be assessed. This is supported by the proposals maps which show the range of development opportunities and constraints within the area, for example:

- the key development areas i.e. the allocations for housing, industry and business, community facilities and infrastructure;
- the potential areas for future development (Potential Development Areas);
- areas requiring actions such as environmental improvement or regeneration (Areas for Action); and
- environmental designations such as national Scenic Areas, Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Areas and Local Nature Conservation Sites.

Appendix 1 shows the LDP for Skipness.

Appendix 2 shows the LDP for Tarbert.

Appendix 3 provides the key for Local Development Plans.

3.7 Skipness Primary School

Skipness Primary School was built in 1886 and is an attractive building of local granite in an exceptionally scenic setting. The school is co-educational and non-denominational and has a catchment area extending from Cour to Cnoc na Meine and across to Whitehouse. The school has two classrooms, an art area and general purpose room as well as an office, a separate canteen building and a large playground.

Appendix 4 shows the Skipness Primary School Floor Plan.

Skipness Primary School is 12.6 miles from Tarbert Primary School. The area is sparsely populated. The School is situated on the side of a single track road that leads from Claonaig to Skipness.

The Scottish Government's Rural School List 2017 classifies Skipness Primary School as 'very remote rural'. This is defined as an area with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more. Skipness Primary is one of 5 primary schools associated with Tarbert Academy.

3.8 Tarbert Primary School

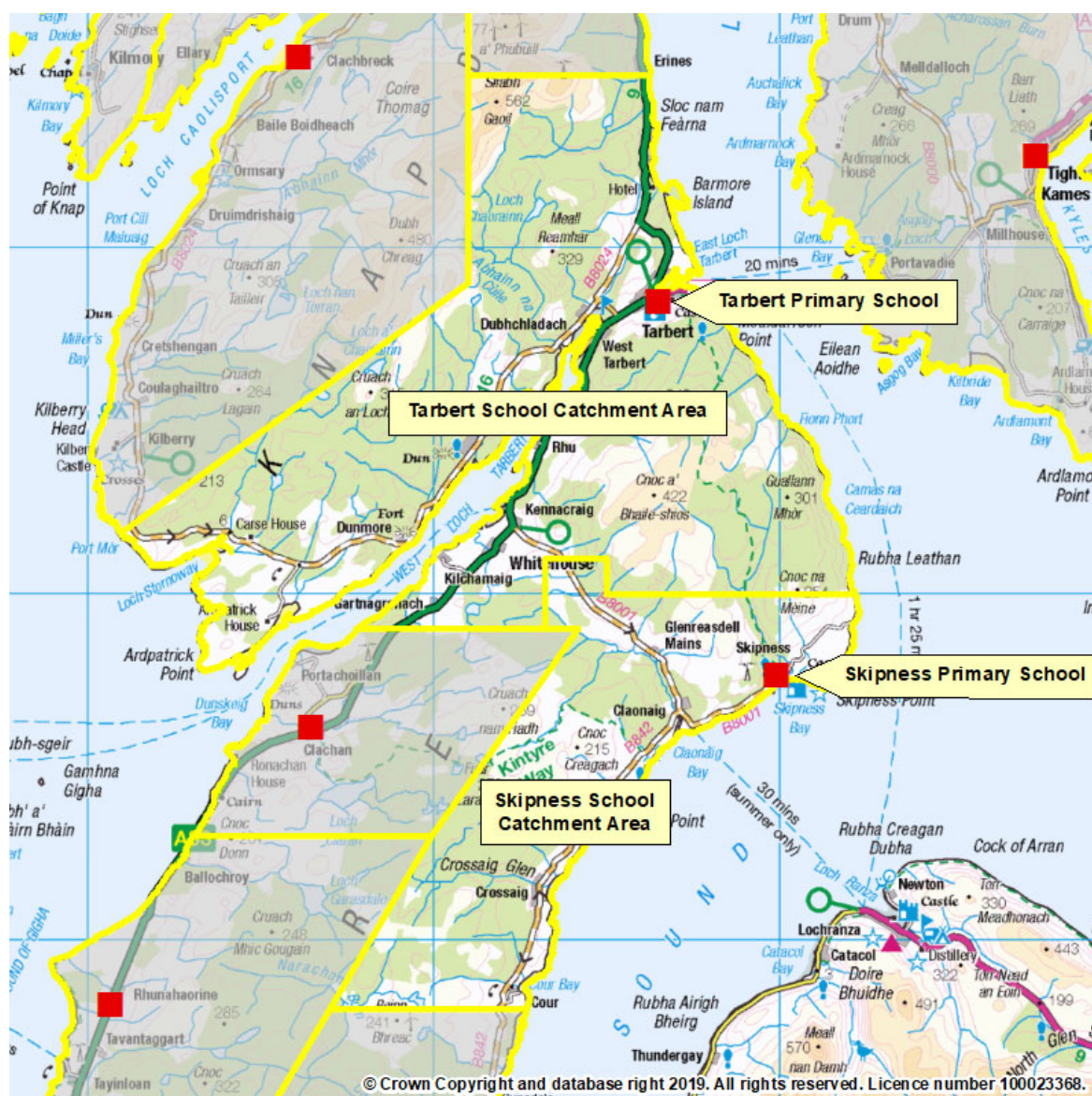
Following the mothballing of Skipness Primary School, children currently attend Tarbert Primary School. Tarbert Primary School is a non-denominational and co-educational school situated in the village of Tarbert at 4 Eastfield, off the main A83 road. Tarbert Academy is a 3-18 school comprising three stages of schooling. The Pre-5 unit serves the village and near environs of Tarbert. The Primary serves the village and the surrounding community; and the Secondary also serves the communities of South Knapdale and North Kintyre. The original school building was constructed in 1896 and is still used today. New accommodation was phased in during the mid-1990s and is used to house the Primary, Assembly Hall, Office and School Kitchen. In the year 2000, the School also became home to a Pre-5 unit and in 2014 an Early Level classroom with its own toilet block, kitchen and outdoor play area was built in the Primary Department. The building is well maintained and along with the surrounding scenery provides attractive accommodation for the Primary School.

Appendix 5 shows the Tarbert Primary School Floor Plan.

The outdoor area provides many opportunities for learning. A joint school and community project was completed to provide and maintain the all-weather pitch adjacent to the school. There is a hard play area complemented by grass play areas. There are willow dens to play in and access to the nearby cycle track.

The Primary School building has facilities for pupils, visitors and special access needs. The Scottish Government’s Rural School List 2017 classifies Tarbert Primary School as ‘very remote rural’. Tarbert Academy is the associated Secondary School for Skipness and Clachan. Pupils at Achahoish Primary can choose between Tarbert Academy and Lochgilphead High and pupils from Rhunahaorine and Gigha are given the choice between Tarbert Academy and Campbeltown Grammar.

The Map below shows the adjoining catchment areas of Skipness and Tarbert Primary Schools Catchment Areas:



3.9 Pupil Numbers

Pupil projections, and data for 2019 - 2020 are based on the 2018 pupil census, a return prepared annually for the Scottish Government. Past pupil numbers are historic data from past pupil censuses. Pupil projections for future P1 intakes

are from NHS data taken from children registered with GP practices in the area. This data is anonymised.

Table 2 shows the historic and current pupil numbers for both Skipness and Tarbert Primary schools:

Table 2:	Skipness PS	Tarbert PS
Capacity	26	130
	Roll	Roll
2005-06	7	100
2006-07	7	91
2007-08	7	89
2008-09	7	92
2009-2010	6	95
2010-2011	1	92
2011-2012	3	88
2012-2013	3	83
2013-2014	4	79
2014-2015	3	81
2015-2016	3	83
2016-2017	0	94
2017-2018	0	93
2018-19	0	96
2019-20	0	102

Table 3 shows projected rolls for Tarbert Primary School and estimated number of pupils in the Skipness Primary School catchment area according to figures held by Argyll and Bute Council:

Table 3:	Skipness PS	Tarbert PS
	Roll	Roll
Capacity	26	154
2020 -2021	1	109*
2021 -2022	1	106*
2022-2023	1	103*

* A prediction based on information available July 2019.

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Meetings

A Community Engagement Meeting was held in Skipness Village Hall, on October 24th, 2019 from 14:30-18:00 hours. This was to seek the views of the community on the future of Skipness School. This meeting was attended by 22 people. There was also a meeting in Tarbert Academy to gather opinions from the young people from within the catchment area for Skipness School. Three secondary aged young people attended as there are currently no primary aged pupils from the Skipness catchment area attending Tarbert Primary.

4.2 Content of Meetings

Attendees at the meetings were given an overview of the information that the Council would be using in this Options Appraisal, this included pupil projections, financial information, development information and local services and facilities.

The questions were as follows:

Over the last three years, what has been the effect of mothballing Skipness School on you, your family and community?

In your view what are the pros/cons of the following options:

- *Continue with mothballing*
- *Re- open the school*
- *Close the school*
- *Re-open the school but widen the catchment area*

Attendees also noted questions regarding the future of the school, and points of information that should be considered in the Options Appraisal.

4.3 Feedback

There was a range of viewpoints on the future of Skipness School:

- **Community and Parents**
The majority of the community felt that the most viable option is to formally close the school and were in agreement that the low numbers of children did not make the re-opening of the school realistic. There was a small percentage of people in support of continued mothballing in order to retain the building in case of future need.
- **Children/young people**
The young people voiced they loved being at school at Skipness Primary but that there are currently no pupils at Skipness Primary and closing the school made sense to them.
- **Staff**
Staff members were sad at the thought of the School being closed but acknowledged that without a significant number of pupils re-opening the school is not viable.

General Comments:

'Closing is the most sensible option.'

'Tarbert isn't too far and there is an existing bus service.'

'Continued mothballing would mean further deterioration to the building and would be a waste of the premises.'

'Changing catchment area could impact other small local schools and wouldn't necessarily mean more pupils for the school as parents have a choice of where to send their children.'

'If there were kids there I feel they would miss out on the great learning experience. But I understand there's no point keeping a school open if there isn't anyone in the classrooms.'

5.0 THE PROPOSAL AND REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSAL AS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for 3 years. The school roll was very low and not predicted to rise in the near future. This continues to be the situation. There is very little support for the reopening of the school.

Whilst the building is mothballed it continues to deteriorate. The Community is very proactive and is planning a future for the building. Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. In September 2019 there were 18.5 fte vacancies for both Head Teachers and Teachers.

The Council is required to consider the future of Skipness Primary School. The following options are explored within this paper:

- a) Re-open Skipness Primary School.
- b) Continued Mothballing of Skipness Primary with the pupils zoned to Tarbert Primary School.
- c) Re-open Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area.
- d) Close Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area to Tarbert Primary School.

6. OPTION A: RE-OPEN SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL

6.1 Community Feedback

Of the 22 community members that attended the Options Appraisal engagement event, no one was in support of re-opening the School because the lack of feasibility due to low pupil numbers.

6.2 Pupil Numbers

If the school were to reopen in August 2020, the maximum pupil numbers from the catchment would be one. There are no pupils currently within the catchment area but children would attend Tarbert Primary School. It has been stated that without a viable number of pupils for the School parents would not be considering placing their children at attend Skipness Primary School if it were to re-open.

If the school were to re-open sustainability may not be viable due to the fact that pupil numbers over the next four years are not predicted to rise and are well below the capacity of the school building.

Table 4: Pupil Numbers

Skipness Primary	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Approved Capacity	26	26	26
Roll Projection	1	1	1

6.3 Financial Information

The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£143,666¹**

The annual cost of mothballing Skipness Primary School is **£1,644**.

The cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£75,000**.

6.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Skipness Primary School is being considered are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Skipness Primary School to increase. Skipness Primary School is currently mothballed and there are no current pupils in the Skipness catchment area. To reopen the school would not increase the pupil numbers.

6.4.1 Community Impact

The reopening of the school would enable the premises to be used by the community. It would also be a possibility that the school pupils would invite the community to specific events. The presence of a school and the facilities/activities that may be offered could make the area a more attractive place to live. Reopening the school may therefore encourage

¹ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Skipness Primary School.

families with school age children to move to the community. This in turn may make the community more sustainable.

However the community have demonstrated no wish for the school to reopen. Almost all who attended the community engagement indicated the need for the school to become a facility for the community to use rather than an educational establishment.

There have been several community events held at the school including Community Council Meetings and social events run by Friends of Skipness School. All of which have been reported to be well attended. Respondents noted the negative impact of the school mothballing on the community as:

- The visual impact on the community of the mothballed school.
- The continued deterioration of the building.

If the school were to reopen as an educational establishment there would be an economic impact with respect to the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard. There would also be costs relating to staffing, and ongoing maintenance. Maintenance and building costs would also have to be met by the community if the school were to reopen as a community hub. The reopening of the school and the potential relocation of families may have a positive effect on the wider economy of the community.

6.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the B8001 and the A83. Travel time is approximately 25 minutes. The travel arrangements have been in place for almost three years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Skipness community. If Skipness Primary School was to reopen there could be a positive impact on the health and wellbeing and education of pupils who are able to walk or cycle to school. Staff would either travel to the school by car, or if they live locally could walk or cycle. There may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a negative environmental impact. The respective positive and negative impact may therefore balance.

6.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility

associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

With respect to outdoor learning community spaces could be used either in the school grounds or in the immediate neighbourhood if the school were to reopen. Outdoor learning is provided by all schools.

There would be issues with respect to the current condition and suitability of the school buildings and facilities which would negatively impact learning and teaching.

6.6 Summary

The 22 people who attended the consultation the majority were not in favour of reopening Skipness Primary as a school. If the school reopened, pupil numbers would be zero, as of the September 2018 census, and this is predicted to increase by 1 over the next three years.

There are financial implications if the school is to be reopened. The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£143,666¹**, with the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£75,000**.

If the School was to be reopened, the premises would be able to be used by the community as a hub, in addition to its use as an educational facility. The reopening of the School may encourage families with school age children to move to the community, which may make the community more sustainable.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the B8001 and the A83. Travel time is approximately 25 minutes. Adverse weather can be a factor, however this is the same for other local schools and areas. The travel arrangements have been in place for almost 3 years. Should the school reopen, there may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a negative environmental impact. The positive and negative impact may balance.

There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

¹ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Skipness.

When considering the above alongside projected low pupil numbers, the challenges in recruiting teaching staff and the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard and the lack of local support for reopening Skipness Primary School this is not considered to be a reasonable option.

7. OPTION B: CONTINUED MOTHBALLING OF SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH PUPILS ZONED TO TARBERT PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Statutory Guidance for the 2010 Act, in relation to mothballing, states *“the maximum length of its duration is likely to depend on the location of the school and the desirability of maintaining capacity to re-open a school there, but it is unlikely that it should exceed 3 years in areas that are not very remote.”* Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for 3 years.

7.1 Community Feedback

There are many ideas for the future of the building being taken forward by the community as a real hub for community life. There was a significant view at the community meeting that mothballing the school over a long period is wasteful due to deterioration of the property and should not be prolonged:

‘The building is deteriorating and is becoming an eye-sore.’

‘Continued mothballing would mean further deterioration to the building and would be a waste of the premises.’

‘The school building has been neglected, there is significant water ingress, the kitchen has been removed and general disrepair is apparent.’

‘The building should be used for a purpose to benefit the community.’

7.2 Pupil Numbers

Pupil numbers are not projected to increase over the next 4 years, as per Table 4 above.

7.3 Financial Information

The current annual cost (2019/20) to the Council of the mothballed Skipness Primary School is **£1,644**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. Neither does it take account of the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which is **£75,000**. There is no current annual transport cost of taking pupils to alternative schools.

7.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Skipness Primary School is being considered are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil

numbers at Skipness Primary School to increase. Skipness Primary School is currently mothballed and although there are currently no registered pupils, pupils would be rezoned to another local school. To reopen the school would not increase the pupil numbers.

7.4.1 Community Impact

If pupils are to continue their education in Tarbert Primary School there would be no change to the current impact on the community. If the mothballing of Skipness was to continue the building would deteriorate further and eventually become unavailable. This could have a detrimental effect on the sustainability of the Skipness community. At present the school grounds are available for community use. For example, the tarmac area is used as parking for Village Hall events and visiting children use the play areas. The community view the buildings and grounds as an opportunity to develop a community hub and there were multiple suggestions for possible usage. This may make the area a more attractive place to live.

7.4.2 Travel Arrangements

There is no change to the travel arrangements that are currently in place nor to the environmental impact from these. The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the B8001 and the A83. Travel time is approximately 25 minutes. The travel arrangements have been in place for almost three years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Skipness community. Continued mothballing of Skipness Primary School would have no effect on current staff travel. The small number of children has minimal effect on staffing within the receiving primary schools.

7.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Both Tarbert and Skipness are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a very remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Children from Skipness area, attending Tarbert Primary School are benefitting from the rural broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is completely different to their home environment. Outdoor learning is currently provided at Tarbert Primary.

The co-location of the nursery and the primary classes at Tarbert Primary enhances the transition process for the children moving from Nursery into Primary one, through joint educational processes and liaison between the two settings. Transition to secondary school is enhanced through joint planning and educational experiences.

7.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of continuing the three year mothballing of Skipness Primary School. There was a significant view at the community meetings that mothballing the school over a long period was wasteful due to deterioration of the property and potentially affected sustainability of the community. Pupil numbers are not predicted to rise in terms of pre-school children living within the catchment area. Mothballing had no positive impact on the reasons for the proposal.

The current annual cost (2019/20) to the Council of the mothballed Skipness Primary School is **£1,644**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. Neither does it take account of the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which is **£75,000**. There is no current annual transport cost for taking pupils to an alternative school.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the B8001 and the A83. Travel time is approximately twenty-five minutes. Adverse weather can be a factor, however this is the same for other local schools and areas. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than four years. Should the school continue to be mothballed these travel arrangements would continue.

There are no specific educational benefits from continuing the mothballing of Skipness Primary school.

On the basis that pupil numbers are not expected to increase and the building's mothballing is not of benefit to the community or the Council, continued mothballing of Skipness Primary School is not viewed as a reasonable option.

8. **OPTION C: RE-OPEN SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EXTEND ITS CATCHMENT AREA TO THE JUNCTION OF THE B8001 AND A83, INCLUDING THE VILLAGE OF WHITEHOUSE**

8.1 Community Feedback

The existing catchment area for Skipness School is very rural and very sparsely populated.

When considering the option to realign the catchment area of Skipness, the boundary for Skipness School has been hypothetically moved to the junction of the B8001 and the A83 and including the village of Whitehouse.

Community views are:

‘Changing catchment area could impact other small local schools and wouldn’t necessarily mean more pupils for the school as parents have a choice of where to send their children.’

8.2 Pupil Numbers

The pupil numbers within this new catchment area would not increase the roll significantly. As part of any possible forthcoming consultation, there would be discussions with the parent body of Tarbert Primary School regarding the future of Skipness School. There was no representation from the Parent Council at the Options Appraisal Meeting. It was felt by attendees at the meeting that moving the catchment area of Skipness Primary School was not an option due to the remote nature of the location, the road and accepted direction of travel.

8.3 Financial Information

The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£143,666**¹ per annum.

To bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school would cost **£75,000**.

The cost to use minibuses to transport the children to Skipness Primary School would be **£14,738**² (These transport costs are calculated assuming the boundary has moved to include all children who live within the junction of the B8001 and the A83).

There would also be a financial cost associated with the recruitment of additional staff and ongoing associated costs.

8.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Skipness Primary School is being reviewed are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Skipness Primary School to increase. Skipness Primary School is currently mothballed and the pupils are rezoned to Tarbert Primary School.

To reopen Skipness Primary School **and** realign its catchment area could increase the pupil numbers if families were to send their children to Skipness Primary School.

¹ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Skipness.

² This would be the cost of one mini bus.

8.4.1 Community Impact

The reopening of the school would enable the premises to be used by the community. It would also be a possibility that the school pupils would invite the community in to specific events. The presence of a school and the facilities/activities that may be offered could make the area a more attractive place to live. Reopening the school may therefore encourage families with school age children to move to the community. This in turn may make the community more sustainable. However, the community has given very little support for this option.

If the school were to reopen as an educational establishment there would be an economic impact with respect to the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard. There would also be costs relating to staffing, and ongoing maintenance. The reopening of the school and the potential relocation of families may have a positive effect on the wider economy of the community.

8.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the A83. Travel for children within this new boundary would be less than thirty minutes and would be a new 'bus route'. Therefore, appropriate risk assessments would be necessary. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Skipness community.

If Skipness Primary School was to reopen there could be a positive impact on the health and wellbeing and education of pupils who are able to walk or cycle to school. Local members of staff could also walk or cycle to school. There would be an increase in the number of pupils at the school and therefore an increase in staff numbers. There could be increased car usage by staff resulting in a negative environmental impact.

8.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the School as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Both Tarbert and Skipness are very remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Children from Skipness area that currently attend Tarbert Primary School benefit from the broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is

completely different to their home environment. Outdoor learning is currently provided at Tarbert Primary School.

The outdoor facilities either in the school grounds or in the immediate neighbourhood of Skipness Primary School would offer the opportunity to develop a curriculum that maximises the use of the local environment supporting the individual needs of the learners.

8.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of reopening Skipness Primary as a school, and realigning its catchment area due to the remote nature of the school's location.

There are financial implications if the school is to be reopened. The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£143,666¹**, with the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£75,000**.

If the School was to be reopened, the premises would be able to be used by the community, in addition to its use as an educational facility. The reopening of the school may encourage families with school age children to move to the community, which may make the community more sustainable.

The travel distance from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the A83. Travel for children within this new boundary would be less than 30 minutes and would be an existing 'bus route'.

There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Due to the geographic location of this very remote rural primary school it is unlikely that the catchment area could be made more sustainable. While this option could in theory contribute to sustainability of the community that may not be the case as most pupils in the neighbouring catchment area travel in the direction Tarbert, towards the larger centre of population, and not towards Skipness. It would require pupils who may have already settled in Tarbert Primary School to move to Skipness Primary School. Skipness families have stated they would not move their children back to Skipness without viable pupil numbers if it reopened. All families would be entitled to submit a placing request to attend Tarbert Primary School. It is unlikely that pupil numbers would increase significantly.

¹ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Skipness.

When considering the above, alongside the challenges in recruiting teaching staff, the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard and the lack of local support for reopening Skipness Primary School, this is not considered to be a reasonable option.

9. OPTION D: CLOSE SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR TARBERT PRIMARY SCHOOL TO INCLUDE THE CURRENT SKIPNESS CATCHMENT AREA

9.1 Community Feedback

The majority of people who attended the Options Appraisal meeting were not in favour of reopening Skipness Primary as a school. They commented that there were not enough children to support re-opening the School. Additionally, with respect to low numbers in future school roll projections, the sustainability of the School did not support re-opening of the School. Comments in relation to the closure of Skipness Primary School and attendance at Tarbert Primary School were positive:

'It's not realistic to re-open the school as there are not enough young people.'

'Tarbert isn't too far and there is an existing bus service.'

Young people said:

'If there were enough kids I think the community would want it to stay open.'

'I found it easy to come to Tarbert, I enjoyed company of new friends transition was ok.'

Many community members commented on the school premises and potential for this to become a community asset:

'The building to be used for a purpose to benefit the community for example a community hub with a shop and café.'

'The community has lost the shop, post office and now school, we feel it is crucially important that this building is retained to build the community.'

Community members discussed pursuing options for use of the building as a community hub.

9.2 Pupil Numbers

Table 5: Schools Occupancy:

<i>Primary</i>	<i>2019/2020</i>	<i>2020/21</i>
<i>Approved Capacity</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>130</i>

<i>Projected Roll</i>	102	109
<i>Skipness Projected Roll</i>	0	0
<i>Total Roll Projection</i>	102	109
<i>Occupancy</i>	78.5%	83.9%

Pupils from Skipness Primary catchment area would attend Tarbert Primary School, as there are currently no pupils attending Skipness there is no projected addition to school roll at Tarbert Primary School. The current occupancy rate for Tarbert Primary School is 78.5%.

9.3 Financial Information

As there are currently no pupils at Skipness Primary there is no annual cost to transport pupils to alternative schools. An existing West Coast bus means that there would be no additional annual transport costs. If Skipness Primary School were to be closed it would generate savings of **£1,644** - the current annual cost of mothballing (2019/20) to the Council. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs.

9.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Skipness Primary School is being reviewed are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Skipness Primary School to increase. Skipness Primary School is currently mothballed and were there pupils they would be rezoned to other schools. To reopen the school would not increase the pupil numbers.

9.4.1 Community Impact

The community overwhelmingly supported closure of the school with the building and adjoining grounds being retained for community use. Within Skipness there is a village hall. All people who attended the consultation strongly stated the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall into further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the community's access to the premises and the visual impact of the village. While it is accepted that school closure may have an adverse effect on a community, a vibrant community hub could be an asset to a community. This could potentially have a very positive impact on sustainability of the community if this option were to progress. If the Community wished to create a community hub, they would require to find a mechanism to acquire the property from the Council and deliver that aspiration. The buildings forming the school premises are situated within walking distance of the village. If the local plans for the building progress,

this would have a positive impact on the sustainability of the village. Formal closure of the school would mean that these plans could potentially be progressed by the community.

9.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the B8001 and the A83. Travel time is approximately 25 minutes. The travel arrangements have been in place for three years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Skipness community. This option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff and pupils. The closure of Skipness Primary School, in terms of travel would have a neutral effect on the environment. There is currently no annual transport cost for pupils to travel to Tarbert Primary School and the use of the existing West Coast Motors service bus would not incur additional costs in the immediate future.

9.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Both Tarbert and Skipness are very remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Children from Skipness area who would attend Tarbert Primary School are benefitting from the rural broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is completely different to their home environment. Outdoor learning is currently provided at Tarbert Primary. The pupils would then be transitioning to Tarbert Academy with an established friendship group.

In Tarbert Primary School children are taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children of their own gender, take part in team activities and move with their peers to secondary school.

9.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were in favour of closing Skipness Primary as a school, and realigning the catchment area of Tarbert Primary School due to the remote nature of the school's location. They also

commented on the potential for the school premises to be used as a community asset.

Current capacity for Tarbert Primary School is 78.5%. As there are currently no pupils in the Skipness catchment area, there is no annual cost to transport pupils to Tarbert Primary school and use of the existing West Coast Motors service bus would not incur additional costs.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the B8001 and the A83 and this option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff and pupils. The closure of Skipness Primary School would therefore have a neutral effect on the environment. Tarbert Academy currently accommodates pupils from Skipness School and pupil numbers are not projected to increase significantly. Tarbert Primary has capacity to continue to accommodate the projected pupil numbers.

In Tarbert Primary School, children benefit from a positive learning environment with learning and teaching which is better matched to the needs of the young people who attend the school. In addition there are more opportunities for personal and social development in this setting.

This has been identified as a reasonable option for further consideration.

11. OVERVIEW OF OPTIONS

Option	Option Description	Outcome
A	Re-open Skipness Primary School with the existing catchment area	Not a reasonable option.
B	Continued Mothballing of Skipness Primary School with the pupils zoned to Primary School	Not a reasonable option.
C	Re-open Skipness Primary School and extend its catchment area to the junction of the B8001 and A83 including the village of Whitehouse.	Not a reasonable option
D	Close Skipness Primary School and realign the catchment area of Tarbert Primary School to include the current catchment area for Skipness Primary School.	A reasonable option with strong representation that the school becomes a facility the community can develop.

12. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF REASONABLE OPTION: CLOSE SKIPNESS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR

TARBERT PRIMARY SCHOOL TO INCLUDE THE CURRENT SKIPNESS CATCHMENT AREA

12.1 Pupil Projections

<i>Primary</i>	<i>2019/2020</i>	<i>2020/21</i>
<i>Approved Capacity</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>130</i>
<i>Projected Roll</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>109</i>
<i>Skipness Projected Roll</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Total Roll Projection</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>109</i>
<i>Occupancy</i>	<i>78.5%</i>	<i>83.9%</i>

12.2 Educational Benefits

This statement focusses on Tarbert Primary School, which is the school Skipness Pupils have been attending since September 2016.

12.2.1 Learning and Teaching

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, to help every child and young person to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.

In Tarbert Primary School, children are encouraged to be eager and active participants who are engaged, resilient and highly motivated during their learning. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon. The learning environment encourages high level of achievement, providing a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential within the four contexts of learning.

In Tarbert Primary School children may be taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children of varying sizes and composition, take part in team activities and move with their peers to secondary school.

There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of curriculum for excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. At Tarbert Primary School, staff are challenged and supported through a range of continuous professional development and review opportunities gained by working and learning with a range of colleagues. Tarbert Primary School is part of the Kintyre Schools Cluster, and a smaller local cluster which means that staff can be supported together, moderation and tracking of pupil progress is enabled and staff work across stage appropriate groups. Colleagues within Tarbert Primary School are able to support and challenge each other on a daily basis. The whole staff are able to bring a range of talents and skills to benefit outcomes for learners.

Tarbert Primary School encourages nurturing and positivity. One aspect of this work is a successful Buddy System. Children from different stages work and learn together. This vertical support is particularly evident on Sports Day and in the dining room when groups of children are together in a social context. This system develops and benefits both the 'buddy' and the 'buddied'. To implement this system there needs to be children across a range of stages in the school.

Both Tarbert and Skipness are very remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Children from Skipness area, who would attend Tarbert Primary School would benefit from the rural broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is completely different to their home environment.

The co-location of the nursery and the primary classes at Tarbert Primary School enhances the transition process for the children moving from Nursery in to Primary one, through joint educational processes and liaison between the two settings.

12.2.2 Outcomes

Through the GIRFEC practice model, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority and teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Careful tracking and monitoring procedures are in place to evidence pupil progress. This includes professional dialogue with teachers, learning discussions with children, classroom observations, assessment and looking at pupil work. Planning for Progress meetings are being further strengthened. These discussions between home and school improve parental engagement whilst focussing on next steps for learning. Where appropriate, intervention is put in place, while working effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure the needs of each child are met.

In the primary classes, standards of attainment have been maintained over the last three years. Most children are achieving national expectations in reading, writing, listening, talking and numeracy. Tarbert continues to develop within the PATHS program supporting positive behaviours and relationship within the school. A larger staff, parent body and partner group by nature increases the breadth of talent and interest that may be available to share within a school setting. This applies both in terms of the wider curriculum and within aspects of the curriculum that may be enhanced by staff individual expertise e.g. PE, language, science, expressive arts teaching.

12.2.3 *Experiences - Broadening the Range of Opportunities*

Children are offered a range of active, planned experiences which help them develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing both now and in the future.

12.2.4 *Environment for Learning*

Tarbert Primary School is a suitably-equipped and well supported school, situated in the village of Tarbert. The entire building is well maintained and along with the surrounding scenery provides attractive accommodation for the primary school. The school has an all-weather pitch adjacent to the school. The pitch is used very well by the school. The building has facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs.

12.3 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Skipness Primary School is being reviewed are stated at Section 2 of this report. There is currently no expectation for the pupil numbers to increase at the School. Skipness Primary School is mothballed with

no current pupils. Having considered all the alternatives above, the option to close Skipness Primary School and realign the catchment area for Tarbert Primary School to include the former Skipness Primary School catchment area is considered the most reasonable means to address the reasons identified at Section 2 of this report.

12.3.1 Community Impact

The community overwhelmingly supported closure of the school with the suggestion that the building and adjoining grounds could potentially be retained for community use. Within Skipness there is a Village Hall which houses community events. All people who attended the Options Appraisal Meeting strongly stated the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the community's access to the premises and the visual impact of the village. It is accepted that a school closure may have an adverse effect on a community, but a vibrant community hub could be an asset to the community. The school premises are situated within walking distance of the village. If the local plans for the building progress, this would have a positive impact on the sustainability of the village. Formal closure of the school would mean that these plans could potentially be progressed by the community.

12.3.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Skipness Primary to Tarbert Primary is 12.6 miles via the B8001 and the A83. Travel time is approximately 25 minutes. The travel arrangements have been in place for almost 3 years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Skipness community. Pupils will travel on the existing West Coast Motors service bus and eventually all the pupils will travel to Tarbert Primary School. The environmental impact of travel will be minimal, as these arrangements are currently in place due to the mothballing of Skipness Primary School. The closure of Skipness Primary School, in terms of travel, would have a neutral effect on the environment. Due to there being no pupils presently within the Skipness catchment area, there is currently no annual transport cost of taking pupils to Tarbert Primary School and use of the existing West Coast Motors service bus would mean there are no future cost implications.

12.4 Financial Impact

The main elements included within a school budget are Teacher employment costs (i.e. basic salary costs plus related employer's National Insurance and Superannuation contributions plus any relevant individual allowances); Local Government employee costs and an allocation for discretionary expenditure

incurred by the school (i.e. educational equipment, materials, staff travel, etc.). Teacher staffing budgets are calculated on an annual basis and within the Primary sector are determined, taking cognisance of the SNCT class size maxima, by the number of classes required to provide for the specific number and age of the pupils in each school. When a school ceases to be operational the Teacher staffing budget is adjusted (at the appropriate time), per entitlement information from Education HR, with the staffing budget resulting in a nil value. As a result of the authority's policy for no Teacher redundancies it is presumed that the staff are deployed elsewhere within the authority and therefore their salary costs still exist with an increase to the receiving school's budget. This is also in line with the national priority of maintaining teacher numbers. This methodology also applies to the school's discretionary budget which again is formula based. The budget of the receiving school, in terms of any pupils being transferred, will have increased. The figures outlined below take account of the fact that the staffing and discretionary budgets have been adjusted to nil.

The annual running costs during mothballing of Skipness Primary School are a total of **£1,644**.

Annual savings generated through closing Skipness Primary School would be **£1,644**.

The costs/savings outlined above assumes all revenue expenditure would cease. This includes non-domestic rates, utility costs, insurances, etc. If the school was to be formally closed, this would allow the council to take steps towards selling the school to a third party or local community.

12.5 Environmental Impact

Currently no pupils travel to Tarbert Primary. However this option would have a neutral environmental impact on the current position and would have no impact on the current travel arrangements for staff and pupils. Eventually all pupils will attend Tarbert Primary School, a relatively short journey. Travel is an accepted aspect of rural life.

13. CONCLUSION

Four alternative options have been reviewed in considering the future of Skipness Primary School. For each option, information was collated and consideration was given to:

- Community feedback;
- Pupil numbers;
- Financial Information;
- Assessment of rural factors, including community impact, economic impact and travel arrangements, and
- Educational Benefits.

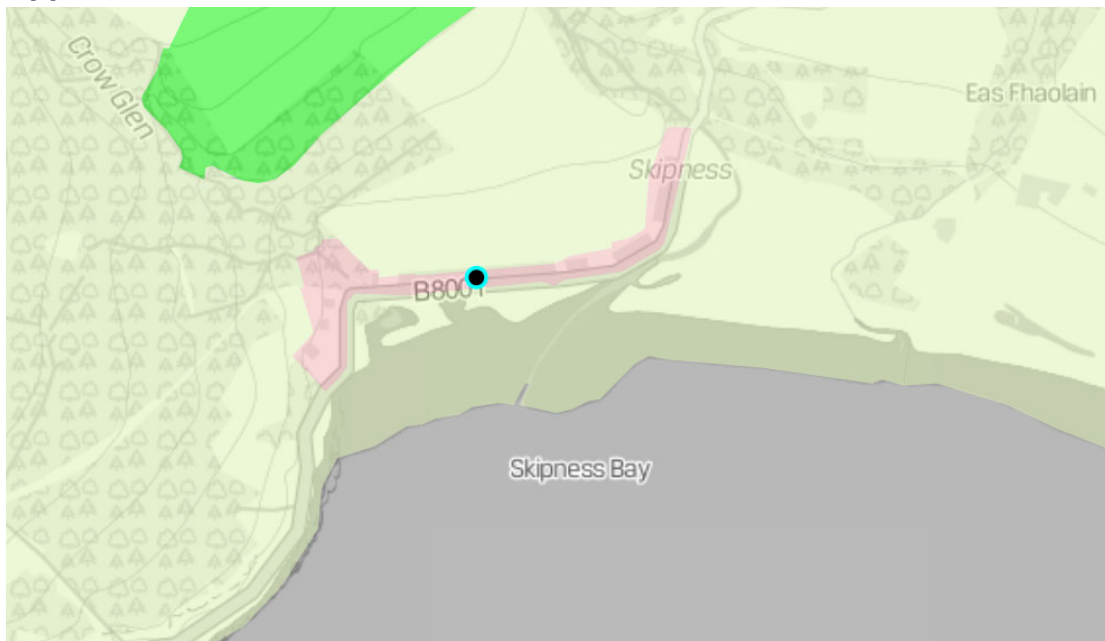
An authority that is contemplating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act before formulating a proposal.

After consideration of the preliminary requirements, as set out in the Act, and the options, and having regard to the specific reasons identified at Section 2 of this report, closing Skipness Primary School and realigning the catchment area of Tarbert Primary School to include the current catchment area for Skipness Primary School is the most reasonable option in order to address the reasons for the possible proposal.

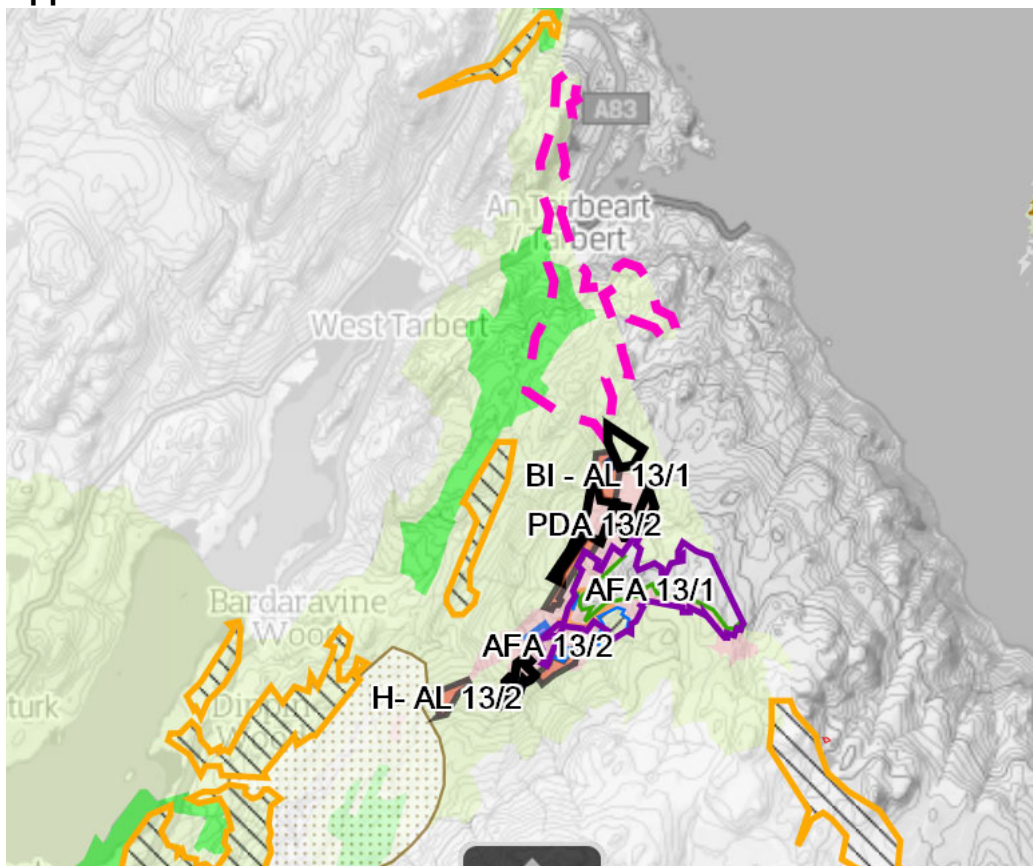
Members are asked to:

- Note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements; and
- Agree that Officers now formulate a draft proposal that will come back to a future meeting of the Committee for approval by Members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

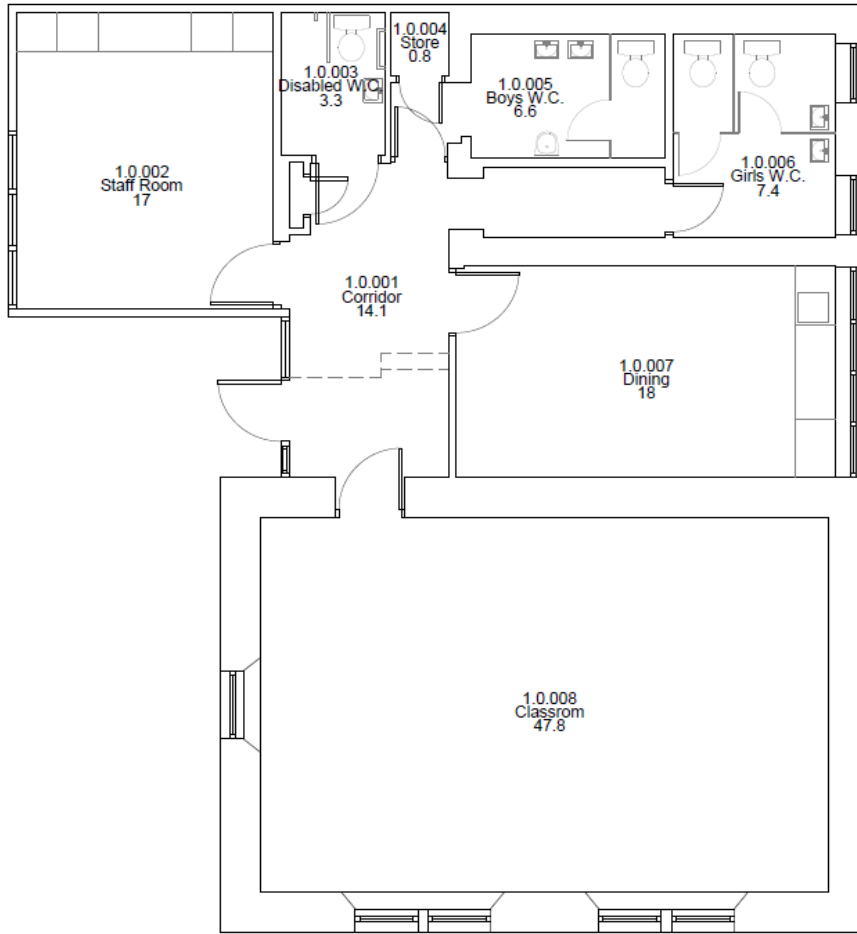


Appendix 3

Development Management Zones

-  Countryside Zone
-  Greenbelt
-  Rural Opportunity Area
-  Settlement Zone - Main Town
-  Settlement Zone - Key Settlement
-  Settlement Zone - Key Rural Settlement
-  Settlement Zone - Village / Minor Settlement
- Very Sensitive Countryside

Appendix 4



Skipsness Primary School Main Building
Ground Floor

Notes

Contractor to check all dimensions on site.
Do not scale from drawing.
Report any discrepancies and omissions to Customer Services, Argyll and Bute Council without delay and before proceeding with any affected works.
All Building work is to comply with current Technical Standards and all other relevant statutory regulations.

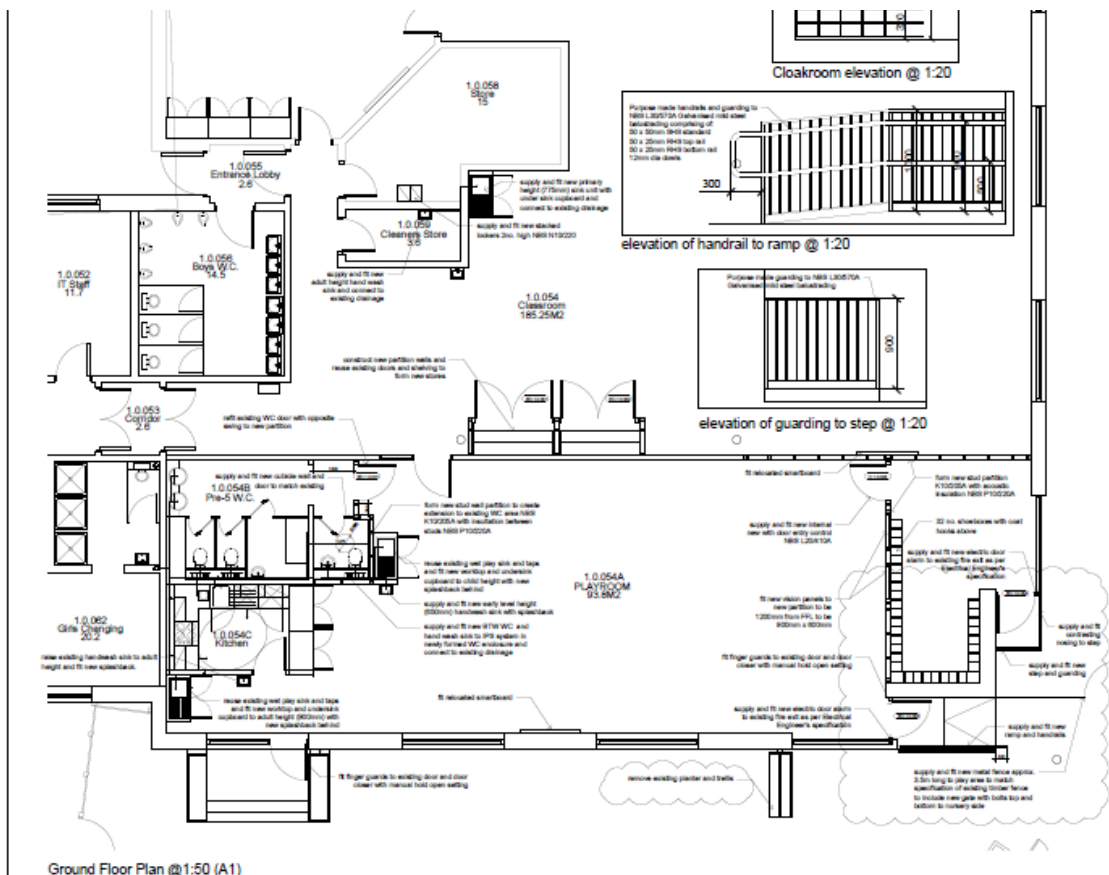
DESIGN

Unless stated otherwise, the designs shown are subject to detailed survey, investigations, and legal definition, the CDM Regulations, and the comments and / or approval of the various relevant Local Authority Officers, Statutory Underwriters, Fire Officers, Engineers and the like. They are copyright, project specific and confidential and not part to be used or copied in any way without the express prior consent of Customer Services, Argyll and Bute Council.

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Current School GIA on 31.10.13 = 125m²

Rev	Date	Description	Drawn By
1		initial	
Customer Services Property Design Team			
Phone: 01546 602127 http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk			
Site Skipsness Primary School			
Location	Tarbert	Postcode	PA29 6XT
Project	---		
Drawing Current Floor Plan			
Site UPRN:		Project No.:	
PE07 109760001		---	
Drawing No.:		Revision:	
AEL(00)001		---	
Drawn By	Date	Scale @ A2	
mm	October 2013	1:50	



Ground Floor Plan @ 1:50 (A1)

Appendix 2 - EQSEIA**Argyll and Bute Council****Argyll and Bute Council:
Equality and Socio-Economic Impact Assessment****Section 1: About the proposal****Title of Proposal**

To close Skipness Primary School.

Intended outcome of proposal

The proposal is to close Skipness Primary School. Currently, we are in the consultation phase, at this stage it is vitally important that we seek the views of all stakeholders affected by this proposal. Once this has been done, there will be a consultation report prepared on the issue by Local Authority Officers, with input from Education Scotland. This report will be presented to the Community Services Committee (CSC) for their decision.

Ultimately, the intended outcome the closure of the school, which has been mothballed since October 2016. If after consultation the stakeholders involved in the process, Education Scotland, and the CSC feel that the closure is not a reasonable option, then the closure would not take place.

Description of proposal

Consideration of this proposal means that a decision is being taken about permanently closing Skipness Primary School. As per the legislative guidance set out in the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2015, Argyll and Bute Council is seeking views on the following proposal, namely:

It is proposed that education provision at Skipness Primary School be discontinued with effect from 1st December 2022.

Pupils of Skipness Primary School will continue to be educated at Tarbert Primary School.

The catchment area of Tarbert Primary School shall be extended to include the current catchment area of Skipness Primary School.

Reasons for this proposal

This is the best option to address the reasons for the proposals which are;

- Skipness Primary School has been mothballed for 5 years. The school roll is very low and not predicted to rise in the near future. The annual cost of the mothballing of the building is £1,641.
- Along with several other rural Councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff.
- Whilst the school is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budget for maintenance.

On 12th March 2020, Argyll and Bute Council's Community Services Committee agreed that a consultation with all stakeholders be undertaken on the proposal. This consultation has been continuously open since March 16th 2020 due to limitations on holding an in person public meeting as detailed by the legislation.

Business Outcome(s) / Corporate Outcome(s) to which the proposal contributes

BO18: All our children and young people are supported to realise their potential.

Corporate outcome: Education, skills and training maximise opportunities for all.

Lead officer details:	
Name of lead officer	Simone McAdam
Job title	Education Manager (acting)
Department	Customer Services: Education
Appropriate officer details:	
Name of appropriate officer	Louise Connor and Jenifer Crocket
Job title	Head of Education
Department	Customer Services: Education
Sign off of EqSEIA	<i>M A Canal</i>

Date of sign off

22nd December 2021

Who will deliver the proposal?

Should the closure go ahead, there will be in fact no change to the current arrangements which have been in place since the school has been mothballed.

The Head Teacher of Tarbert Academy will be the senior officer of the Council who provides the leadership of the educational experience for the children attending the school, who would have otherwise attended Skipness Primary School. The Education Central team of the Council will be responsible for the support and challenge of the school as per standard protocols.

Transport colleagues will be responsible for any travel arrangements for children who are entitled to this, and this has already been in place since the school was mothballed.

Section 2: Evidence used in the course of carrying out EqSEIA

Consultation / engagement

Under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, if a local authority proposes to close a school it must undertake a statutory consultation with the 'relevant consultees' affected by this proposal. In this instance;

Skipness Primary School

Is the 'affected school'.

The formal consultation on the proposal within this document will be undertaken under the terms of the

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the Act"). The consultation period will start on 16th March 2020

(with due written notice of the proposal issued to the relevant consultees listed in Appendix 1) and end on

23rd December 2021. Written representations must be received by this date in order to be taken into account.

A copy of the proposal document will be provided to the following 'relevant consultees' in terms of the Act:

- The Parent Councils of the affected schools;
- The parents of the pupils at the affected schools;
- A copy of the proposal will be provided to all Early Years Establishments in the local area, giving access to parents who have children expected to attend the affected schools within two years of the publication of this proposal paper;
- The pupils at the affected schools (in so far as the Education Authority considers them to be of suitable age and maturity);
- All Argyll and Bute Council employees at the affected schools;
- Trade union representatives of employees at the affected schools;
- Community Councils within the affected locality;
- Local churches;
- All relevant users of the affected schools, and • Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partners.

A copy of the proposal document will also be made available to:

- All Elected Members of Argyll and Bute Council;
- Argyll and Bute Youth Forum;
- Education Scotland (formerly Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, HMIE);
- The Constituency MSP of the affected schools;
- List MSP for the area of the affected schools;
- The MP of the affected schools;
- Police Scotland;
- NHS Highland;
- Argyll and Bute School Transport;
- Senior Local Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services, and
- Care Inspectorate

The steps listed below have also been taken to ensure that the proposal is widely available:

- The proposal document will also be published on the Argyll and Bute Council website;
- This document can be made available in alternative forms or translated by contacting Argyll House, Dunoon, tel: 01369 708576 or argyllhousesereception@argyll-bute.gov.uk;

The proposal paper will also be available at the following locations;

- Council Headquarters, Kilmory, Lochgilphead, Argyll, PA31 8RT
- Education Offices, Argyll House, Dunoon, Argyll, PA23 8AJ
- Tarbert Public Library, Barmore Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TW
- Lochgilphead Service Point, 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD
- Tarbert Primary School, School Road, Tarbert, PA29 6TE
- Skipness Village Hall, B8001, Tarbert, PA29 6XT

There will be a public meeting held on the 10th November 2021 at 6.00pm in Skipness Village Hall.

DATA

The catchment area for Skipness Primary School is classed as remote rural. The definition for remote rural are settlements with a population of less than 3,000 with a greater than 30 minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more.

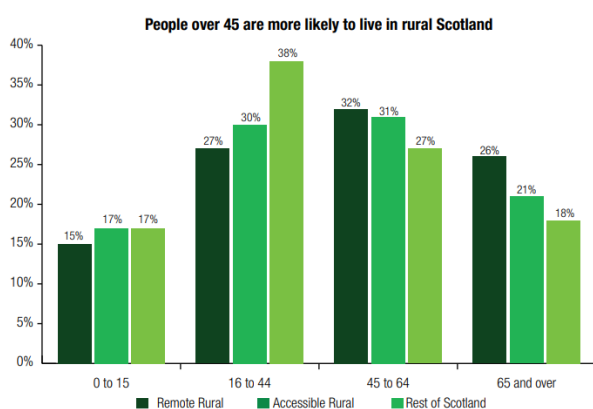
Table 1: Population and land share by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2011 & 2019

	2011	2019	% change 2011-2019	% of 2019 population	% of land area
Remote Rural	315,945	316,166	0.1%	6%	70%
Accessible Rural	573,407	616,536	8%	11%	28%
Rest of Scotland	4,410,548	4,530,598	3%	83%	2%
Total	5,299,900	5,463,300	3%	100%	100%

Source: Mid-year small area population estimates, National Records of Scotland
(Using Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Over the period of 2011-2019 Remote Rural areas have seen a 0.1% increase in population this contrasts with an 8% increase in the same period in Accessible Rural and 3% increase in the rest of Scotland.

Figure 1: Age distribution of population by 3-fold Urban Rural category, 2019



Source: Mid-year small area population estimates, National Records of Scotland
(Using the Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016)

Remote rural areas have a lower percentage of the population in the 0-15 and the 16-44 age groups but a higher proportion of people aged 45-64. For example, in 2019 27% of the population in remote rural areas and 30% of the population in accessible rural areas were 16-44 year olds, compared to 38% in the rest of Scotland.

Conversely, 58% of the population in remote rural areas and 52% of the population in accessible rural areas were aged 45 and over, compared to 45% in the rest of Scotland.

In 2019 the proportion of people aged 65 or over was 21% in accessible rural areas was and 26% in remote rural areas compared to 18% in the rest of Scotland.

54% of journeys to school were made by walking or cycling in 2019. 61% of those aged 4-11 and 43% of those aged 12-18 usually walked or cycled to school. For those aged 4-11 the next most popular mode was as a passenger in a car or van (29%). For those aged 12-18, the next most popular was school bus (25%). 7% of children aged 4-11 usually used school transport. 21% of children living in the most deprived SIMD areas (centile 1 and 2) used school transport. 44% of children living in remote rural areas used school transport.

OTHER INFORMATION

Evidence for this proposal was found in the Equality Evidence Finder, and in the Guidance for the Fairer Scotland Act.
Additional evidence was found in the School (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, in terms of legislative compliance. Education management circulars, 1.33 on capacity, 3.01 on admission and 3.09 on transfers were also consulted. The circular 3.23 on child protection and safeguarding was also considered.
The national policy of GIRFEC – Getting it Right for Every Child, was also considered in the formation of this proposal as was the Argyll and Bute Education vision and strategy, Our Children, Their Future

Gaps in evidence
There are no gaps in evidence

Section 3: Impact of proposal**Impact on service users:**

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population				x
Island populations		x		
Low income				X
Low wealth				X
Material deprivation				X
Area deprivation				X
Socio-economic background				X
Communities of place				X
Communities of interest				X

If you have identified any impacts on service users, explain what these will be.

--

If any 'don't knows have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?

If the proposal is accepted, there will be no immediate impact on pupils and families, as the children are already currently attending Tarbert Primary School, who would otherwise have attended Skipness Primary School.

There may be families who move into the revised catchment area who would then require transport, and in addition this may lead to changes in staffing levels in Tarbert Primary School.

The Education Management team will use their existing quality assurance procedures to monitor the education provided in the school.

Impact on service deliverers (including employees, volunteers etc):

	Negative	No impact	Positive	Don't know
Protected characteristics:				
Age				x
Disability		X		
Ethnicity		X		
Sex		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		X		
Pregnancy and Maternity		X		
Religion		X		
Sexual Orientation		X		
Fairer Scotland Duty:				
Mainland rural population				x
Island populations		X		
Low income				X
Low wealth				X
Material deprivation				X
Area deprivation				X
Socio-economic background				X
Communities of place				X
Communities of interest				X

If you have identified any impacts on service deliverers, explain what these will be.

--

If any 'don't knows have been identified, at what point will impacts on these groups become identifiable?
The Proposal has a consultation period that runs from March 16 th 2020 to December 23 rd 2021 where all interested parties can submit a written representation. A public meeting will be held on November 10 th 2021 where interested parties can ask questions of the Proposal.

How has 'due regard' been given to any negative impacts that have been identified?
In looking at the educational benefits statement of this proposal these have been considered. All information is contained in the proposal paper. https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Unknown/skipness_proposal_paper_feb_final.pdf

Section 4: Interdependencies

Is this proposal likely to have any knock-on effects for any other activities carried out by or on behalf of the council?	Potentially on transport, as more children may require transport who may move into the catchment area.
--	--

Details of knock-on effects identified
Increased number of children requesting free school transport may add pressure to the transport system.

Section 5: Monitoring and review

How will you monitor and evaluate the equality impacts of your proposal?
The Education Central Team including locality Education Managers will monitor the impact this catchment area change would have, if implemented.

APPENDIX 3 - WRITTEN CONSULTATION RESPONSES

The statutory consultation on the proposal to close Skipness Primary School commenced on the 16th March 2020 and closed on 23rd December 2021.

Response Forms

Three consultation response forms were received from community members. One of which requested their response to be considered confidential with access restricted to Elected Members and Council Officers of Argyll and Bute. Tarbert Primary School also submitted three consultation response forms one each from the P4/5, P5/6 and P6/7 classes. All responses were in favour of closing the school.

RESPONDENT GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	AGREE	DISAGREE
Community Members	3	3	0
Community Council	0	0	0
Pupils – Tarbert Primary School	3	3	0
TOTAL	6	6	0

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Argyll and Bute Education – Skipness Primary School Written Responses Summary - Consultation			
format	interest	Comment	Agree/disagree/neutral
Consultation response form	Parent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prohibitive cost and proximity of 2 other schools mean provision at Skipness should cease. 	agree
Consultation response form	other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptance of need for closure. Increase to Clachan Primary School catchment by change to existing Tarbert Primary catchment area and encompassing Skipness Primary School catchment area. Some children (10) from Tarbert Primary to be offered attendance Clachan Primary. 	agree

email	Community member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building should be offered to the village hall committee for developing a community asset or • Building should be offered to those that own the school house as they would preserve the car park for village use. 	agree
Consultation response form	P4/5 class Tarbert Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 thought school should close • 8 thought school should stay open • 12 pupils did not vote either way 	neutral
Consultation response form	P5/6 class Tarbert Primary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 pupils thought closure was a good idea • 1 pupil thought closure was not a good idea <p>Pros:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tarbert is a bigger school with classes from P1 – P7 • Small numbers at Skipness might mean pupils would be lonely or sad • Pupils will make more friends and have more fun at Tarbert • There would not be enough work getting done because not enough pupils e.g. Topic Work • If just a few pupils, they would not be able to do big group things, fun things and trips • More people will come to Tarbert • Pupils would have more people to play with in the playground at Tarbert • What would happen to the equipment in Skipness? This should be given to schools 	agree

		<p>which do not have much equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are only a few pupils in Skipness, they are paying quite a lot of money to heat the school so that it is usable. • Something better could be built if they knocked the school down – a park? <p>Cons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longer travel for pupils to Tarbert • If a P5 and a P7 pupil in Skipness were friends, when they come to Tarbert they might be split into different classes 	
Consultation response form	P6/7 class Tarbert Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All pupils (21) agreed it was a good idea to close Skipness. • They felt children would have more opportunities if they went to Tarbert Primary, especially socially. • It would also save the council money. 	agree

APPENDIX 4 - PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Skipness Public Consultation Meeting

Skipness Village Hall

10 November 2021

Panel:

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Policy Lead for Education

Douglas Hendry, Executive Director

Louise Connor, Head of Education: Learning and Teaching

Jen Crocket, Head of Education: Lifelong Learning and Support

Officers

Simone McAdam, Education Officer

Graeme McMillan, Solicitor

Fiona Ferguson, Directorate Support Officer

Laura Blackwood, Directorate Support Officer

Councillor Anne Horn

8 members of the Public

Councillor McNeilly opened the meeting and outlined the background to the proposal. Mr Hendry advised that the meeting tonight is to gather views on the proposal to close Skipness Primary School and realign its catchment area to Tarbert Primary School. A presentation then followed and questions from the audience were invited.

Question

Why is the date of closure December 2022?

Panel Response

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 legislation sets out the requirements which the council follows and this includes the time frames for reports to be produced and agreed by the council and Education Scotland.

The 1st December 2022 date allows for this process to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the legislation.

Question

What would happen if there was a lack of capacity in Tarbert Primary School?

Panel Response

There is capacity in the school building at the moment and we look at projections for the next 5 years. The head teacher would manage class sizes and the use of the building.

Question

There is already pressure on the building. Work on the school has focused on the early years provision.

There is concern regarding the class sizes in Tarbert should further families move into the area.

Panel Response

We have projected figures until 2030 and Mrs Connor advised that she would send the roll projection figures to 2030 to Councillor Horn for her information.

Question

Query was raised in regard to the travel time to Tarbert and whether this is within the reasonable limits.

Panel Response

The travel to Tarbert by car is 25 minutes and by public transport is longer as there will be stops on route. This is considered a reasonable distance and many children within Argyll and Bute travel these distances on a daily basis.

Question

A query on the number of children currently living in the Skipness catchment area was raised. A member of the audience advised that 4 primary aged children currently live in the catchment area of Skipness.

Panel Response

Mrs Connor agreed to confirm the numbers as this was not the same as the information held by the service. Update: The number of primary aged children living in the catchment area currently is 3.

Question

What will happen with the building if option D is taken forward?

Panel Response

If there is a clear expression from the Community to take over the building then that is a route which can be taken forward. The council have transferred a previous school building over to the community.

The council would be happy to hear from the community if there is an interest in the community taking over the building and discussions can be opened up in anticipation of the closure.

Question

What is meant by community?

Panel Response

Any group can come forward with proposals and the council will engage with them.

Question

An ask was made for the council to share information with the community on the community take overs which have all been taken forward to provide as this would provide the community with ideas on how to progress.

Panel Response

Yes, this is something which we can do.

Question

Does the Council own the school building?

Panel Response

As far as we are aware the council do own the building, however ownership will be checked in regard to any restriction on the title of the property.

Question

If the community do not show an interest in the building will it go on the market?

Panel Response

Yes, if there are no proposals from the community the building would be put on the open market for sale.

Question

Further query in regard to travel to Tarbert for young children and if this will be standard process if this option is taken forward.

Panel Response

With the distances here there will always be the obligation on the council to transfer children to the school.

We recognise that there is a clear concern specifically regarding young children taking public transport to Tarbert and this will be looked at as part of the process.

Question

Consideration to use building as an outdoor/external learning area.

Panel Response

Councillor McNeilly expressed that Argyll & Bute Council would be keen to progress this however, it would require investment and funding which the council simply does not have.

A community group would have access to other funds which the council would not have.

Question

Were any children consulted in this process?

Panel Response

Yes, those children who attended Skipness and are now attending Tarbert were consulted and this is recorded in the report previous to the proposal paper.

Councillor McNeilly thanked everyone for coming along and for their contribution and advised that should anyone have any further queries they can contact one of the officers here tonight and that the consultation is open until 23 December.

Two meeting attendees left email addresses for any updates and follow up communications.

The meeting closed at 7pm.

APPENDIX 5 - EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT



Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by HM Inspectors of Education addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Argyll and Bute Council to discontinue education at Skipness Primary School and extend the current catchment area of Tarbert Primary School to include the current catchment of Skipness Primary School.

January 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 Argyll and Bute Council's proposal to discontinue education at Skipness Primary School and extend the current catchment area of Tarbert Primary School to include the current catchment of Skipness Primary School. 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. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers and the special provisions that apply to proposals to close a rural school.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the school; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children 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:

- 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
- a virtual visit to the site of Tarbert Primary School and Tarbert Academy, including discussion with relevant consultees.

1.4 As the proposal will lead to the closure of a rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of any reasonable alternatives to closure of Skipness Primary School, the likely effect on the local community and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements of the proposed closure.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Argyll and Bute Council undertook the consultation on its proposal with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 Argyll and Bute Council took the decision to mothball Skipness Primary School in 2016 when the school roll dropped to zero. The school has remained mothballed since that time. A formal consultation process to consider the closure of the school was commenced under the terms of the 2010 Act in March 2020. Due to public health concerns and to follow national guidance, the consultation period was extended until December 2021. A public meeting was held in Skipness Village Hall on 10 November 2021 where eight members of the public attended. The attendees were overall in favour. Issues raised included the projected roll of the school, transport times for children and the future use of the school building should Skipness Primary School close. The council received three written responses which were supportive of the proposal. The council sought the views of children currently attending Tarbert Primary School. In total, 69 children were involved; 70% were in favour, 13% against and 17% were undecided.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council rightly points out the educational benefits with regard to a number of areas. These include, for example, transitions from the co-located Early Learning Centre into the primary classes at Tarbert Primary School. Joint planning for learning across the early level supports effective progression for children. Similarly, staff and children feel the transition between Tarbert Primary School and the secondary department in Tarbert Academy is easier for children moving within a larger group. HM Inspectors agree that in Tarbert Primary School, children benefit from the increased opportunities to build relationships with groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a wider social group. They are able to interact and socialise with different groups of children and take part in team activities. The children are able to maintain links with friends who live in their own village as well as creating links with children from other rural communities. Currently, due to current Covid restrictions, the clubs and activities are more limited. As restrictions ease, children will have access to a wider range of clubs and team activities including sports.

3.2 A number of benefits are possible as part of a significantly bigger school community. The larger staff group at Tarbert Primary School, provides opportunities for professional learning for staff including the moderation of children's work. The wider staff group are able to bring a range of talents and skills which benefits learners. Children in Tarbert Primary School are able to develop responsibility as members of class and the school councils. A buddy system encourages children from different stages to work and learn together. Young people from the Academy work with younger children as part of their sports leader roles. Children are able to perform and take on roles in the regular shows and concerts held in Tarbert Primary School and Academy.

3.3 Stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors agreed with the proposal. Whilst a few recognised some strengths in the experience children historically gained through their education in Skipness Primary School, stakeholders felt these were outweighed by the benefits children gained in Tarbert Primary School. These included the wider opportunities for clubs and team sports, learning with peers of a similar age and stage and greater social interaction allowing children to build friendships across a wider network.

3.4 As the proposal will lead to the closure of a rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of the factors to which it should have special regard. The council has identified clearly its reasons for formulating the proposal. They considered carefully if there were any reasonable alternatives to closure of the school before it consulted on the proposal. To allow due consideration of the proposal, the council lengthened the time for the consultation and pushed back the date for implementation should the proposal go ahead. The level and nature of stakeholder

response shows that, overall, the local community accept the council's proposal. The village of Skipness has its village hall for local use and members of the community have indicated their ideas for the possible future use of the school building should the proposal go ahead. The likely effects of travelling arrangements on the environment and on children will be minimal as currently only one child lives in the existing Skipness catchment area. The travel time by car of 25 minutes is what has been well-established since the mothballing of Skipness Primary School in 2016 and this proposal will formalise this arrangement moving forward.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors' agree that the proposal by Argyll and Bute Council will result in educational benefits for the children in the Skipness Primary School catchment area. The proposal provides clarity for parents and the community with regard to the future education provision in the area. There are clear benefits to children both socially and educationally. Children will be working with a larger peer group, closely aligned to their age and stage. There will be more opportunities for after school activities and teamwork. Should the proposal go ahead, the wider opportunities in Tarbert Primary School, broader range of activities and larger group of peers will continue to provide valuable experiences for the children in the Skipness catchment area. The current and predicted number of children within the catchment area is insufficient to make the school viable. The proposal will assist the council to deliver 'Best Value' through making more efficient and effective use of its resources. In taking forward the proposal the council should follow up on working with the Skipness community to explore options for the future use of the mothballed school.

**HM Inspectors
January 2022**

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APPENDIX 6 - PUPIL FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

Date of Visit	19/08/19
School for proposed closure	Skipness Primary School
Staff member(s) Leading	Simone McAdam
Pupils	3 pupils – Tarbert Academy that had attended Skipness Primary

Background information for pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am meeting with you today because the Council want to find out your views, about Skipness Primary School being closed. This process of asking for your views is called a consultation. • This consultation is anonymous – which means your words and ideas may be used in public reports that are written, but your name won't be written with your words and ideas. • We want to consult with you to find out what you think about the Council's proposal to close Skipness Primary School. The Council is proposing this because <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There aren't any pupils from the area that would go to Skipness and this number isn't going up. - It's getting expensive to keep looking after a building that isn't being used. • It is important that we find out your thoughts and opinions because you are the most current pupils that went to that school so your views are important and this will help us make a decision for pupils that would be future pupils at Skipness Primary School. • Closing the school isn't the only option for Skipness Primary School – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It could re-open. - It could continue to be 'mothballed' – which means it's temporarily closed like it is now. - Close Skipness PS and change the catchment area for pupils to go to another school nearby.
Tell us a little bit about going to school at Skipness PS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the teachers were nice. • There were only 3 pupils and we were all siblings. • There was more ore one-to-one because there were less children. • The education at Skipness was amazing. We would go out and learn about things like the birds and bring things back to the classroom. • You learned more because it was at your speed and you had more help. • It was more laid back but we learned a lot more. • The food was amazing! • Since it was such a small school the resources were better.
What do you think the positive things would be if Skipness PS closed?	The students expressed an understanding that closure was being considered because there were no children. They expressed a sadness that other children wouldn't experience the great school that they had gone to.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there were kids in the school they would miss out on the great learning experience. But I understand there's no point keeping a school open if there isn't anyone in the classrooms.
Do you have any concerns about Skipness PS closing?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would happen if other children moved to Skipness and the school was closed?
What might other people be concerned about if Skipness PS closed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would happen to the things in the school? • If there were kids I think the community would want it to stay open.
If Skipness PS closed is there anything that would help make this easier for pupils from SPS going to another school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I found it easy to come to Tarbert, I enjoyed company of new friends transition was ok. • It was a little trickier for me because I was used to a tiny group and coming to a bigger school and being in a class with lots more pupils can be slightly scary. • I like being on my own, but I have made friends. • Working in groups can be challenging because sometimes learning goes really quickly.
Do you have any other comments about this that you want to add?	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have more ideas please let your teacher know and she call tell me. • If anything we have chatted about today has made you worried remember you can talk to your class teacher or your parents.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

**SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 – MINARD PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides details of the Options Appraisal for Minard Primary School, carried out in accordance with the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:
- a. Note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements; and,
 - b. Agree that officers now formulate a draft closure proposal that will come back to the June 2023 meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION

25 AUGUST 2022

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 – MINARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 When considering the future of a rural school the Education Authority must first satisfy the preliminary requirements as set out in Section 12A the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended.
- 2.2 On 8th December 2020, the Community Services Committee agreed that officers would undertake a preliminary consultation process in respect of Minard Primary School. As Minard Primary School is a rural school, the preliminary requirements require that a possible closure proposal, and all the reasonable alternatives, are assessed having particular regard to the following:
- a. Their likely educational benefits.
 - b. Their likely effect on the local community – having particular regard to the sustainability of the community and the availability of the school premises to the community.
 - c. The likely effect that would be caused by any different travelling arrangements on the school's pupils and staff and any other users of the school's facilities, as well as the possible environmental impact.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:
- a. Note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements; and,
 - b. Agree that officers now formulate a draft closure proposal that will come back to the June 2023 meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 This report provides details of the Options Appraisal, carried out in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended (the 2010 Act), in respect of Minard Primary School.

4.2 The Options Appraisal for Minard Primary School is attached as **Appendix 1**

4.3 Three alternative options have been assessed whilst considering the future of Minard Primary School. For each option, information was collated and particular regard was given to:

- Community feedback;
- Pupil numbers;
- Assessment of rural factors – namely the likely effect on the local community (having particular regard to the sustainability of the community and availability of the school’s premises and its other facilities for use by the community); and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements that may be required (having particular regard to the effect on pupils, staff and any other users of the school’s facilities, and any environmental impact).
- Educational benefits; and
- Financial information

4.4 An authority that is contemplating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act prior to formulating any proposal.

4.5 Consideration was given to the underlying reasons as to why the future of Minard Primary School is being reviewed, and all reasonable alternatives to closure of the school as a response to those underlying reasons, were identified. All three options (including closure) were then assessed – having particular regard to likely educational benefits, likely effect on the local community and likely effect on travelling arrangements. Following this assessment, closing Minard Primary School and realigning the north section of its catchment area from Achagoyle Bay to Blackstone Bay to Furnace Primary and the south section of its catchment area from Achagoyle Bay to Kilmichael Beg to Lochgilphead Primary School is considered to be the most reasonable option to address the underlying reasons for the possible proposal.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Options Appraisal for Minard Primary School has been prepared in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the 2010 Act.

5.2 After consideration of the preliminary requirements, all identified reasonable alternatives and the reasons for why the future of the School is being considered, closing Minard Primary School and redrawing its catchment area realigning the north section of the catchment area from Achagoyle Bay to

Blackstone Bay to Furnace Primary and the south section of the catchment area from Achagoyle Bay to Kilmichael Beg to Lochgilphead Primary School is considered to be the most reasonable option to address the underlying reasons for the possible proposal. Officers are now in a position to formulate a draft proposal that will come back to a future meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the 2010 Act.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy - An authority that is considering formulating a rural school closure proposal must first satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended.

6.2 Financial - there are financial implications for each option, as set out in the Options Appraisal.

6.3 Legal - The Options Appraisal for Skipness Primary School has been prepared in accordance with the preliminary requirements as set out in Section 12A of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended.

6.4 HR - none

6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:

6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – none at present

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – none at present

6.5.3 Islands – none at present

6.6 Climate Change – none at present

6.7 Risk – none at present

6.8 Customer Service – none at present

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly – Policy Lead for Education

30 June 2022

For further information contact:

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Options Appraisal - Minard Primary School

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Appendix A



EDUCATION

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

MINARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 10th December 2019, Argyll and Bute Council approved the continued mothballing on a temporary basis of Minard Primary School. There have been no pupils attending the school since October 2018, and as such, the school had been *de facto* mothballed since that time. The Council agreed at that time that the mothballing of Minard Primary School be continued on a temporary basis until December 2020, and that the School premises be retained during this time on a care and maintenance basis. The Council further agreed that in the intervening period, Education Services would gather the necessary information, identify all reasonable options in order to consider the future of Minard Primary School in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=8513&Ver=4>

Further to this, on 8th December 2020, the Community Services Committee agreed that Minard Primary School would continue to be mothballed on a temporary basis until May 2021 and that the school premises be retained during this time on a care and maintenance basis. It was also agreed by the Community Services Committee that in the intervening period, Education Services would undertake a pre consultation meeting as part of the preliminary work and options appraisal process when it was permissible under the Coronavirus Regulations relating to public gatherings. The Education Service intended to undertake the required preliminary consultation and an options appraisal, for Minard Primary School in May 2021 but due to the restrictions of the pandemic were unable to complete this work until the last term.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=13970&Ver=4>

The statutory process for the closure of a rural school is laid out in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* as amended by the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

The Act, as amended, contains a presumption against closure of a rural school and details specific requirements which the education authority is required to follow if they are formulating a proposal to close a rural school. This includes the introduction of a preliminary consultation process.

In addition, the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015* sets out a new right for community organisations to request the transfer of local assets into local community ownership/management. Public bodies, including councils, must consider such requests and respond to them within a reasonable timescale.

Minard Primary School has had zero pupils enrolled since October 2018.

On 8th December 2020, Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the preliminary requirements in relation to considering a rural school closure and look at an options appraisal for Minard Primary School. This review will enable the Education Service to identify and consider the options put forward.

The 2010 Act makes special arrangements in regard to rural schools that is in effect a presumption against their closure. There is a requirement to have special regard to the rural schools factors prior to formulating a proposal to close a rural school. In particular, it is necessary to consider any reasonable alternatives before considering closure. It is also necessary to consider the impact on the wider community of a potential closure and the impact of any different travel arrangements. These factors have been considered in this options appraisal.

2. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

2.1 An authority that is contemplating formulating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in section 12A of the 2010 Act before starting to prepare its proposal paper. In particular, it must identify the underlying reasons why the future of the School is being considered, which are as follows:

1. Minard Primary School has been mothballed for four years. The school roll was very low and not predicted to rise in the near future. This continues to be the situation.
2. Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. In June 2022 there were 15.49 vacancies for both Head Teachers and Teachers.
3. Whilst the School is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for maintenance.

The Council is therefore considering the future of Minard Primary School. The various options are explored within this paper.

3. BACKGROUND

Argyll and Bute is an area of outstanding natural beauty sitting within an ancient landscape with a strong cultural identity. Today, the culture of Argyll and Bute is reflected in its traditional industries of fishing, farming and crofting, sports such as shinty and in its world class musicians and artists as well as its modern commercial industries such as wind turbine production and fish farming. Tourism also lies at the centre of the economy.

Argyll and Bute is geographically the second largest authority in Scotland. Education is delivered in a range of settings including schools, partnerships and youth services.

3.1 Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan

The Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan identifies Argyll and Bute as an area of Scotland with outstanding places, people and potential for a prosperous future for everyone. Our Council along with our Community Planning Partners, is committed to ensuring that Argyll and Bute's Economic Success is built on a growing population.

This strategic approach embraces the vision for our area, our communities and our people as outlined in the Corporate Plan. Our key service priorities support the delivery of our commitments in the plans, helping to focus on local outcomes that will achieve meaningful improvements for the area, our local communities and our citizens.

Councils have a statutory responsibility in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to achieve best value. Our Community Services Asset Management Plan provides a review of the property assets used to deliver services. It incorporates the School Estate Management Plan which reflects the local implementation of Building Better Schools: Investing in Scotland's Future, the national school estate strategy developed by the Scottish Government in conjunction with local authorities.

The aspirations, guiding principles and objectives contained within Building Better Schools are reflected throughout Education and Children's Services Asset Management Plan (SAMP) for schools and public buildings, both in the management of the existing assets and in the design and construction of developments.

3.2 Our Children Their Future

Councils, as an Education Authority, have a statutory duty in terms of the *Education (Scotland) Act 1980* to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand. This is reflected in Our Children, Their Future: Education Vision and Strategy.

3.3 Minard and the Local Area – the Minard Primary School Setting

Minard lies on the western shore of Loch Fyne, with beautiful views and 4 miles southwest of Furnace. Minard Castle lies a mile to the south. Minard is a linear village of just under 2 miles long, with loch side bungalows, along the A83 road to the south is the school, church, village hall and several older cottages. Minard was originally part of the estate of Minard Castle before becoming an independent village.

Minard is approximately 13.13 miles away from Lochgilphead and 20 minutes travel time.

3.4 The School within the Community

Minard Primary School was previously very active within the community. Pupils would often use the local area for outdoor learning, including Crarae Gardens and also work with local businesses and other cluster schools. The school has not been used by the local community since it has been mothballed and there has been one request locally to use the grounds recently. The request was made in May 2022 by a representative of a local parent and baby/toddler group.

3.5 Population

Argyll and Bute has an average population density of just 0.13 persons per hectare. This coupled with the changing demographic profile of the area presents one of our greatest challenges. The table below refers directly to the Minard area showing the changing population from census 2001 to census 2011:

Table 1: Population Information

Minard Area Census Ref : Data from Scotland's Census website			
2001		2011	
Total Resident Population	70	Total Resident Population	71
% under 16	15.71	% under 16	14.1
% 16 – 64 (pensionable age)	57.14	% 16 – 64 (pensionable age)	59.2
% pensionable age	27.14	% pensionable age and	26.8

and over		over	
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It is recognised that the census area and the catchment area Minard Primary School differ slightly.

3.6 Development and House Building

A new Local Development Plan (LDP2) is now available, which sets out planning and development proposals for the next 10 years from 2020 and a vision for 20 years. The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan provides the local planning framework for the Council area, excluding the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area. The Plan is divided into the written statement and proposals maps. The written statement provides the general policy context against which planning applications for new development proposals should be assessed. This is supported by the proposals maps which show the range of development opportunities and constraints within the area, for example:

- the key development areas i.e. the allocations for housing, industry and business, community facilities and infrastructure;
- the potential areas for future development (Potential Development Areas);
- areas requiring actions such as environmental improvement or regeneration (Areas for Action); and
- environmental designations such as national Scenic Areas, Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Areas and Local Nature Conservation Sites.

Appendix 1 shows the LDP 2 for Minard.

Appendix 2 shows the LDP 2 for Furnace.

Appendix 3 shows the LDP 2 for Lochgilphead areas

Appendix 4 provides the key for Local Development Plans.

3.7 Minard Primary School

The school is situated in the village of Minard, on the shores of Loch Fyne, in Mid-Argyll, on the A83 between Inveraray and Lochgilphead. The school, which was purpose built to deliver education, in 1871, is of traditional rural design.

The Council's title to the building was obtained from Thomas Owen Lloyd in favour of the School Board of the Parish of Glassary, dated 22 February and recorded GRS (Argyll) 19th March, both 1906. Legal Services and Estates indicate there is a burden in the title from 1906 to the effect that the subjects are to be used for educational purposes and for no other purpose. However Conveyancing Team within Legal

Services have investigated and in providing a copy of the title plan it clearly shows that the area of ground in question was in fact within the Council's school title and it was transferred to the Community Trust in 2006.

The building itself comprises one classroom with dining area, corridor with cloakroom, toilets and office. The school is well equipped with disabled access and facilities.

The school is co-educational and non-denominational and has a catchment area extending from Crarae Gardens to Nursery Cottages in Minard village.

Appendix 5 shows the Minard Primary School Floor Plan.

Minard Primary School is 13.13 miles from Lochgilphead Joint Campus. Minard Primary is 3.83 miles from Furnace Primary. The area is sparsely populated. All three schools are situated along the A83.

The Scottish Government's Rural School List 2017 classifies Minard Primary School as 'very remote rural'. This is defined as an area with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more. Minard Primary is one of 6 primary schools that has children transferring to secondary education at Lochgilphead High School.

3.8 Furnace Primary School and Lochgilphead Joint Campus

Following the mothballing of Minard Primary School, children living within the catchment area attended Furnace Primary School or Lochgilphead Joint Campus. Furnace Primary School is a non-denominational and co-educational school situated in the village of Furnace off the main A83 road. Furnace Primary school is a small rural school which occupies a central position in the village of Furnace. It currently has a significantly falling roll, with 8 children expected to be attending the school in August 2022. The school will have a shared Head Teacher with Inveraray Primary from August 2022.

Appendix 5 shows the Minard Primary Floor Plan

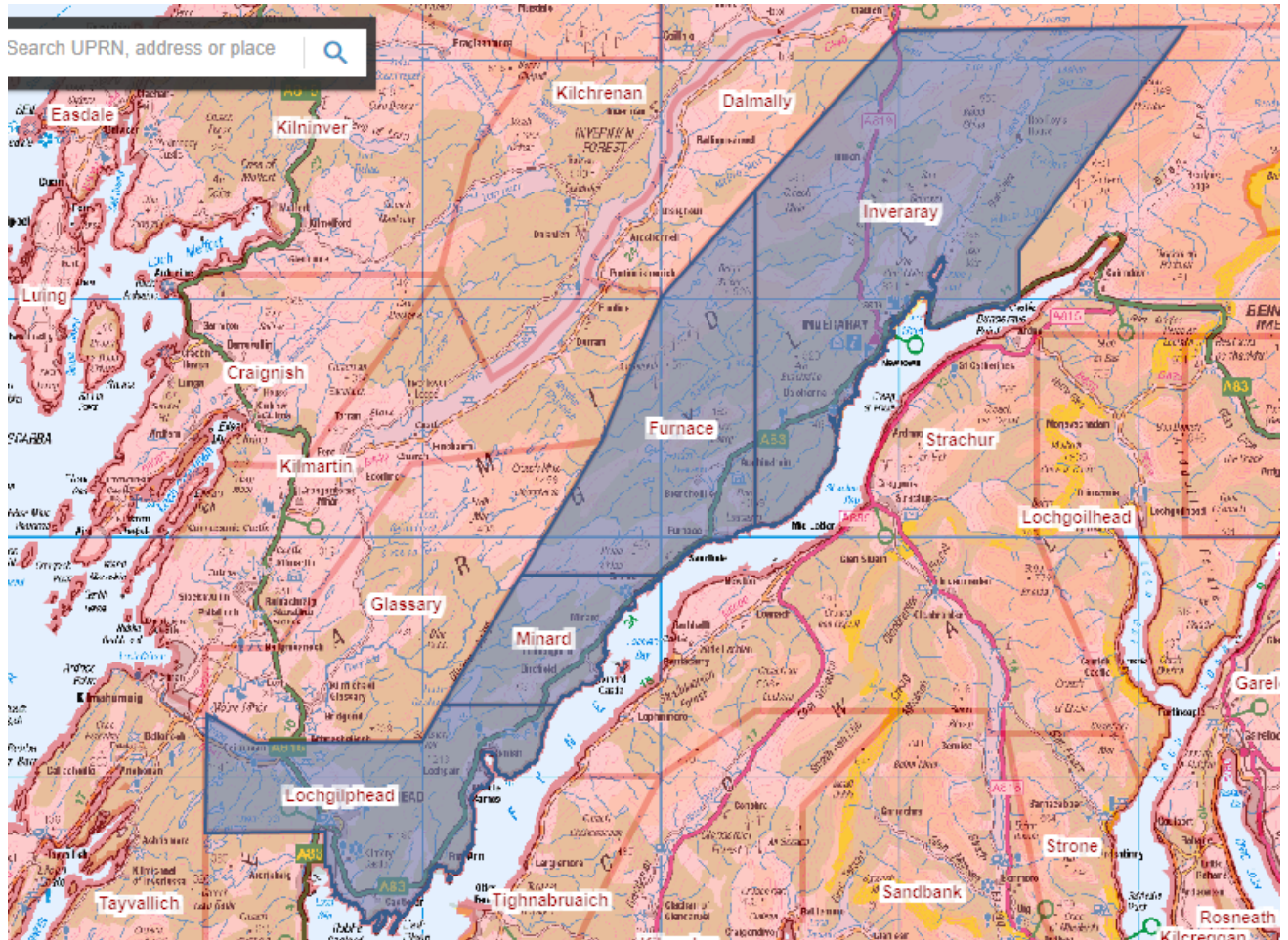
Appendix 6 shows the Lochgilphead Joint Campus Floor Plan

Appendix 7 shows the Furnace Primary Floor Plan

Furnace and Lochgilphead Joint Campus buildings have facilities for pupils, visitors and special access needs. The Scottish Government's Rural School List 2017 classifies Furnace Primary School as 'very remote rural'. Lochgilphead Joint Campus is the associated Secondary

School for Furnace and Minard Primary Schools and classified as 'remote rural'.

The Map below shows the adjoining catchment areas of Minard and Furnace Primary Schools and Lochgilphead Joint Campus Catchment Areas:



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3.9 Pupil Numbers

Pupil projections, and data for 2021-22 are based on the 2018 pupil census, a return prepared annually for the Scottish Government. Past pupil numbers are historic data from past pupil censuses. Pupil projections for future P1 intakes are from NHS data taken from children registered with GP practices in the area. This data is anonymised.

Table 2 shows the historic and current pupil numbers for Minard, Furnace and Lochgilphead Primary schools:

Table 2:	Minard PS	Furnace PS	Lochgilphead PS
	Roll	Roll	Roll
Capacity	33	50	249
2011-2012	10	21	213
2012-2013	9	18	221
2013-2014	6	12	231
2014-2015	8	10	230
2015-2016	6	7	233
2016-2017	5	7	221
2017-2018	1	6	221
2018-19	3	13	227
2019-20	0	10	226
2020-21	0	12	207

Table 3 shows projected rolls for Furnace and Lochgilphead Primary Schools and estimated numbers of pupils in the Minard Primary School catchment area according to figures held by Argyll and Bute Council:

Table 3:	Minard PS	Furnace PS	Lochgilphead PS
	Roll	Roll	Roll
Capacity	33	50	249
2022 -2023	6	7	192
2023 -2024	4	7	189
2024-2025	2	10	191

* A prediction based on information available June 2022

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Meetings

A Community 'drop in' Engagement session was held in Minard Primary School, on 19th May 2022 from 9.30am-6pm. This was to seek the views of the community on the future of Minard Primary School. Members of the community could 'drop in' throughout the day and give their views to Education Officers and receive information on the Pre-consultation process. This session was attended by 19 people. Notes from this session with comments from the community can be found in *Appendix 8*. There were also meetings in Furnace and Lochgilphead Primary Schools to gather opinions from the young people from within the catchment area for Minard School. The Education Officer leading the Pre-consultation met with the children during May 2022 so that they

could contribute to the process and their views are reflected in the paper.

4.2 Content of Meetings

Attendees at the meetings were given an overview of the information that the Council would be using in this Options Appraisal, this included previous pupil rolls, pupil projections, background information and details of the pre-consultation process.

The questions were as follows:

Over the last three years, what has been the effect of mothballing Minard School on you, your family and community?

In your view what are the pros/cons of the following options:

- *Continue with mothballing*
- *Re- open the school*
- *Close the school*

Attendees also noted questions regarding the future of the school, and points of information that should be considered in the Options Appraisal.

4.3 Feedback

There was a range of viewpoints on the future of Minard School:

- **Community and Parents**

The majority of the community acknowledged how the future of the school needed to be considered now. Many understood that in order to be a viable option for schooling, there was an agreement that the low numbers of children did not make the re-opening of the school realistic. There was a small percentage of people in support of continued mothballing in order to retain the building in case of future need. One family of children currently attending another school locally were keen that the school should re-open; while other families are satisfied with the current arrangements of their children attending a bigger school.

- **Children/young people**

A few of the children expressed their desire to attend Minard Primary School however, the majority of children voiced they loved being at another primary school but that closing the

Minard Primary School made sense to them, due to small numbers of children involved.

- **Staff**

Staff members were sad at the thought of the School being closed but acknowledged that without a significant number of pupils re-opening the school is not viable.

General Comments:

“This was a vibrant school at the heart of the community. When my children came here – there were 30 children here. Those children have gone on to be very successful. They also have a community minded approach to life. Children gain so much from the community that is valuable. How can that be provided by a bigger community? When the children were here, they would feel the support from the other members of the community.”

“There was such a pride in the school – with different activities, including coffee mornings – the whole community supported the children in many ways.

When you have an education in a school like this, it stays with you.”

“Not enough children in the locality for the school to be opened as an educational establishment.”

5.0 THE PROPOSAL AND REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSAL AS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Minard Primary School has been mothballed for 3 years. The school roll was very low and not predicted to rise significantly in the near future. This continues to be the situation. There is concern about the future of the school and a collective wish within the community for it to re-open, but also an understanding that the numbers of young children locally means that this may not be viable.

Whilst the building is mothballed it continues to deteriorate. The Community would like to see the building put to good use. Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. In June 2022 there were 15.49 fte vacancies for both Head Teachers and Teachers.

The Council is required to consider the future of Minard Primary School. The following options are explored within this paper:

- a) Re-open Minard Primary School.
- b) Continued Mothballing of Minard Primary with the pupils zoned to Furnace Primary School.
- c) Close Minard Primary School and realign its catchment area to Furnace and Lochgilphead Primary School.

6. OPTION A: RE-OPEN MINARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

6.1 Community Feedback

Ten community members who attended the Pre-consultation meeting were in favour of the school opening but felt it was linked to ensuring there is affordable housing in the area to attract more families. After school care was also a feature in meeting the needs of families and the feasibility of the school re-opening. The previous success of the school was recognised and there was some feeling that this should be available for the next generation. There was recognition that the school was at the heart of the community and the community have lost local amenities and concern that the village will lose its vibrancy and become less sustainable. There were also community members who felt that the numbers of children on the roll were so low now and in the future that a local village school was sadly no longer viable.

“There needs to be sufficient numbers of children in the school so that a child is not there on their own.”

“If folk know if there is a school in the village area – it may attract more people here – there were only ever good reports about the school and former pupils should be able to access the school. The village needs new life rather than the older demographic – we need to attract new younger members of the community.”

“There are not any children to make it viable at the moment.”

“As a parent, I would send my child to Minard PS. The community want the school to open but the question would be if other parents would send their child to Minard. After school provision is an issue. A school makes a community. Everything has already closed here. The sense of isolation as a young family.....I don't see anyone in the community.”

Why has this happened? I find this very upsetting to look at the school like this – I know there are not a lot of children in the village but could the school be used for adult purposes too?

6.2 Pupil Numbers

If the school were to reopen in August 2022, the maximum pupil numbers from the catchment would be six. It has been stated that without a viable number of pupils for the school, some parents would not be considering placing their children at Minard Primary School if it were to re-open.

If the school were to re-open sustainability may not be viable due to the fact that pupil numbers over the next four years are not predicted to rise, indeed they would decline further and are well below the capacity of the school building.

Table 4: Pupil Numbers

Minard Primary	2021/2022	2022/202	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026
		3			
Approved Capacity	33	33	33	33	33
Roll Projection	6	6	4	2	1

6.3 Financial Information

The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£137,511**.

The annual cost of mothballing Minard Primary School is **£8,956**.

The cost to bring the educational building to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£36,500**. The cost to open the school house, if required, to an acceptable standard would be **£21,500**.

6.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Minard Primary School is being considered are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Minard Primary School to increase significantly without development in affordable housing. Minard Primary School is currently mothballed and at the time of writing, there are 7 current pupils in the Minard catchment area. To reopen the school would not necessarily increase the pupil numbers.

6.4.1 *Community Impact*

The reopening of the school would more easily allow the school's premises to be used by the community. It would also be a possibility that the school pupils would invite the community to

specific events. The presence of a school and the facilities/activities that may be offered could make the area a more attractive place to live. Reopening the school may therefore encourage families with school age children to move to the community. This in turn may make the community more sustainable.

Many who attended the community engagement indicated the need for the school premises to be used for a community purpose in the future if it did not re-open.

Respondents noted the negative impact of the school mothballing on the community as:

- The continued deterioration of the building.
- Schooling not being available within the village may be a factor in not attracting and retaining young families to the area.
- A lack of focus for significant aspects of community life that the school previously provided for all generations within the community.

If the school were to reopen as an educational establishment there would be an economic impact with respect to the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard. There would also be costs relating to staffing, and ongoing maintenance. The reopening of the school and the potential relocation of families may have a positive effect on the wider economy of the community.

6.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Furnace Primary is 3.82 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately 7 minutes by car. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than three years.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard to Lochgilphead Joint Campus is 13.13 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately 19 minutes by car. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Minard community.

If Minard Primary School was to reopen there could be a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils who are able to walk or cycle to school. Staff would either travel to the school by car, or if they live locally could walk or cycle. There may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to

transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a negative environmental impact. The respective positive and negative impact may therefore balance.

6.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

With respect to outdoor learning community spaces could be used either in the school grounds or in the immediate neighbourhood if the school were to reopen. Outdoor learning is provided by all schools.

There would be issues with respect to the current condition and suitability of the school buildings and facilities which would negatively impact learning and teaching.

6.6 Summary

Some community members, including some parents, are in favour of re-opening the school. Others recognised that the school may not be viable due to low pupil numbers. If the school reopened, pupil numbers would be low and are currently projected to decline further.

There are financial implications if the school is to be reopened. The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£137,511** with the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£36,500**. The cost to open the school house, if required, to an acceptable standard would be £21,500.

If the School was to be reopened, the premises would be able to be used by the community, in addition to its use as an educational facility. The reopening of the School may encourage families with school age children to move to the community, which may make the community more sustainable.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Furnace Primary is 3.82 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately 7 minutes by car. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than three years.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard to Lochgilphead Joint Campus is 13.13 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately 19 minutes by car. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Minard community. If Minard Primary School was to reopen there could be a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils who are able to walk or cycle to school. Staff would either travel to the school by car, or if they live locally could walk or cycle. There may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a negative environmental impact. The respective positive and negative impact may therefore balance.

There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

When considering projected low pupil numbers, the challenges in recruiting teaching staff and the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard, these need to be balanced against some members of the community's opinion on whether the school should re-open or not. For these reasons, this is not considered to be a reasonable option.

7. OPTION B: CONTINUED MOTHBALLING OF MINARD PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH PUPILS ZONED TO FURNACE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Statutory Guidance for the 2010 Act, in relation to mothballing, states *"the maximum length of its duration is likely to depend on the location of the school and the desirability of maintaining capacity to re-open a school there, but it is unlikely that it should exceed 3 years in areas that are not very remote."* Minard Primary School has been mothballed for 4 years.

It should be noted that part of this time has been during a pandemic and the Council had hoped to consider options for the school previously, but this was curtailed due to restrictions.

7.1 Community Feedback

There are many ideas for the future of the building being taken forward by the community as a hub for community life. Some members of the community felt that the school should continue to be mothballed to see if in the longer term more families would move into the area post-COVID. There was a significant view at the community meeting that mothballing the school over a long period is wasteful due to deterioration of the property and should not be prolonged. It was hoped that a decision about the future of the school, whatever it may be would be taken in the near future.

“Mothballing the school has had a huge impact on community cohesion.”

“Families have been forced into going elsewhere and now they don't know what they are missing.”

“No focal point left for the village.”

“Would encourage a decision to be made about the future of the building and grounds sooner rather than later.”

“Should we continue to mothball to see how post-pandemic living impacts on choices open to parents? The increase in home working could make the local school more viable?”

“Could the school be used by the community in a more productive way whilst mothballed?”

7.2 Pupil Numbers

Pupil numbers are not projected to increase over the next 4 years, they will be in decline, as per Table 4 above.

7.3 Financial Information

The current annual cost (2021/22) to the Council of the mothballed Minard Primary School is **£8,956**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. Neither does it take account of the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which is **£36,500**. Current annual transport cost of taking pupils to alternative schools is **£1,482**.

7.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Minard Primary School is being considered are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Minard Primary School to increase significantly. Minard Primary School is currently mothballed and although there are currently no registered pupils, pupils would be rezoned to another local school. To reopen the school would not increase the pupil numbers.

7.4.1 Community Impact

If pupils are to continue their education in other primary schools whilst Minard Primary School remains mothballed there would be no change to the current impact on the community. While some families are satisfied with current arrangements, others report to feeling isolation. If the mothballing of Minard Primary was to continue the building would deteriorate further and eventually become unavailable. This could have a detrimental effect on the sustainability of the Minard community. At present the school grounds are available for community use. The community view the buildings and grounds as an opportunity to develop as a community and there were multiple suggestions for possible usage, as outlined in Appendix 8. This may make the area a more attractive place to live.

7.4.2 Travel Arrangements

There is no change to the travel arrangements that are currently in place nor to the environmental impact from these. The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Furnace Primary is 3.82 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately 7 minutes by car. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than three years.

Some parents in the current catchment area have chosen to have their children attend Lochgilphead Joint Campus as they work within that community. The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Lochgilphead Joint Campus is 13.13 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately 19 minutes by car. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Minard community. Continued mothballing of Minard Primary School would have no effect on current staff travel. The small number of children has minimal effect on staffing within the receiving primary schools.

7.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Minard, Furnace and Lochgilphead are remote rural schools. Minard and Furnace Primary Schools are set within a very remote rural area, Lochgilphead Primary is classified as a remote rural school (Scottish Government classification October 2021). Children from Minard area, attending Furnace and Lochgilphead Primary School are benefitting from the rural broader environment, whilst not moving their learning to a school that is completely different to their home environment.

The co-location of the nursery and the primary classes at Lochgilphead Primary enhances the transition process for the children moving from Nursery into Primary one, through joint educational processes and liaison between the two settings. Transition to secondary school is enhanced through joint planning and educational experiences.

7.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of further continuing the mothballing of Minard Primary School. A few people felt it would be beneficial to mothball for longer as there was a possibility of attracting more young families to the village post-COVID. There was a significant view at the community meetings that mothballing the school over a long period was wasteful due to deterioration of the property and potentially affected sustainability of the community. Pupil numbers are not predicted to rise significantly in terms of pre-school children living within the catchment area, indeed they are in decline. Mothballing had no positive impact on the reasons for the proposal.

The current annual cost (2021/22) to the Council of the mothballed Minard Primary School is **£8,956**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. Neither does it take account of the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which is **£36,500**. The current annual transport cost of taking pupils to alternative schools is **£1,482**.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Furnace Primary is 3.82 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately seven minutes by car. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than three years. Some parents in the current catchment area have chosen to have their children attend Lochgilphead Joint Campus as they work within that community. The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Lochgilphead Joint Campus is 13.13 miles via the A83. Adverse weather can be a factor, however this is the same for other local schools and areas. Should the school continue to be mothballed these travel arrangements would continue.

There are no specific educational benefits from continuing the mothballing of Minard Primary school.

On the basis that pupil numbers are declining and the building's mothballing is not of benefit to the community or the Council, continued mothballing of Minard Primary School is not viewed as a reasonable option.

8. OPTION C: CLOSE MINARD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR FURNACE AND LOCHGILPHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOLS TO INCLUDE THE CURRENT MINARD CATCHMENT AREA

9.1 Community Feedback

Some people who attended the Options Appraisal meeting were not in favour of reopening Minard Primary as a school. They commented that there were not enough children to support re-opening the School. Additionally, with respect to low numbers in future school roll projections, the sustainability of the School did not support re-opening of the School. Comments in relation to the closure of Minard Primary School:

There are positives and negatives around a small school and a big school. Quality of leadership is a factor and lack of staff is also an issue.

You lose culture when you lose a small school.

Many community members commented on the school premises and potential for this to become a community asset:

'The building to be used for a purpose to benefit the community for example a community hub with a shop and café.'

'The community has lost the shop, post office and now school, we feel it is crucially important that this building is retained to build the community.'

Community members discussed pursuing options for use of the building as a community hub.

9.2 Pupil Numbers

Table 5: Schools Occupancy:

<i>Minard Primary</i>	<i>2022/2023</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>
<i>Approved Capacity</i>	33	33	33
<i>Projected Roll</i>	6	4	2
<i>Occupancy</i>	18%	12%	6%

9.3 Financial Information

Transport costs taking pupils to alternative schools are **£1,482**. If Minard Primary School were to be closed it would generate savings of **£8,956** - the current annual cost of mothballing (2021/22) to the Council. This includes electricity, heating oil, ground maintenance, building maintenance and repair costs.

If parents choose to send their children to Lochgilphead Joint Campus, there will be no increase in costs regarding transport as there is capacity in the current system.

9.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Minard Primary School is being reviewed are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Minard Primary School to increase. Minard Primary School is currently mothballed and pupils are rezoned to other schools. To reopen the school would not increase the pupil numbers, however some members of the community feel that a local school would attract families to the area.

9.4.1 Community Impact

The community had differing opinions on the closure of the school. Some would like the school to reopen, some reluctantly accepted that numbers were so low the school may not be viable

in the long term. All agreed that they would want a decision made and that it would be retained for community use, and not be allowed to fall into a state of disrepair. Within Minard there is a village hall. While it is accepted that school closure may have an adverse effect on a community, a vibrant community hub could be an asset to a community. This could potentially have a very positive impact on sustainability of the community if this option were to progress. If the Community wished to create a community hub, they would require to find a mechanism to acquire the property from the Council and deliver that aspiration. The buildings forming the school premises are situated within walking distance of the village. If the local plans for the building progress, this would have a positive impact on the sustainability of the village. Formal closure of the school would mean that these plans could potentially be progressed by the community.

9.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Furnace Primary is 3.82 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately seven minutes by car. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than three years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Minard community. However one family has expressed strongly that they are finding the travel arrangements in place for Furnace very difficult.

Transport costs for pupils to Furnace Primary are **£1,482**.

Other families in the Minard area have chosen to place their children at Lochgilphead Joint Campus due to their own work and family commitments and have made their own travel arrangements. The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard to Lochgilphead Joint campus is 13.13 miles via A83. Travel time is approximately 19 minutes by car. This option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff. There would be no additional travel costs for children attending Lochgilphead Joint Campus as there is capacity in the current system.

The closure of Minard Primary School, in terms of travel would have a neutral effect on the environment.

9.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

It is proposed that children in the Minard catchment area would be directed to Lochgilphead Joint Campus or Furnace Primary, depending on where they live in the catchment area. The proposal is that children living in the north section of catchment area from Achagoyle Bay to Blackstone Bay attend Furnace Primary (with the section of Minard's catchment area being subsumed by Furnace Primary School) and children in the south section of the catchment area from Achagoyle Bay to Kilmichael Beg attend Lochgilphead Joint Campus (with that section of Minard's catchment area being subsumed by Lochgilphead Primary School).

Both Minard and Furnace are very remote rural schools. Lochgilphead Joint Campus is a remote rural school. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification).

Furnace Primary

Children from Minard area from Achagoyle Bay to Blackstone Bay who would attend Furnace Primary School are benefitting from the rural environment and the strengths that a small village primary can offer. Good quality outdoor learning is currently provided at Furnace Primary.

In Furnace Primary School children are taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a strong social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children of their own gender, take part in team activities and move with their peers as an established friendship group to secondary school at Lochgilphead Joint Campus.

Lochgilphead Joint Campus

Children from the Minard catchment area from Achagoyle Bay to Kilmichael Beg who would attend Lochgilphead Joint Campus would benefit from learning within a bigger context and community. Children

are taught in single year groups and there is a wide range of expertise within a larger staff team.

The school has strong community links and children learn in a variety of contexts and groups including ability, co-operative and social. The school provides a number of wider curricular activities and pupils transition within the campus from Pre-5 to secondary education.

9.6 Summary

People who attended the consultation had differing opinions in relation to the closing of Minard Primary as a school, and realigning the catchment area of Minard Primary School due to the remote nature of the school's location. Some wanted the school to open for their families and become the heart of the community once again; others reluctantly accepted that such low numbers did not make the school viable in the future. The majority commented on the potential for the school premises to be used as a community asset.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Furnace Primary is 3.82 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately seven minutes by car. The travel arrangements have been in place for over three years. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Minard community. However one family has expressed strongly that they are finding the travel arrangements in place for Furnace very difficult. Other families in the Minard area have chosen to place their children at Lochgilphead Joint Campus due to their own work and family commitments and have made their own travel arrangements. The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard to Lochgilphead Joint campus is 13.13 miles via A83. Travel time is approximately 19 minutes by car.

This option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff. The closure of Minard Primary School, in terms of travel would have a neutral effect on the environment. Transport costs for pupils are **£1,482**. Minard Primary School pupil numbers are not projected to increase significantly. Furnace and Lochgilphead Joint Campus have capacity to continue to accommodate the projected pupil numbers.

In Furnace Primary and Lochgilphead Joint Campus children benefit from a positive learning environments with learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of the young people who attend each school. In addition, there are opportunities for personal and social development in these settings.

Taking all of the above into account, and considering how this option is likely to successfully address the underlying reasons why the future of Minard Primary School is being considered, this has been identified as a reasonable option for further consideration.

10. OVERVIEW OF OPTIONS

Option	Option Description	Outcome
A	Re-open Minard Primary School with the existing catchment area	Not a reasonable option.
B	Continued Mothballing of Minard Primary School with the pupils zoned to Furnace Primary School.	Not a reasonable option.
C	Close Minard Primary School and realign the catchment area of Furnace Primary School and Lochgilphead Joint Campus to include the current catchment area for Minard Primary School.	A reasonable option.

11. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF REASONABLE OPTION: CLOSE MINARD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR FURNACE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND LOCHGILPHEAD JOINT CAMPUS TO INCLUDE THE CURRENT MINARD CATCHMENT AREA

11.1 Pupil Projections

<i>Minard Primary</i>	<i>2022/2023</i>	<i>2023/24</i>	<i>2024/25</i>
<i>Approved Capacity</i>	33	33	33
<i>Projected Roll</i>	6	4	2
<i>Occupancy</i>	18%	12%	6%

11.2 Educational Benefits

This statement focusses on Furnace and Lochgilphead Primary Schools, which are the schools the proposal is focused on in terms of realigning the catchment area for Minard. Some pupils in the Minard

area have been attending Furnace Primary since it was mothballed. Some pupils within the catchment area for Minard have always attended Lochgilphead Primary School as placing requests, these pupils have never attended Minard, even when it was open as the placement suited family work commitments.

11.2.1 *Learning and Teaching at Furnace Primary*

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, to help every child and young person to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.

In Furnace Primary School, children are encouraged to be eager and active participants who are engaged, resilient and motivated during their learning. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon. The learning environment encourages high level of achievement, providing a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential within the four contexts of learning.

In Furnace Primary School, children may be taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group.

There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of curriculum for excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. At Furnace Primary School, staff are challenged and supported through a range of

continuous professional development and review opportunities gained by working and learning with a range of colleagues. These schools are also part of the Mid Argyll Schools Cluster, supported together, moderation and tracking of pupil progress is enabled and staff work across stage appropriate groups. Colleagues within these schools are able to support and challenge each other on a daily basis. The whole staff teams are able to bring a range of talents and skills to benefit outcomes for learners.

From August 2022, Furnace Primary will be part of a shared headship with Inveraray Primary and it is anticipated that staff and children will benefit from working with other professionals and children from another context.

Furnace Primary School encourages nurturing and positivity. One aspect of this work is a successful Buddy System. Children from different stages work and learn together. This vertical support is particularly evident in a number of different planned activities when groups of children are together in a social context. This system develops and benefits both the 'buddy' and the 'buddied'. To implement this system there needs to be children across a range of stages in the school.

Furnace Primary School is a very remote rural school (Scottish Government classification). Children from the Minard area attending Furnace Primary would be benefitting from the rural environment and the strengths that a small village primary can offer. Good quality outdoor learning is currently provided at Furnace Primary.

11.2.2

Outcomes

Through the GIRFEC practice model, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority and teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Careful tracking and monitoring procedures are in place to evidence pupil progress. This includes professional dialogue with teachers, learning discussions with children, classroom observations, assessment and looking at pupil work. Planning for Progress meetings are being further

strengthened. These discussions between home and school improve parental engagement whilst focussing on next steps for learning. Where appropriate, intervention is put in place, while working effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure the needs of each child are met.

In the primary classes, standards of attainment have been maintained over the last three years. Most children are achieving national expectations in reading, writing, listening, talking and numeracy. All of the schools in Mid Argyll continue to develop within the PATHS program supporting positive behaviours and relationship within the school. A larger staff, parent body and partner group by nature increases the breadth of talent and interest that may be available to share within a school setting. This applies both in terms of the wider curriculum and within aspects of the curriculum that may be enhanced by staff individual expertise e.g. PE, language, science, expressive arts teaching.

11.2.3 *Experiences - Broadening the Range of Opportunities*
Children are offered a range of active, planned experiences which help them develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing both now and in the future.

11.2.4 *Environment for Learning*
Furnace Primary is a suitably-equipped and well supported school, situated in the heart of the community. The building is well maintained and provide a fit for purpose accommodation for primary aged children. The school has access to outdoor areas that support pupil learning and wellbeing. The building has facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs.

11.3 Assessment of Rural Factors – Furnace Primary

The reasons why the future of Minard Primary School is being reviewed are stated at Section 2 of this report. There is currently no expectation for the pupil numbers to increase at the School. Minard Primary School is mothballed with no current pupils. Having considered all the alternatives above, the option to close Minard Primary School and realign the catchment area for Furnace Primary School and Lochgilphead Primary School respectively to include the former Minard

Primary School catchment area is considered the most reasonable means to address the reasons identified at Section 2 of this report.

11.3.1 Community Impact

The community offered differing views on the proposed closure of the school. There was a suggestion that should the school close, the building and adjoining grounds could potentially be retained for community use. There was a view from some community members that a local school would attract new families to the area. Within Minard there is a Village Hall which houses community events. All people who attended the Options Appraisal Meeting strongly stated the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the community's access to the premises and the visual impact of the village. It is accepted that a school closure may have an adverse effect on a community, but a vibrant community hub could be an asset to the community. The school premises are situated within walking distance of the village. Formal closure of the school would mean that plans for the future of the building could potentially be progressed by the community.

11.3.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard Primary to Furnace Primary is 3.82 miles via the A83. Travel time is approximately seven minutes by car. The travel arrangements have been in place for more than three years. This option will have no impact on staff travel. Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Minard community. However one family has expressed strongly that they are finding the travel arrangements in place for Furnace very difficult. Transport costs for pupils to Furnace Primary are **£1,482**.

The closure of Minard Primary School, in terms of travel would have a neutral effect on the environment.

11.4 Learning and Teaching at Lochgilphead Joint Campus

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, to help every child and young person to

develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.

In Lochgilphead Joint Campus, children are encouraged to be eager and active participants who are engaged, resilient and motivated during their learning. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon. The learning environment encourages high level of achievement, providing a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential within the four contexts of learning.

Children are taught in single year groups and there is a wide range of expertise within a larger staff team. The school has strong community links and children learn in a variety of contexts and groups including ability, co-operative and social. The school provides a number of wider curricular activities and pupils transition within the campus from Pre-5 to secondary education.

There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of curriculum for excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. At Lochgilphead Joint Campus, staff are challenged and supported through a range of continuous professional development and review opportunities gained by working and learning with a range of colleagues. These schools are also part of the Mid Argyll Schools Cluster, supported together, moderation and tracking of pupil progress is enabled and staff work across stage appropriate groups. Colleagues within these schools are able to support and challenge each other on a daily basis. The whole staff teams are able to bring a range of talents and skills to benefit outcomes for learners.

Lochgilphead is a remote rural school (Scottish Government classification). Lochgilphead Joint Campus has a welcoming and inclusive ethos of celebrating pupil achievement and prides itself in being big enough to offer a breadth of experience for pupils but small enough to strive to meet the needs of all pupils.

The co-location of the nursery and the primary classes at Lochgilphead Joint Campus enhance the transition process for children moving from Nursery in to Primary one, through joint educational processes and liaison between the two settings.

11.4.2

Outcomes

Through the GIRFEC practice model, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority and teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Careful tracking and monitoring procedures are in place to evidence pupil progress. This includes professional dialogue with teachers, learning discussions with children, classroom observations, assessment and looking at pupil work. Planning for Progress meetings are being further strengthened. These discussions between home and school improve parental engagement whilst focussing on next steps for learning. Where appropriate, intervention is put in place, while working effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure the needs of each child are met.

In the primary classes, standards of attainment have been maintained over the last three years. Most children are achieving national expectations in reading, writing, listening, talking and numeracy. All of the schools in Mid Argyll continue to develop within the PATHS program supporting positive behaviours and relationship within the school. A larger staff, parent body and partner group by nature increases the breadth of talent and interest that may be available to share within a school setting. This applies both in terms of the wider curriculum and within aspects of the curriculum that may be enhanced by staff individual expertise e.g. PE, language, science, expressive arts teaching.

11.4.3 Experiences - Broadening the Range of Opportunities
Children are offered a range of active, planned experiences which help them develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing both now and in the future.

11.4.4 Environment for Learning
Lochgilphead Joint Campus is a suitably-equipped and well supported school, situated in the heart of the community. The building is well maintained and provide a fit for purpose accommodation for primary aged children. The school has access to outdoor areas that support pupil learning and wellbeing. The building has facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs.

11.5 Assessment of Rural Factors – Lochgilphead

The reasons why the future of Minard Primary School is being reviewed are stated at Section 2 of this report. There is currently no expectation for the pupil numbers to increase at the School. Minard Primary School is mothballed with no current pupils. Having considered all the alternatives above, the option to close Minard Primary School and realign the catchment area for Lochgilphead to include a portion of the current Minard Primary School catchment area is considered the most reasonable means to address the reasons identified at Section 2 of this report.

11.5.1 Community Impact
The community offered differing views on the proposed closure of the school. There was a suggestion that should the school close, the building and adjoining grounds could potentially be retained for community use. There was a view from some community members that a local school would attract new families to the area. Within Minard there is a Village Hall which houses community events. All people who attended the Options Appraisal Meeting strongly stated the school building should be retained for community use and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the community's access to the premises and the visual impact of the village. It is accepted that a school closure may have an adverse effect on a community, but a vibrant community hub could be an asset to the community. The school premises are situated within

walking distance of the village. Formal closure of the school would mean that plans for the future of the building could potentially be progressed by the community.

11.5.2 Travel Arrangements

Some families in the Minard area have chosen to place their children at Lochgilphead Joint Campus due to their own work and family commitments and have made their own travel arrangements, before Minard Primary was mothballed. The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Minard to Lochgilphead Joint campus is 13.13 miles via A83. Travel time is approximately 19 minutes by car. This option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements of staff. There would be no additional travel costs for children attending Lochgilphead Joint Campus as there is capacity in the system.

The closure of Minard Primary School, in terms of travel would have a neutral effect on the environment.

11.6 Financial Impact

The main elements included within a school budget are Teacher employment costs (ie basic salary costs plus related employer's National Insurance and Superannuation contributions plus any relevant individual allowances); Local Government employee costs and an allocation for discretionary expenditure incurred by the school (i.e. educational equipment, materials, staff travel, etc.). Teacher staffing budgets are calculated on an annual basis and within the Primary sector are determined, taking cognisance of the SNCT class size maxima, by the number of classes required to provide for the specific number and age of the pupils in each school. When a school ceases to be operational the Teacher staffing budget is adjusted (at the appropriate time), per entitlement information from Education HR, with the staffing budget resulting in a nil value. As a result of the authority's policy for no Teacher redundancies it is presumed that the staff are deployed elsewhere within the authority and therefore their salary costs still exist with an increase to the receiving school's budget. This is also in line with the national priority of maintaining teacher numbers. This methodology also applies to the school's discretionary budget which again is formula based. The budget of the receiving school, in terms of any pupils being transferred, will have increased. The figures outlined

below take account of the fact that the staffing and discretionary budgets have been adjusted to nil.

The annual running costs during mothballing of Minard Primary School are a total of **£8,956**.

Annual savings generated through closing Minard Primary School would be **£8,956**.

The costs/savings outlined above assumes all revenue expenditure would cease. This includes non-domestic rates, utility costs, insurances, etc. If the school was to be formally closed, this would allow the council to take steps towards selling the school to a third party or local community.

11.5 Environmental Impact

Currently pupils travel to Furnace Primary and Lochgilphead Joint Campus. However this option would have a neutral environmental impact on the current position and would have no impact on the current travel arrangements for staff and pupils. Families travelling to Lochgilphead Joint Campus do so for work and family commitments, and would continue to do so, even if Furnace Primary were to re-open. Travel is an accepted aspect of rural life.

12. CONCLUSION

Three alternative options have been reviewed in considering the future of Minard Primary School. For each option, information was collated and consideration was given to:

- Community feedback;
- Pupil numbers;
- Financial Information;
- Assessment of rural factors, including community impact, economic impact and travel arrangements, and
- Educational Benefits.

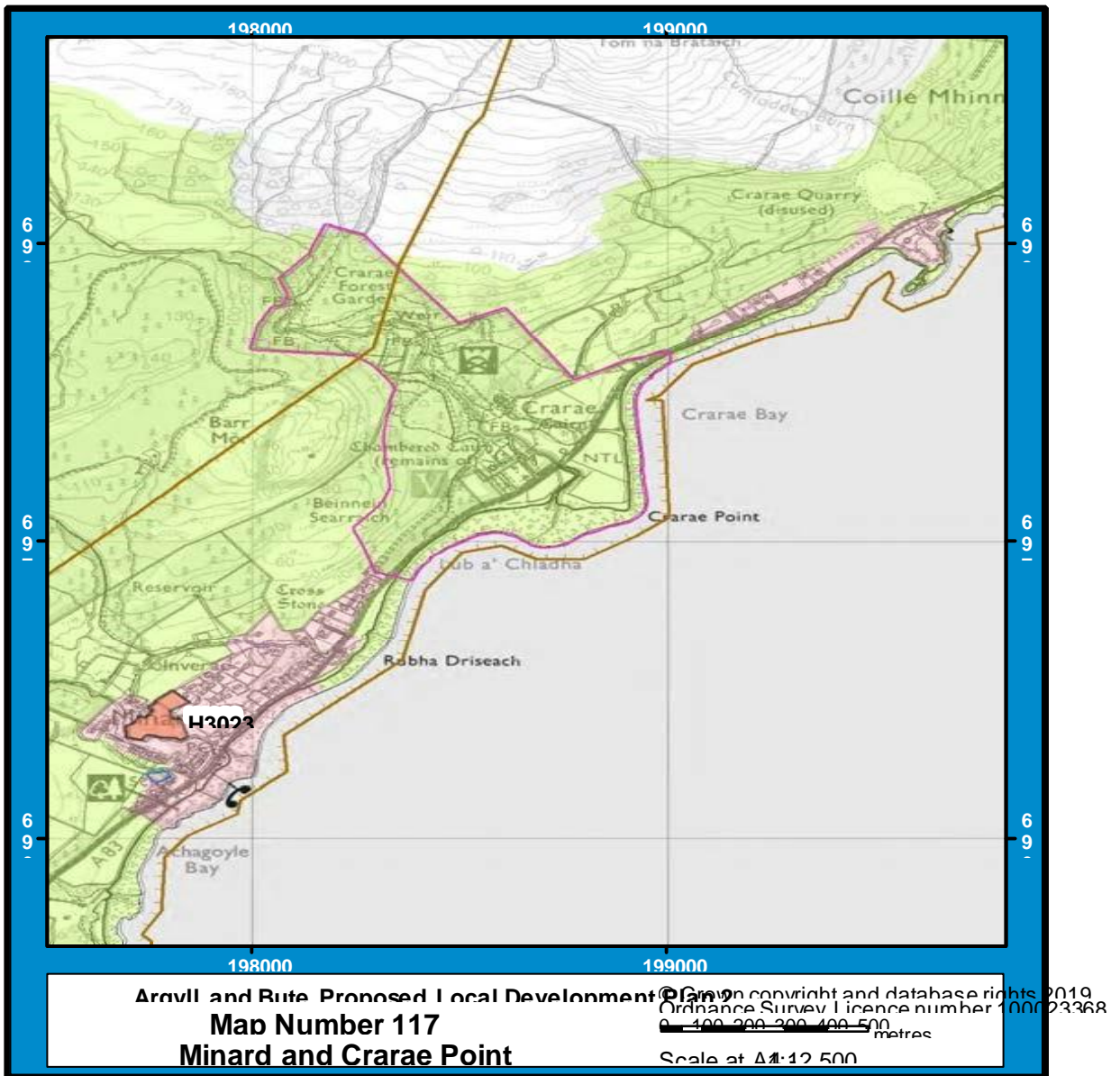
An authority that is contemplating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act before formulating a proposal.

After consideration of the preliminary requirements, as set out in the Act, and the options, and having regard to the specific reasons identified at Section 2 of this report, closing Minard Primary School and realigning the catchment area to Furnace Primary School and Lochgilphead Joint Campus is the most reasonable option for consideration.

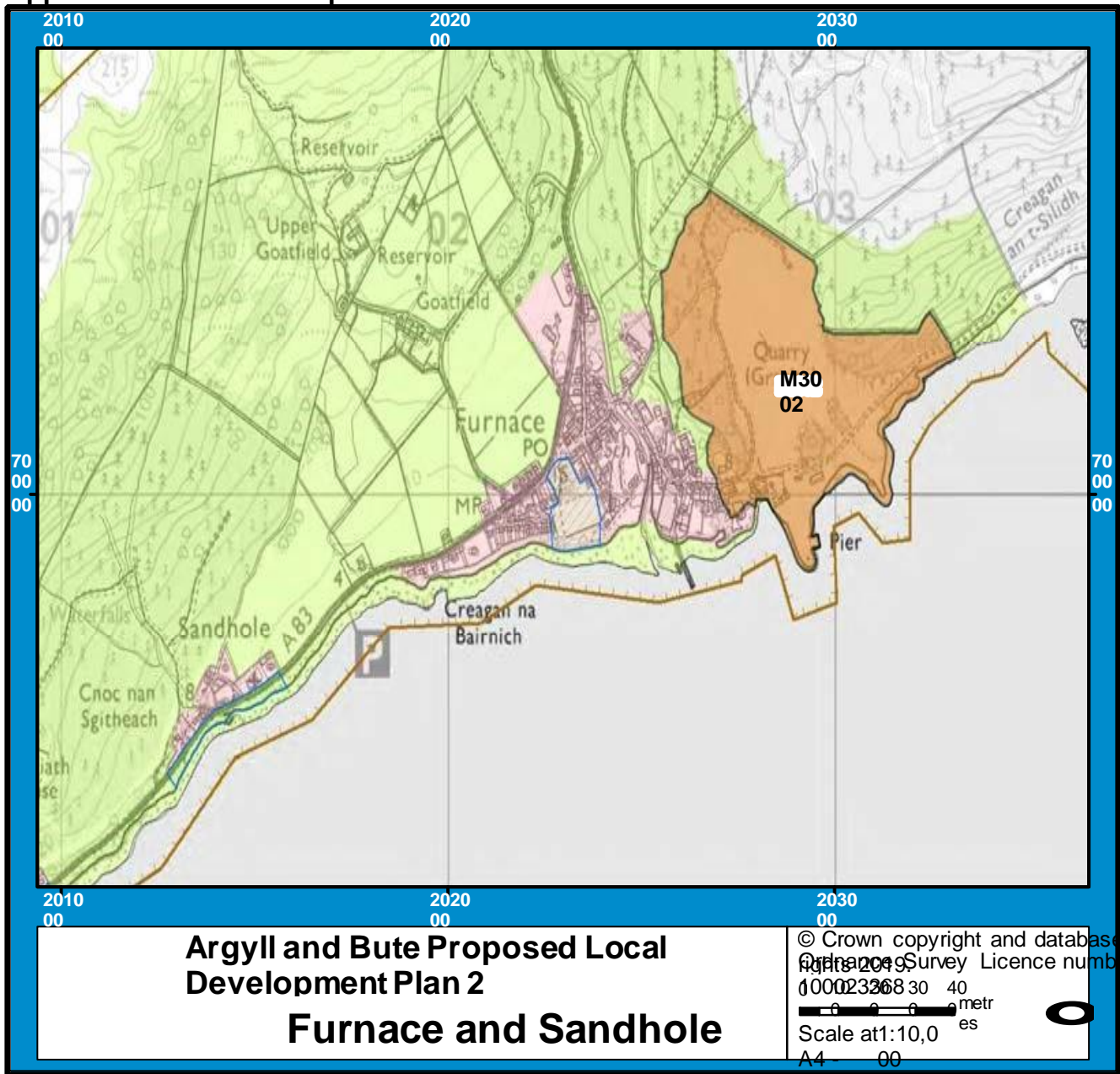
It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a. Note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements; and,
- b. Agree that officers now formulate a draft proposal that will come back to the June 2023 meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

Appendix 1 Local Develop Plan for Minard



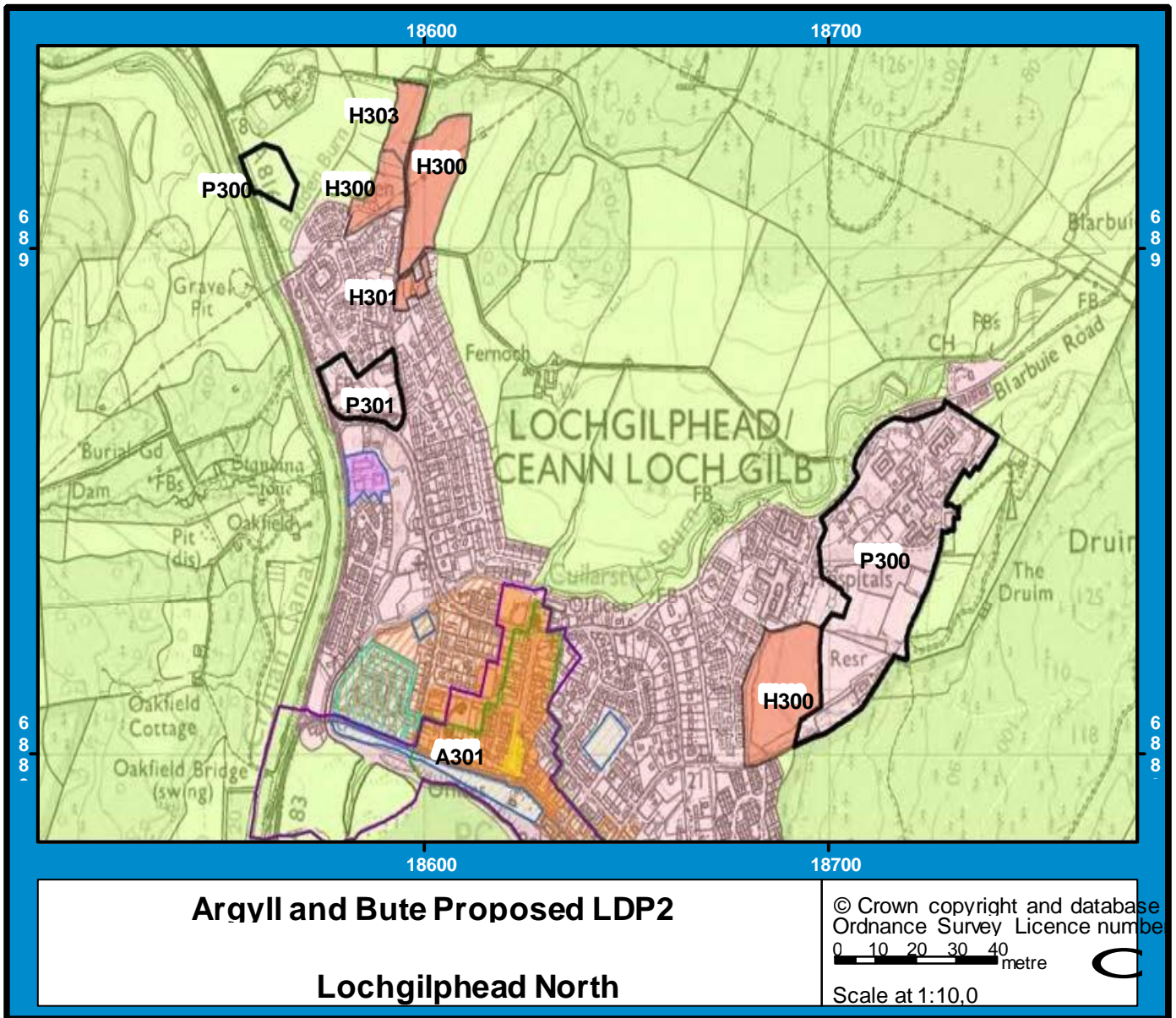
Appendix 2 Local Development Plan for Furnace

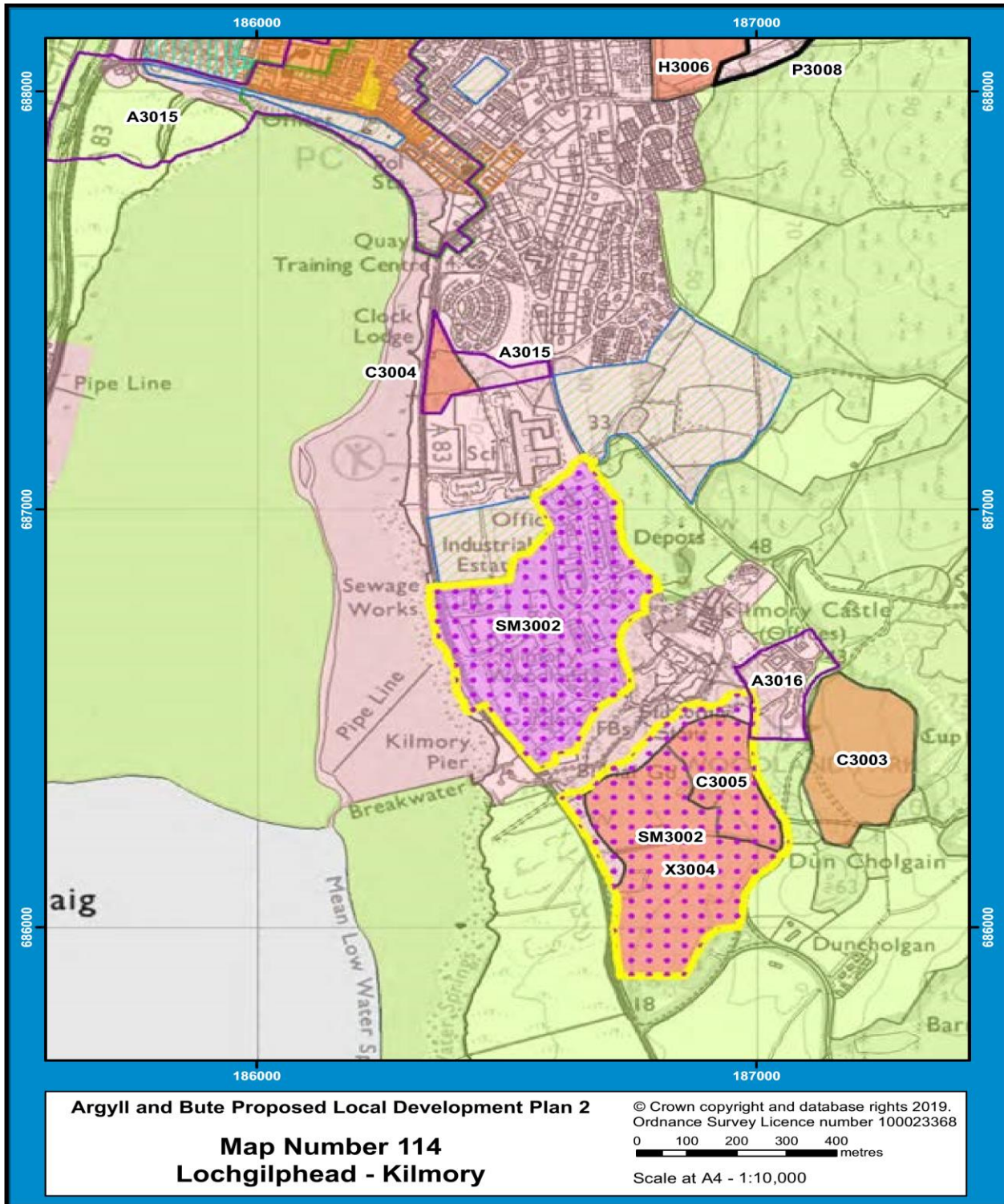


**Argyll and Bute Proposed Local
Development Plan 2
Furnace and Sandhole**

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100023268 30 40
metres
Scale at 1:10,000
A4 00

Appendix 3 Local Development Plans for Lochgilphead



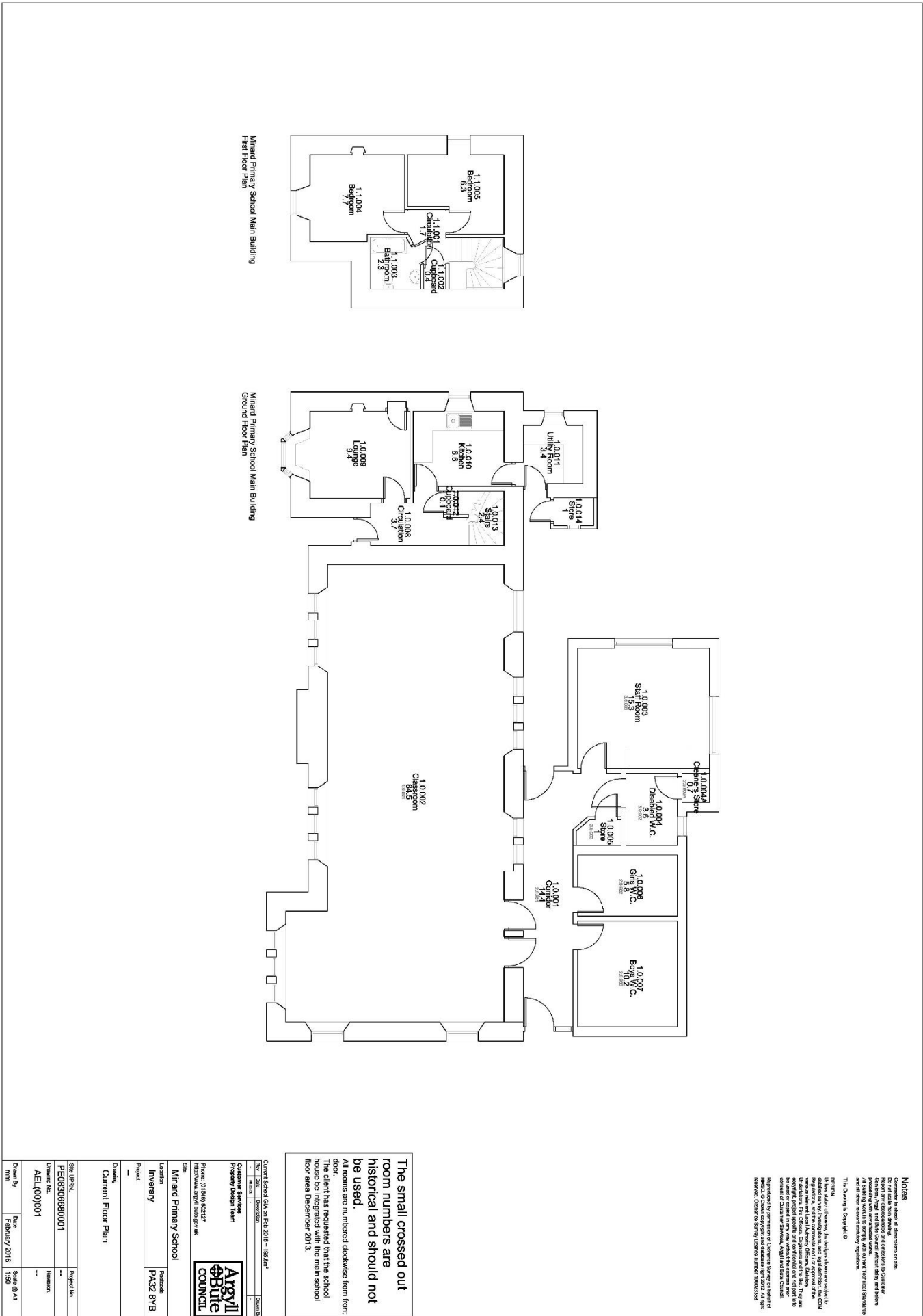


Appendix 4 Key for Local Development Plans

Proposed Local Development Plan 2 Key

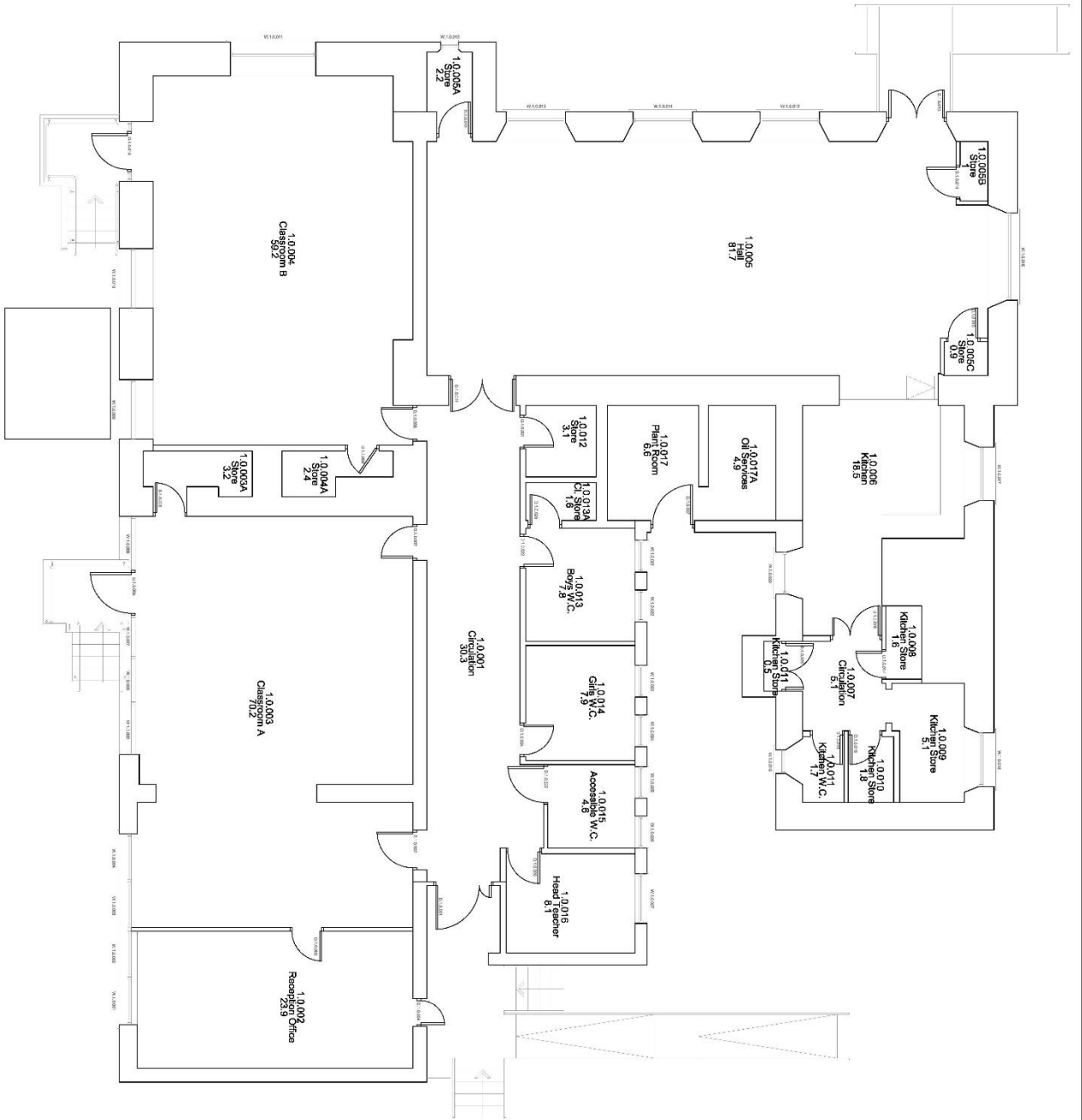
<p> Settlement Area</p> <p> Greenbelt</p> <p> Countryside Area</p> <p> Remote Countryside Area</p> <p> Strategic Masterplan</p> <p> Allocation</p> <p> Potential Development Area</p> <p> Main Town Centre</p> <p> Edge of Town Centre</p> <p> Core Shopping Area</p> <p> Strategic Economic Investment Location</p> <p> Established Business & Industry Area</p> <p> Area for Action</p> <p> Transport Infrastructure</p> <p> Waste Management Site</p>	<p> Open Space Protection Area</p> <p> Wild Land</p> <p> Site of International Importance - Ramsar</p> <p> Site of International Importance - Special Area of Conservation</p> <p> Site of International Importance - Special Protection Area</p> <p> Site of Special Scientific Interest</p> <p> National Nature Reserve</p> <p> National Scenic Area</p> <p> Garden & Designed Landscape</p> <p> Local Landscape Area</p> <p> Conservation Area</p> <p> Tourism Infrastructure</p> <p> Marine Consultation Area</p> <p> National Park</p> <p> Other Council Area</p>
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Appendix 5 Minard Primary Floor Plan



Appendix 7 Furnace Floor Plan

Furnace Primary School Main Building
Ground Floor



NOTES

Do not scale from drawing.

Report any discrepancies or omissions to Customer Services, Argyll and Bute Council, 100 High Street, Oban, Argyll and Bute, PA32 8XU. Tel: 01842 802277. Email: customer.services@argyll-bute.gov.uk

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100 High Street, Oban, Argyll and Bute, PA32 8XU.

Current School OIA on 01.08.2015 - 387 Area			
Ref	Area	Position	Drawn By
1	387	100 High Street	AEI
Customer Services Property Planning Team Phone: 01842 802277 http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk			
Argyll & Bute COUNCIL			
Site: Furnace Primary School			
Location:	Furnace	Postcode:	PA32 8XU
Project:	PA32 8XU		
Drawn: Current Ground Floor Plan			
Site Ref:	FE07604190001	Project No.:	
Drawn No.:	AEI/00/001	Revision:	
Drawn By:	AEI	Scale:	A1
Date:	Sept 2015	Sheet:	1 of 1

Appendix 8 Notes from Community Consultation Day

Minard Community Consultation

26TH May 2022

19 people attended through the day

Some have also responded by email.

General responses

Wrap around care featured...

I feel there are limited efforts to keep Minard PS open. Argyll and Bute have not committed to the wrap around care that would make it viable. There used to be after school care in Furnace that was also used by Minard families.

When it closed, it also had an impact on Minard.

The council have made a conscious choice not to support wrap around care to help to close schools.

When the school was open, we had an after school club. Would parents take ownership of this? Help with before and after school care? It might suit parents better who are now working from home.

Wrap around care is important for a school in this location and context.

The school was at the heart of the community

It's more than just a school.

This was a vibrant school at the heart of the community. When my children came here – there were 30 children here. Those children have gone on to be very successful. They also have a community minded approach to life.

Children gain so much from the community that is valuable. How can that be provided by a bigger community? When the children were here, they would feel the support from the other members of the community.

This was the hub for the community.

There was a great feeling around the school.

As a former parent, we would never have moved here without the school being open. The shop, the post office, church – the school is so important – without a school the village is dead. This was a marvellous school, the village was buzzing. The school was the life of the village/community – it was vibrant – with Easter celebrations, Christmas and the local community would offer support.

I have been part of the community for 40 years and my children attended the school and hold very responsible positions with the Scottish Government and Strathclyde University. I was involved in the school, I find it so sad as it was the centre of the community.

There was such a pride in the school – with different activities, including coffee mornings – the whole community supported the children in many ways. When you have an education in a school like this, it stays with you.

General comments

I can't say either way without more information.

This affects the long term future of communities that are between Inveraray and Lochgilphead.

If you are transported to another town to go to school, you lose your connection with your home community.

ABC needs to take care because of how previous proposed closures were managed. This needs compassion.

Children end up not having freedom to play with friends without being transported. For children from low income families, this impacts more. The cost of living is real.

Having the school closed has impacted on the connections or **lack of** that young families have. Covid activities in the community illustrated this as activities for kids was organised by older families.

The community used to be based around so much many of the school activities.

The use of the building and grounds would need to be for the community, should the school close.

Concern that if the school were to close, it would end up as an Airbnb or anti-social neighbours.

The actions of the council are out of line with what they are saying about retaining schools therefore there is a lack of trust.

We need to look at all the facts and we don't have these. Maybe we need an independent mediator to help facilitate discussion.

x2 Would encourage a decision to be made about the future of the building and grounds sooner rather than later.

Social belonging is important but is it to be expected from education?

This is a reflection of how life is now in a rural area – you need to commute out of the village for work and services.

I don't feel I have enough information around the health and wellbeing impact on pupils.

Empty houses for holiday lets – the community could be gone and this is a ghost town.

This affects the local church too.

Within the locality, it is holiday homes around here. Are there 10 affordable houses meant to be built?

I am torn between the personal and the professional outlook – if my wee one was to come here – socially - what would I want?

What we need are more children within the area.

Families who have already settled will stay in other schools as they will be established. We would need more children to have enough in a co-hort.

We need the community to thrive and numbers to go up for the school to be viable. The social side – could the school provide this?

All it takes is for some local families to move into the area.

The Community Council held a meeting regarding the school previously – 4 adults turned up.

Amenities have reduced considerably in the village – what is there for young families? Recently young families have stepped up and kept it alive but sadly the writing is on the wall.

House prices in the area are so high – ACA? Indeed, across Argyll.

Housing is an issue in the area.

This could become a 'ghost village', with second houses.

Such a shame about the building – not easy.

Understand what families are doing at the moment - it is convenient for them to have their children attend other schools.

It would be perfect to open the school again but realistically we know it is hard – but there is a danger this will become a retirement village.

The recent Transformation plans from the education department – gives me concerns for the future.

We need to make the area attractive for families in the future.

Affordable housing in the area is an issue. What is affordable for families?

Employment is also an issue.

We know staffing is an issue – but can we look at accommodation for members of staff to attract them to the area?

When travelling to another school, the LA should provide a school bus, rather than a public bus.

There are young families in the village – children are the lifeblood, we have children and grandchildren locally.

I understand parents wanting to go elsewhere to education their children – is it linked with after school care?

There are retired people here and the age demographic is older.

The local economy

Not having a school impacts on the local economy.

No school resulted in no shop.

When we lost the shop, it was hard.

Toddler group

There is a toddler group starting to encourage family participation in the area.

This is split between Furnace and Minard.

There is a Parent and Toddler group (13 max) attending, with 6-8 regular attenders – we work between Minard and Furnace and the parents like this.

There have been incidents with the alarm going off.

The building itself

The Community Trust was a tenant in the front room of the school house. It is still a tenant but 'stuff' moved out. CT on space at front.

Would like to see it used for a purpose for young people regardless. The building needs investment.

What affect has the mothballing had on you, your family, the community?

Mothballing the school has had a huge impact on community cohesion.

Families have been forced into going elsewhere and now they don't know what they are missing.

No focal point left for the village.

I feel really sad about it – my kids did really well out of the school.

Mothballing has forced community conversations around how the school could be better used.

I think it should continue to be mothballed as we don't know what people's lifestyles are going to be in the next 5 years, into the post-pandemic world.

The school connected (and was at the centre of) the community. It gave us a focus.

It's not being an asset to the community at the moment.
Need to accept that families are now looking to seek wider friendships for their family.

This was a vibrant school that was part of our community.

The school delivered a high quality education.

The children gained great democratic community skills.

Views on continuing with the mothballing

How will continuing to mothball the school increase numbers?

Should we continue to mothball to see how post-pandemic living impacts on choices open to parents? The increase in home working could make the local school more viable?

Could the school be used by the community in a more productive way whilst mothballed?

Views on re-opening the school with existing catchment

There needs to be sufficient numbers of children in the school so that a child is not there on their own.

Children in small schools learn so well from each other.

It would be interesting to know post pandemic the projected numbers for pupils.

It would be great to involve the community through events that used to be led from the school.

The environmental impact and cost of living should be considered.

There are very young children in the area, coming up.

Unless you know there is potential to send a child to a local school, you are not going to use it.

There are not any children to make it viable at the moment.

I know that in order for it to be viable we need more children. I would like the school to open with larger catchment area but there needs to be a demand. It is hard for families to juggle – wrap around care could be an issue.

Why has this happened? I find this very upsetting to look at the school like this – I know there are not a lot of children in the village but could the school be used for adult purposes too?

Children would benefit from walking locally to school rather than going in the car.

We have more young children already in our area that have recently arrived who could benefit from local education in the village.

If folk know if there is a school in the village area – it may attract more people here – there were only ever good reports about the school and former pupils should be able to access the school. The village needs new life rather than the older demographic – we need to attract new younger members of the community.

The school offers a fantastic context for learning about nature – children need to be learning outdoors – it's not just about learning in the classroom.

The facilities and resources are already here to open – this could save money.

Views on closing the school

You lose culture when you lose a small school.

Concern that this will have further impact on the local community and the economy.

It is difficult to motivate pupils in small groups.

Not enough children in the locality for the school to be opened as an educational establishment.

The school logbook show how much quality work was done in the school – but numbers need to be healthy – numbers below 9 means it is hard to motivate children.

We have no need for a school.

There are positives and negatives around a small school and a big school.

Quality of leadership is a factor and lack of staff is also an issue.

Re-open the school but widen the catchment area

It would be competing with Furnace PS.

X2 You would need wrap around care.

The toddler group has shown that there may be a demand for the school through this group.

When the school was here, there was placing requests from outwith the area.

There doesn't appear to be the same commitment/flexibility within communities to support one another with wrap around care.

Parents need to want to support their own local schools.

It's harder to get a community feel in a large school.

We are a young family and we work from home – it would be so convenient for us to have the school open.

We have a two year old and this is a strong community – there is no park/social space for children to meet/socialise (other than the school) – the school would be a great hub for them. I like the idea of small classes compared to larger classes – get more 1 to 1 focus on pupils. The 'friend base in one place ie the school helps in the transition to High School.

As a young parent, I am unsure about transporting young children to another school. Our travel and work commitments are an issue if the school does not re-open.

Social and belonging skills can be fostered.

With my experience in Pupil Support, I would reflect that a small school can offer a great deal for pupils with ASN. The distance between Lochgilphead and Inveraray is considerable for young children. Pupils thrive in small schools – there are some children who can't cope in bigger schools. With the nurture agenda – it's what small schools provide. Some pupils have transferred to here – they could not cope elsewhere and they flourished. My heart says open the school and widen the catchment area, but my head knows it is unsustainable. The school grounds are fantastic for learning. This is a fantastic resource.

Children need to come first – this should be used as education as its sole purpose. Need to bring in as a village young children and families, without them we will lose buses, shops, businesses.

Mum's need to be at the gate – it is about supporting them as much as supporting the children.

I feel this is such a waste of a beautiful building. Why keep Furnace open and close here? Why not open here and close Furnace if their numbers are going down?

To open the school would bring more life to the village and encourage young families into the area.

Future use of the building/grounds

X5 Could it be used as an outdoorcentre, Leisure/hostel/cycling/sailing/kayaks/archery etc locals and visitors could access?

X 3 Could this be a Pre-5 centre? Nursery?

Could this be used for Forest schools?

Could this be a 1 to 1 support place for children with learning disabilities?

Could the school be used as a creative space/possible art hub?

Or a drop in medical centre – appointments for those who have mobility or transport issues?

A health retreat?

Fetes could be held.

Could be used as a bookable office or meeting space?

Could the school house be let out to help finance the use of the school for the above mentioned?

Post COVID – would this be used differently as a building?

The building needs life but perhaps in a different purpose?

A hub to support those with addiction problems?

Would parents re-consider school placements if this was on their doorstep/in their immediate community?

Uncertainty around the building and the grounds. Would the building and ground revert back to the community?

Issues with access. Concern over scale or any development. Does infrastructure support this? Parking, etc?

Could development create a population with more children without a school to deliver the education service?

Could the grounds be used for a community garden?

Could the school be a community hub for adult education or educational purposes? The last two years have been tough – it has had a lot of impact on the mental health of everyone.

The community would benefit from it being used on a commercial basis.

Use as a hub/café/current community use?

X2 Needs to be used to its full potential/strengths

Community would benefit from use as a business or linked to education.

So sad to see this – the building needs investing in.

The school would make an amazing conversion into a home.

I believe there could possibly be 19 children attending the school in the future.

This would support a network for young families.

What happens for families living locally who do not have a car?

The longer the building is left, it is going to be open to vandalism and squatters. The building has a heritage that we cannot lose.
What is it going to turn into? The Lloyd family had gifted to Argyll and Bute.
Would like the community to pull together to consider buying the building.

Questions raised

What are the financial implications?
What infrastructure is being put in place to support/encourage young families into the area?
What is the overall plan for the future proofing of the area to join up housing etc?
Is it the responsibility for education to provide that sense of belonging?
Is there an argument for the school to be used while mothballed?
What are the plans for the building?

Information provided

Local residents also provided Education representatives with information about the ownership of the building and also thoughts on the accuracy of numbers of children in the area.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 – LUING PRIMARY SCHOOL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides details of the Options Appraisal for Luing Primary School, carried out in accordance with the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:
- a. Note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements; and,
 - b. Agree that officers now formulate a draft proposal that will come back to the June 2023 meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION

25 AUGUST 2022

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 – Luing Primary School

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 When considering the future of a rural school the Education Authority must first satisfy the preliminary requirements as set out in Section 12A the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended.
- 2.2 On 8th December 2020, the Community Services Committee agreed that officers would undertake a preliminary consultation process in respect of Luing Primary School. As Luing Primary School is a rural school, the preliminary requirements require that a possible closure proposal, and all the reasonable alternatives, are assessed having particular regard to the following:
- a. Their likely educational benefits.
 - b. Their likely effect on the local community – having particular regard to the sustainability of the community and the availability of the school premises to the community.
 - c. The likely effect that would be caused by any different travelling arrangements on the school's pupils and staff and any other users of the school's facilities, as well as the possible environmental impact.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:
- a. Note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements; and,
 - b. Agree that officers now formulate a draft closure proposal that will come back to the June 2023 meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 This report provides details of the Options Appraisal, carried out in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended (the 2010 Act), in respect of Luing Primary School.

4.2 The Options Appraisal for Luing Primary School is attached as **Appendix 1**

4.3 Three alternative options have been assessed whilst considering the future of Luing Primary School. For each option, information was collated and particular regard was given to:

- Community feedback;
- Pupil numbers;
- Assessment of rural factors – namely the likely effect on the local community (having particular regard to the sustainability of the community and availability of the school’s premises and its other facilities for use by the community); and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements that may be required (having particular regard to the effect on pupils, staff and any other users of the school’s facilities, and any environmental impact).
- Educational benefits; and
- Financial information

4.4 An authority that is contemplating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act prior to formulating any proposal.

4.5 Consideration was given to the underlying reasons as to why the future of Luing Primary School is being reviewed, and all reasonable alternatives to closure of the school as a response to those underlying reasons, were identified. All three options (including closure) were then assessed – having particular regard to likely educational benefits, likely effect on the local community and likely effect on travelling arrangements. Following this assessment, closing Luing Primary School and realigning the catchment area of Easdale Primary School to include the current catchment area for Luing Primary School is considered to be the most reasonable options to address the underlying reasons for the possible proposal.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Options Appraisal for Luing Primary School has been prepared in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the 2010 Act.

5.2 After consideration of the preliminary requirements, all identified reasonable alternatives and the reasons for why the future of the School is being

considered. Following this assessment, closing Luing Primary School and realigning the catchment area of Easdale Primary School to include the current catchment area for Luing Primary School is considered to be the most reasonable options to address the underlying reasons for the possible proposal. Officers are now in a position to formulate a draft proposal that will come back to a future meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the 2010 Act.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy - An authority that is considering formulating a rural school closure proposal must first satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended.

6.2 Financial - there are financial implications for each option, as set out in the Options Appraisal.

6.3 Legal - The Options Appraisal for Skipness Primary School has been prepared in accordance with the preliminary requirements as set out in Section 12A of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, as amended.

6.4 HR - none

6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:

6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – none at present

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – none at present

6.5.3 Islands – none at present

6.6 Climate Change – none at present

6.7 Risk – none at present

6.8 Customer Service – none at present

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education

30 June 2022

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APPENDICES - Appendix A – Options Appraisal - Luing Primary School

Appendix A



EDUCATION

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

LUING PRIMARY SCHOOL
Isle of Luing

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 No pupils have attended Luing Primary School since August 2020. On 8th December 2020, the Community Services Committee agreed Luing Primary should be mothballed on a temporary basis until June 2022 and the school premises should be retained during this time on a care and maintenance basis. The Community Services Committee also agreed that in the intervening period, the Education Service would gather the necessary information, identify all reasonable options and assess those options in order to consider the future of Luing Primary School in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, and present these findings to the Committee in the form of an Options Appraisal at a future meeting of the Committee.

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/moderngov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=548&MId=13970&Ver=4>

The statutory process for the closure of a rural school is laid out in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* as amended by the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

The Act, as amended, contains a presumption against closure of a rural school and details specific requirements which the education authority is required to follow if they are formulating a proposal to close a rural school. This includes the introduction of a preliminary consultation process.

In addition, the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015* sets out a new right for community organisations to request the transfer of local assets into local community ownership/management. Public bodies, including councils, must consider such requests and respond to them within a reasonable timescale.

Before the Community Services Committee mothballed Luing Primary School, there were no pupils enrolled.

On 8th December 2020, the Community Services Committee agreed that the Education Service would undertake the preliminary requirements in relation to considering a rural school closure and look at an Options Appraisal for Luing Primary School. This review will enable the Elected Members to consider the various options put forward in relation to the future of Luing Primary School.

The 2010 Act makes special arrangements in regard to rural schools that is in effect a presumption against their closure. There is a requirement to have special regard to the rural schools factors prior to formulating a proposal to close a rural school. In particular, it is necessary to consider any reasonable alternatives before considering closure. It is also necessary to consider the impact on the wider community of a potential closure and the impact of any different travel arrangements. These factors have been considered in this Options Appraisal.

2. REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

2.1 An authority that is contemplating formulating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in section 12A of the 2010 Act before starting to prepare its proposal paper. In particular, it must identify the underlying reasons why the future of the School is being considered, which are as follows:

1. Luing Primary School has been mothballed for two years. The school roll had been declining in the few years previously and not predicted to rise in the near future. This continues to be the situation. In the last year when the school was open, families with children of primary school age expressed their desire for their children to attend a bigger school.
2. Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. In June 2022 there were 15.49 vacancies for both Head Teachers and Teachers. Should Luing Primary School re-open, staffing the school will be a significant challenge in the current educational climate.
3. Whilst the School is mothballed, the building is deteriorating with limited budgets for maintenance.

The Council is therefore considering the future of Luing Primary School. The various options are explored within this paper.

3. BACKGROUND

Argyll and Bute is an area of outstanding natural beauty sitting within an ancient landscape with a strong cultural identity. Today, the culture of Argyll and Bute is reflected in its traditional industries of fishing, farming and crofting, sports such as shinty and in its world class

musicians and artists as well as its modern commercial industries such as wind turbine production and fish farming. Tourism also lies at the centre of the economy.

Argyll and Bute is geographically the second largest authority in Scotland. Education is delivered in a range of settings including schools, partnerships and youth services.

3.1 Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan

The Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan identifies Argyll and Bute as an area of Scotland with outstanding places, people and potential for a prosperous future for everyone. Our Council along with our Community Planning Partners, is committed to ensuring that Argyll and Bute's Economic Success is built on a Growing Population.

This strategic approach embraces the vision for our area, our communities and our people as outlined in the Corporate Plan. Our key service priorities support the delivery of our commitments in the plans, helping to focus on local outcomes that will achieve meaningful improvements for the area, our local communities and our citizens.

Councils have a statutory responsibility in terms of the *Local Government in Scotland Act 2003* to achieve best value. Our Community Services Asset Management Plan provides a review of the property assets used to deliver services. It incorporates the School Estate Management Plan which reflects the local implementation of Building Better Schools: Investing in Scotland's Future, the national school estate strategy developed by the Scottish Government in conjunction with local authorities.

The aspirations, guiding principles and objectives contained within Building Better Schools are reflected throughout Education and Children's Services Asset Management Plan (SAMP) for schools and public buildings, both in the management of the existing assets and in the design and construction of developments.

3.2 Our Children Their Future

Councils, as an Education Authority, have a statutory duty in terms of the *Education (Scotland) Act 1980* to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand. This is reflected in Our Children, Their Future: Education Vision and Strategy.

3.3 Luing and the Local Area - the Luing Primary School Setting

Luing Primary School is situated on the Island of Luing which lies nineteen miles south of Oban. The island is 6 miles long and 1.5 miles wide and has a population of around two hundred. It is mainly a farming and fishing community and a number of residents commute daily to Oban via the ferry at Cuan. The largest centre of population is at Cullipool in the north west of the island. Slate quarrying was carried out on Luing for many years, at one point employing 170 men, with slate still being extracted from quarries at the north end of Cullipool until 1965. Luing is also well known for its breed of Luing Cattle which were developed as a commercial beef breed hardy enough to prosper under adverse weather. There is a variety of wildlife on the island, such as otters and hares with sightings of seals, porpoises and dolphins. There are regular chances to see buzzards, peregrines and hen harriers, as well as visiting eagles.

3.4 The School within the Community

When the school was open, Luing Primary School was very active within the community. It was a focus for social and educational events. The school had positive links with a number of agencies that enriched the education of the children. Whilst being mothballed, the school has not been used for any activities. The island has an active community and the Community Council indicate that they are trying to attract families to the area. Recently the Community Council and local parent and toddler groups have submitted requests to use the building.

3.5 Population

Argyll and Bute has an average population density of just 0.13 persons per hectare. This coupled with the changing demographic profile of the area presents one of our greatest challenges. The table below refers directly to the Luing area showing the changing population from census 2001 to census 2011:

Table 1: Population Information

Luing Area Census Ref : Data from Scotland's Census website			
2001		2011	
Total Resident Population	142	Total Resident Population	128
% under 16	22.54	% under 16	14.8
% 16 – 64 (pensionable age)	54.23	% 16 – 64 (pensionable age)	49.2
% pensionable age and over	23.24	% pensionable age and over	35.9

Data identifies that the population until 2011 was decreasing with a reducing demographic of children of statutory school age and an increase in those residents who are of a pensionable age.

It is recognised that the census area and the catchment area of Luing Primary School differ slightly.

3.6 Development and House Building

The Local Development Plan (LDP2), sets out planning and development proposals for the next 10 years from 2020, and a vision for 20 years, is available. The Argyll and Bute Local Development Plan provides the local planning framework for the Council area, excluding the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park area. **There are no allocations or development proposals for Luing within the current plan.**

Appendix 1 shows the Local Development Plans (2) for Luing. (Toberonochy, Blackmill Bay and Cullipool)

Appendix 2 shows the Local Development Plans (2) for the Easdale area (Easdale and Seil)

Appendix 3 provides the key for Local Development Plans.

3.7 Luing Primary School

Luing Primary School is an attractive Victorian building, built in 1877, of local granite in an exceptionally scenic setting. The school is co-educational and non-denominational and has a catchment area extending across the whole island. The school has two classrooms, an office, a store, kitchen and a playground.

Appendix 4 shows the Luing Primary School Floor Plan.

Luing Primary School is 5.95 miles from Easdale Primary School, with a stretch of water in between. A local ferry provides a link with the mainland and the crossing takes 4 minutes. The area is sparsely populated. Luing Primary School is situated on the side of a road that leads towards Toberonochy.

The Scottish Government's Rural School List 2017 classifies Luing Primary School as 'very remote rural'. This is defined as an area with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a settlement of 10,000 or more. Luing is one of primary schools associated with Oban High School.

3.8 Easdale Primary School

Children who are in the catchment area for Luing Primary School while it has been mothballed have been directed to Easdale Primary on the Isle of Seil. There is one Primary 1 pupil who is in mainstream education in the catchment area for Luing attending Easdale Primary School. The pupil arrived on the island after the school was mothballed. Easdale Primary is a mainstream, non-denominational school catering for boys and girls of all stages P1-P7. It has a pre-five unit catering for children who have reached their third birthday. The catchment area of the school includes the Isle of Seil and Easdale Island.

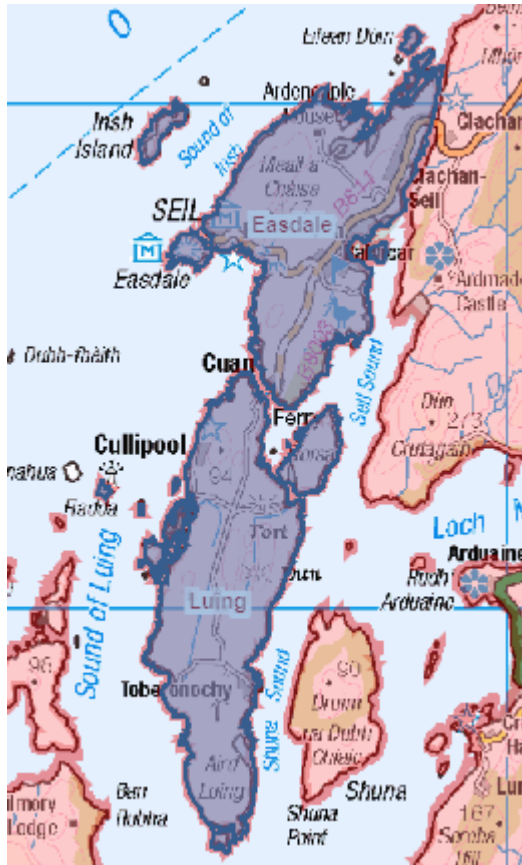
The school is close to the village of Ellenabiach on the Isle of Seil, which is linked to the mainland by a bridge.

The school building dates from 1877 and has been extensively modernised. The accommodation comprises 3 class-teaching areas, an activity area and pre five/general purpose area, a hall/dining room, an office and staff room. The school grounds comprise of a tarred area to the rear of the building with wet weather shelter and garden areas to the side and front.

Appendix 5 shows the Easdale Primary School Floor Plan.

The Primary School building has facilities for pupils, visitors and special access needs. The Scottish Government's Rural School List 2017 classifies Easdale Primary School as 'very remote rural'. Oban High School is the associated Secondary School for Luing and Easdale.

The Map below shows the adjoining catchment areas of Luing and Easdale Primary Schools:



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3.9 Pupil Numbers

Pupil projections, and data for 2021 - 2022 are based on the 2018 pupil census, a return prepared annually for the Scottish Government. Past pupil numbers are historic data from past pupil censuses. Pupil projections for future P1 intakes are from NHS data taken from children registered with GP practices in the area. This data is anonymised.

Table 2 shows the historic and current pupil registration numbers for both Luing and Easdale Primary schools:

Table 2

School name	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Luing Primary	17	12	15	14	8	8	14	10	7	0	0
Easdale Primary	29	28	33	26	28	21	14	14	16	17	20

Table 3 shows projected rolls for Luing Primary School and estimated numbers of pupils in the Easdale Primary School catchment area according to figures held by Argyll and Bute Council:

Table 3:	Luing PS	Easdale PS
	Roll	Roll
Capacity	49	92
2023	3	24
2024	4	25
2025	5	27
2026	6	25
2027	6	28
2028	6	27

* Prediction based on information available to Argyll and Bute (2022).

4. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.1 Meetings

A Community Pre-Consultation 'drop in' engagement session was held in Atlantic Island Centre, on 26th May 2022 from 9.30am-7.30pm. This was to seek the views of the community on the future of Luing School. This meeting was attended by 33 people. There were also written communication and emails from the local community received that have also been accepted as part of the pre-consultation. An officer also met with the Primary 1 pupil at Easdale Primary who is from the Luing Primary School catchment area on 11th May to gain their view at the time of the Pre-consultation. There is a record of this meeting available and the pupil's views are represented in Sections 4, 6, 7 and 8.

4.2 Content of Meetings

Attendees at the meetings were given an overview of the information that the Council would be using in this Options Appraisal, this included previous pupil rolls, pupil projections, background information and details of the pre-consultation process.

The questions were as follows:

What has been the effect of mothballing Luing School on you, your family and community?

In your view what are the pros/cons of the following options:

- *Continue with mothballing*
- *Re- open the school*
- *Close the school*

Attendees also noted questions regarding the future of the school, and points of information that should be considered in the Options Appraisal. A summary of comments from the Community meeting can be found in *Appendix 6*.

4.3 Feedback

There was a range of viewpoints on the future of Luing Primary School:

- **Community and Parents**

The majority of the community felt on the day of the consultation that they wanted the mothballing to continue for a number of reasons. Two families wanted the school to be re-opened; one family were happy with the provision for their Early Years child at Easdale Primary. Subsequently, after the consultation day, Luing Community Council indicated that it would be their wish to open the school as soon as possible as a school and used as such by both Luing and Seil Pre-school and primary aged children. One family confirmed during the consultation that they would be sending their child to Luing Primary School, should it re-open.

- **Children/young people**

The responsible Education Officer was granted permission to speak to the Primary 1 child that would attend Luing PS in 2021-22 and it was his wish that the school should re-open. The pupil said he was tired of travelling and wanted to be able to walk or ride his bike to the school and he looked forward to meeting teachers at the school.

- **Staff**

Staff members were sad at the thought of the School being closed but acknowledged that without a significant number of pupils re-opening the school may not be viable. Members of staff highlighted difficulties in providing staffing, securing affordable family housing on the island and ensuring social aspects of education are met due to low numbers. Some members of staff stated that when the school was under a shared headship with Easdale, this worked well. Some indicated that they would like to see the school open again to

have education more locally for families and thought this would help to attract families to the area.

Feedback notes from the consultation day can be found in Appendix 6.

General Comments:

“Continue to mothball for a while longer, with possible uses for other purposes eg playgroup. Gives the community time and can attract families to the area.”

“A key point is that the Community Trust have been working hard to bring more families to the area but this can take few years. We need the authority to support us. This is a big thing for us.”

“In a wee community like this – the school was at the centre – the community were able to support the children – this is harder when the local school is not on the island.”

“If there is no school on the island, it is off putting to families considering moving to the area.”

“The council need to understand that this is a historical cycle on the Isle of Luing, when I attended the school, there were 6 children, 7 children, when my children went but then when my youngest son left there was around 30 children – the roll goes up and down and the school has remained open. This is nothing new in the last 55 years. We would ask that it continues to remain open as we believe the numbers will go up.”

“It’s more than just a school.”

“Easdale ELC has 10 children – which is better socially and for educational purposes.”

“There is a really good community at Easdale PS for the children. My child likes going on the ferry.”

5.0 THE PROPOSAL AND REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSAL AS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Luing Primary School has been mothballed for 2 years, the decision to mothball the school was during a pandemic and had arisen through parental choice of families choosing at the time to educate their children in a bigger school. There were 5 primary aged children at Luing Primary at the time. The school roll was very low and not predicted to rise significantly in the future. This continues to be the situation. At the Pre-Consultation meeting in May the majority of the community felt that mothballing should continue. The Community

Council have since expressed their wish that the school should open with immediate effect.

Whilst the building is mothballed it continues to deteriorate. The Community is very proactive and would like to use the building constructively in the future. Along with several other rural councils, Argyll and Bute is facing increasing challenges in recruiting staff. In June 2022 there were 15.49 FTE vacancies for both Head Teachers and Teachers.

The Council is required to consider the future of Luing Primary School. The following options are explored within this paper:

- a) Re-open Luing Primary School.
- b) Continued Mothballing of Luing Primary with the pupils zoned to Easdale Primary School.
- c) Close Luing Primary School and realign its catchment area to Easdale Primary School.

6. OPTION A: RE-OPEN LUING PRIMARY SCHOOL

6.1 Community Feedback

Of the 33 community members that attended the Options Appraisal engagement event, the majority of which were in favour of mothballing the school with a view to re-opening the school in order to attract families to the area. There was a small minority who felt the small number of children in the school would prove challenging to deliver a meaningful education. Luing Community Council have subsequently requested that the school is opened with immediate effect and continue to work with under a shared Headship with Easdale Primary School, as previously.

“In a wee community like this – the school was at the centre – the community were able to support the children – this is harder when the school is not on the island.”

“If there is no school on the island, it is off putting to families considering moving to the area.”

“When the ferry is involved, it does change everything – adds time to the commute.”

“Smaller schools really support children of different ages, P1-P7 looking out for each other – all generations benefit from the school opening.”

“Housing is an issue on the island. Easdale PS love having Luig children with them – it is brilliant as they get to be with their peers. While it would be nice to have a school on your doorstep, being with children of different ages is important.”

“It would be lovely to see the school open however, children’s welfare is not good if there are not many children there and they cannot reach their milestones. It is important that they mix with children of their own age and other ages.”

“Financially, it is hard. The staffing, support for pupils and teaching commitments need to be considered as all of this would be hard to find.”

6.2 Pupil Numbers

If the school were to reopen in August 2022, the maximum pupil numbers from the catchment would be two. The families of these children have expressed a desire for the school to open.

If the school were to re-open sustainability may not be viable due to the fact that pupil numbers over the next four years are not predicted to rise significantly (see Table 4 below), and are well below the capacity of the school building.

If the school were to reopen teaching staff would require to be recruited.

If the school were to re-open, numbers would remain low and are well below the capacity of the school building. The community feel however, with their efforts to ensure affordable housing is available, the numbers of pupils could increase.

Table 4: Pupil Numbers

Luig Primary	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
Approved Capacity	49	49	49	49	49	49
Roll Projection	2	3	4	5	6	6

6.3 Financial Information

The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and catering consideration to re-open the school is **£165,360¹**

The annual cost of mothballing Luing Primary School is **£10,323**.

Property Services have advised that if the decision is that the school is to remain operational, the total estimated cost of remedial works identified as being required in Years 1 to 3 and Years 1 to 10 and excluding professional fees is as follows:

	Estimated Cost (Y1-Y3)	Estimated Cost (Y1-Y10)
Total	£119,432.10 (£120k)	£151,053.10 (£155k)

6.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Luing Primary School is being considered are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Luing Primary School to increase significantly under present circumstances within the forthcoming years without a change in the housing situation on the island. The Luing Community Trust have informed through the pre-consultation process that they are working to address the concerns about affordable family housing on the island. This could take some time and affordable housing does not always guarantee numbers of children of statutory school age seeking local authority education. Luing Primary School is currently mothballed and from August 2022 there are 2 current pupils in the Luing catchment area looking to access mainstream schooling, and currently attending Easdale Primary School. To reopen the school would not necessarily increase the pupil numbers but the local community feel that it would help to attract families to the area.

The school has not been able to secure stable staffing in recent years. There was no resident staff on Luing and winter closures were high risk due to ferry cancellations. In the last ten years there were occasions each year when the school closed due to inclement weather and no teaching staff being available on the island. However, this issues was not, and is not, unique to Luing.

Luing ELC has been registered as 'Inactive' with the Care Inspectorate since August 2018.

¹ Annual costs for running a comparative school for Luing Primary School.

The Isle of Luing has a Village Hall that is accessed and used on a regular basis.

6.4.1 Community Impact

The reopening of the school would enable the premises to be used by the community. It would also be a possibility that the school pupils would invite the community to specific events. The presence of a school and the facilities/activities that may be offered could make the area a more attractive place to live. Reopening the school may therefore encourage families with school age children to move to the island. This in turn may make the community more sustainable.

The local authority are currently making arrangements for the local community to be able to use the building while it is mothballed. This does not impact on the future of the school.

The Community Council have expressed their wish that the school open with immediate effect and the majority of local community members who attended the Pre-consultation meeting were in favour of the school re-opening.

Respondents noted the negative impact of the school mothballing on the community as:

- The continued deterioration of the building.
- They were unaware as a community that the building could be used by Community groups while it was mothballed and as a result, it has not been used. Some community groups have now requested use of the building and this is being investigated.
- A lack of focus for significant aspects of community life that the school previously provided for all generations on the island.
- Disappointment in not being consulted regarding the initial mothballing *de facto*. However, the school was mothballed due to families seeking to educate their children elsewhere and there is no requirement for the local authority to lead a consultation as mothballing is an informal, non-statutory process.
- Concerns about travel arrangements for pupils who attend Easdale Primary School from Isle of Luing during the mothballing period.

If the school were to reopen as an educational establishment there would be an economic impact with respect to the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard. There would also be costs relating to staffing, and ongoing maintenance. The reopening of the school and the potential relocation of families to the island may have a positive effect on the wider economy of the community.

6.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Luinig Primary to Easdale Primary is 6 miles, including a ferry crossing of 4 minutes which runs to a public timetable. The total travelling time to Easdale Primary is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, this could be slightly longer or shorter, depending on ferry times and where children live on the Isle of Luinig. The travel arrangements, as arranged by Transport department would be: pupils are picked up on a mini bus on the island, taken to the ferry, the driver accompanies the children on the ferry, as an escort and wait with them until the service bus arrives. The driver ensures that the children safely board the bus at this location. The service bus is met by a member of the school staff at Easdale Primary School, who ensures pupils disembark safely and are led into the school, the reverse of which happens in the afternoon. At no time are the primary pupils left unattended.

Families and the community on Luinig have been dissatisfied with these arrangements, viewing them as being unsafe and putting children at risk. One family who currently have the only child of primary school age on the island have chosen to take and pick up their child themselves, incurring costs and also dedicating time during the working day. The travel arrangements have been available since the school was mothballed. If Luinig Primary School was to reopen there could be a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of pupils who are able to walk or cycle to school. The Education Officer spoke to the Primary 1 child travelling from Luinig to Easdale Primary in May 2022 and he indicated as part of the pre-consultation process that he was tired of travelling and would prefer to attend the local school. Staff would either travel to the school by car and ferry or if they live locally could walk or cycle. There may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a

negative environmental impact. The respective positive and negative impact may therefore balance, subject to recruitment of staff and where they lived.

6.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

There are recognised benefits of children working with and socialising with a peer group. Collaborative learning is an important aspect of the curriculum and with very low projected pupil rolls is not a benefit that would be achieved by reopening the school.

With respect to outdoor learning community spaces could be used either in the school grounds or in the immediate area of the island if the school were to reopen. Outdoor learning is provided by all schools.

There would be issues with respect to the current condition and suitability of the school buildings and facilities would need to be brought up to standard in order to facilitate an appropriate learning and teaching environment.

6.6 Summary

Of the 33 people who attended the pre-consultation the majority were in favour of mothballing in the sense that this would then facilitate the reopening of Luing Primary as a school on a permanent basis. If the school reopened in August 2022, the pupil roll would be two and based on current projections, increasing to 3 in 2023 as numbers of children registered with Argyll and Bute demonstrate.

Argyll and Bute Council have found recruitment of teachers and promoted posts challenging in remote rural areas, particularly since the pandemic and staffing remains an issue for many schools nationally. Should Luing Primary School re-open, staffing the school will be a significant challenge in the current educational climate.

There are financial implications if the school is to be reopened. The total amount including employee; premises; supplies and services and

catering consideration to re-open the school is **£165,360²**, with the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school is **£119,432** over a three year period, **£151,053** over a ten year period.

The Isle of Luing has a Village Hall that is accessed and used on a regular basis. The community will continue have access to the school building while it is mothballed, as the authority are arranging currently.

If the School was to be reopened, the premises would be able to be used by the community, in addition to its use as an educational facility. The reopening of the School may encourage families with school age children to move to the community, which may make the community more sustainable.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Luing Primary to Easdale Primary is 6 miles including a short ferry journey of 4 minutes. Travel time to Easdale Primary is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, this could be slightly longer or shorter, depending on ferry times and where children live on the Isle of Luing. Adverse weather can be a factor, however this is the same for other local schools and areas. The travel arrangements have been available to access since the school was mothballed. Parents of the Primary 1 child attending Easdale Primary during the mothballing period have chosen not to access the travel arrangements due to their belief that the arrangements put their child at risk and have made their own arrangements, at a personal cost. Should the school reopen, there may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a negative environmental impact. The positive and negative impact may balance depending on the recruitment of staff and their location.

There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

When considering the above alongside projected low pupil numbers, the challenges in recruiting teaching staff and the considerable expenditure needed to bring the building up to standard balanced against strong feeling within the community and their specific request to keep the school open, this is not considered the most reasonable

² Annual costs for running a comparative school for Luing.

option to address the underlying reasons why the future of Luining Primary School is being explored.

7. OPTION B: CONTINUED MOTHBALLING OF LUING PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH PUPILS ZONED TO EASDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Statutory Guidance for the 2010 Act, in relation to mothballing, states *“the maximum length of its duration is likely to depend on the location of the school and the desirability of maintaining capacity to re-open a school there, but it is unlikely that it should exceed 3 years in areas that are not very remote.”* Luining Primary School has been mothballed for 2 years.

7.1 Community Feedback

There was significant concern raised at the Pre-consultation meeting regarding what was viewed as the lack of consultation in the mothballing of Luining Primary School. The mothballing of a school is a temporary closure. It does not require a statutory consultation to be carried out as it is an informal non-statutory measure.

At the Pre-consultation meeting there was a majority that wanted the continued mothballing of Luining Primary, in the sense that this would allow for preparation for the community and local authority to assess what the long term future would be for the school. The majority of residents viewed the mothballing to this being short term and would enable planning for the school to re-open. Luining Community Trust stated that they were working hard to secure affordable housing on the island and they felt that this would help to increase numbers of children accessing local mainstream education. There was also a view that post-pandemic, there would be opportunities for the island to attract more families to the area.

“Continue to mothball for a while longer, with possible uses for other purposes eg playgroup. Gives the community time and can attract families to the area.”

“The building needs to be used sooner rather than later as it will deteriorate and I am sure others would like to use it.”

“Folk have changed the way they work from home. People are still reeling from COVID, these two years should not count. Beginning to

think about the future. Folk are adjusting and need to look at and assess. I think we will get another influx on Luinig.”

“Keep it mothballed for the time being until we are ready for it as a school, but ensure that the community can use it safely ie toddlers group and others as appropriate in the meantime.”

There was a significant view at the community meeting that mothballing the school over a long period is wasteful due to deterioration of the property and should not be prolonged:

7.2 Pupil Numbers

Pupil numbers are not projected to increase significantly over the next 4 years, as per Table 4 above.

7.3 Financial Information

The current annual cost (2021/22) to the Council of the mothballed Luinig Primary School is **£10,323**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. Neither does it take account of the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which is **£119,432** over a three year period, **£151,053** over a ten year period. The current annual transport cost of taking pupils to Easdale Primary school is approximately **£18,427**.

7.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Luinig Primary School is being considered are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Luinig Primary School to increase significantly without a change in the housing situation on the island. The Community Trust have informed through the Pre-consultation process that they are working to address the concerns about affordable family housing on the island. Luinig Primary School is currently mothballed and from August 2022 there are 2 current pupils in the Luinig catchment area looking to access mainstream schooling. To mothball the school it would not necessarily increase the pupil numbers but the local community feel that it would give them more time to attract families to the area in the short term.

7.4.1 Community Impact

If pupils are to continue their education in Easdale Primary School the members of the community who attended the consultation day majority indicated that they would remain

concerned. If the mothballing of Luing was to continue the building would deteriorate further. There are already concerns about the condition of the building and there would be expenses to be met by the authority to bring it up to standard for use by the community. There is a risk that the building would eventually become unavailable, if not brought up to standard and used in the meantime by the community. This could have a detrimental effect on the sustainability of the Luing community.

7.4.2 Travel Arrangements

There is no change to the travel arrangements that are currently in place nor to the environmental impact from these. The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Luing Primary to Easdale Primary is 6 miles via a ferry crossing of 4 minutes which runs to public timetable. Travel time to Easdale Primary is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour depending on ferry times and where children live on the Isle of Luing. The protocol for travel arrangements is detailed in Section 6.4.2 but have not been used by the existing family as they are viewed by them and some members of the community as being unsafe and putting children at risk. They also feel there is a lot of expectation for young children. The travel arrangements have been available since the school was mothballed. The existing family have chosen to take and pick up their children themselves, incurring personal costs and also dedicating time during the working day. The child travelling from Luing to Easdale Primary was in Primary One in May 2022 and indicated when speaking to the Education Officer as part of the Pre-consultation process that he was tired of travelling and would prefer to attend the local school.

Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Luing community. Children throughout Argyll and Bute make very similar journeys on school transportation, ferries and service buses every day. Continued mothballing of Luing Primary School would have no effect on current staff travel. The small number of children has minimal effect on staffing within Easdale Primary, the receiving primary school.

7.5 **Educational Benefits**

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the

specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits from reopening the school as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

There are recognised benefits of children working with and socialising with a peer group. Collaborative learning is an important aspect of the curriculum and with very low projected pupil rolls is not a benefit that would be achieved by reopening the school.

Both Luing and Easdale are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a very remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Outdoor learning is currently provided at Easdale Primary.

The co-location of the nursery and the primary classes at Easdale Primary enhances the transition process for the children moving from Nursery into Primary one, through joint educational processes and liaison between the two settings. Transition to secondary school is enhanced through joint planning and educational experiences.

7.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were in favour of continuing the mothballing of Luing Primary School; only for the short term to provide time for the community and Council to see what the future holds for the population of the Isle of Luing. The majority of attendees felt that after the next period of mothballing there would be a possibility of the school being able to re-open. There was a significant view at the community meetings that mothballing the school over a long period was wasteful due to deterioration of the property and potentially affected sustainability of the community. Pupil numbers are not predicted to rise significantly in terms of pre-school children living within the catchment area.

The current annual cost (2021/22) to the Council of the mothballed Luing Primary School is **£10,323**. This includes electricity, heating oil, and ground maintenance but does not include building maintenance and repair costs. Neither does it take account of the cost to bring the property to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which is **£119,432** over three years and **£151,053** over ten years. The current annual transport cost for taking pupils to Easdale Primary School is approximately **£18,427**.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Luing Primary to Easdale Primary is 6 miles including a brief ferry crossing of a four minutes. Travel time to Easdale Primary is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, this could be slightly longer or shorter, depending on ferry times and where children live on the Isle of Luing. Adverse weather can be a factor, however this is the same for other local schools and areas. The travel arrangements have been available to access since the school was mothballed, but families and many members of the community are dissatisfied with the travel arrangements offered by the Council and have chosen to make their own arrangements at a cost financially and commitment of time. Should the school reopen, there may be a positive environmental impact as the use of vehicles to transport pupils may decrease. Conversely, there could be increased car usage by staff which may mean these travel arrangements have a negative environmental impact. The positive and negative impact may balance.

There are no specific educational benefits from continuing the mothballing of Luing Primary school.

On the basis that pupil numbers are not expected to increase significantly in the forthcoming years, and the building's mothballing was a temporary measure; the long term possibilities remain unknown. Although a significant portion of stakeholders in the pre-consultation exercise requested a continuation of the mothballing of Luing Primary School, this is not considered the most reasonable option to address the underlying reasons why the future of Luing Primary School is being explored for the reasons as set out above.

8. OPTION C: CLOSE LUING PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR EASDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL TO INCLUDE THE CURRENT LUING CATCHMENT AREA

8.1 Community Feedback

The majority of people who attended the Options Appraisal meeting were in favour of reopening Luing Primary as a school. The Community Council have indicated that it would be their wish that the school opens with immediate effect. Some recognised the challenges there were in small numbers of children at the school. The Education Officer leading the Pre-consultation sought permission and spoke to the Primary 1 pupil who currently attends Easdale PS. The pupil has no experience of Luing Primary and while he likes his teacher and friends, he expressed his wish to attend Luing Primary. The following comments were made by stakeholders in relation to the option to close Luing Primary School:

“The school is vital to the future of the island. My substantial experience in education makes me very concerned. Previously the school was under threat, we fought this and the roll has declined. However, there needs to be enough children to attend. There are potential pupils currently. We will campaign against closure as strongly as we did 10 years ago.”

“Absolutely not – once it’s gone it’s gone and cancels any future of Luing children being educated on their island.”

“My child has friends whose family would love to move over here but housing is hard. It would be wonderful to have them here.”

“The school was an important part of previous children’s lives here and it was an important part of our small community which supported it and enjoyed seeing the children there.”

There were a few comments regarding parents being satisfied with the education offered at Easdale Primary and ELC:

“Easdale ELC has 10 children – which is better socially and for educational purposes.”

“There is a really good community at Easdale PS for the children. My child likes going on the ferry.”

There were also concerns raised regarding the cost of opening a school for small numbers of pupils and also the quality of what may be available to the children subsequently:

“.....were the school used for education in future, there is the social question that, in the fullness of time, the very few children who might be schooled on the island will be deprived of contact with what would be their peers, were they in a larger school community, perhaps to the detriment of their development as members of society.”

Many community members commented on the school premises and potential for this to be used by the community:

“There must be other ways of using the school building – previously used as a café and for choirs to use.”

“Could the school be used as a Pre-school facility for early learning?”

“Could the building be used to link with UHI and Argyll College for learning? Adult learning? A study space in classes? This happens in

Mull, Campbeltown and on Islay. Folk studying on the island could use this facility – you have less distractions than at home.”

8.2 Pupil Numbers

Table 4: Pupil Numbers and Occupancy

Luing Primary	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
Approved Capacity	49	49	49	49	49	49
Roll Projection	2	3	4	5	6	6
Occupancy	4%	6%	8%	10%	12%	12%

If Luing Primary School were to be permanently closed, it is further intended that the catchment area for Easdale Primary School would be extended to subsume Luing’s current catchment area. The current occupancy rate for Easdale Primary School is 78.5%.

8.3 Financial Information

Currently there are no primary school age children using the Education Transport offered but one primary child is entitled to this; the family have chosen to not access this for reasons outlined in Section 7.4.2. An existing West Coast Motors bus means that there would be no additional annual transport costs should Luing Primary School be permanently discontinued. Families accessing Early Years provision at Easdale Primary School from the Isle of Luing are reimbursed **£1,482** annually. If Luing Primary School were to be closed it would generate savings of **£10,323** - the current annual cost of mothballing (2021/22) to the Council. This includes electricity, heating oil, ground maintenance, building maintenance and repair costs. The cost to bring the school building to an acceptable standard to re-open the school which is **£119,432** over three years and **£151,053** over ten years.

8.4 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Luing Primary School is being considered are as stated at Section 2 of this Report. There is no expectation for the pupil numbers at Luing Primary School to increase significantly without a change in the housing situation on the island over forthcoming years. The Community Trust have informed through the Pre-consultation process that they are working to address the concerns about affordable family housing on the island. Luing Primary

School is currently mothballed and from August 2022 there will be 2 pupils in the Luing catchment area looking to access mainstream schooling. If the school were to close many of the local community members who engaged with the pre-consultation process felt that it will discourage families from moving to the island and this then could have a significant impact on the future of the island overall.

8.4.1 Community Impact

There was a significant view from community members at the preliminary consultation in May 2022 that did not support the closure of the school. Within Luing there is a village hall that the community use. All people who attended the consultation strongly stated the school building should be retained in a good state of repair. It was widely accepted by the community that school closure will have an adverse effect on a community and its longer term sustainability.

8.4.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Luing Primary to Easdale Primary is 6 miles, including a ferry crossing of 4 minutes which runs to public timetable. Travel time to Easdale Primary is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, this could be slightly longer or shorter, depending on ferry times, and where children live on the Isle of Luing. The protocol for travel arrangements has already been described in Section 6.4.2 but has not been used by the existing family as the arrangements are viewed by them and some members of the community as being unsafe and putting children at risk. They also feel there is a lot of expectation for young children. The travel arrangements have been available since the school was mothballed. The existing family has chosen to take and pick up their child themselves, incurring personal financial costs and also dedicating time during the working day. The child travelling from Luing to Easdale Primary was in Primary One in May 2022 and indicated as he spoke to the Education Officer as part of the pre-consultation process that he was tired of travelling and would prefer to attend the local school.

Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Luing community. Children throughout Argyll and Bute make very similar journeys on school transportation, ferries and service buses every day. Closure of Luing Primary School would have no effect on current staff travel. The small number of children has minimal

effect on staffing within Easdale Primary, the receiving primary school.

This option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements in place for staff and pupils. However, the family with the current pupil attending Easdale Primary has expressed concern about the sustainability of the current situation and is dissatisfied. The community have also made their views known in terms of their concerns about what is available. The closure of Luing Primary School, in relation to travel would have a neutral effect on the environment. There is currently no additional annual transport cost for pupils to travel to Easdale Primary School and the use of the existing mini-bus, ferry and West Coast Motors service bus would not incur additional costs in the immediate future.

8.5 Educational Benefits

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. There are no specific educational benefits as all schools implement Curriculum for Excellence ensuring effective learning and teaching which is matched to the needs of children.

Both Luing and Easdale are remote rural schools. Each school is set within a very remote rural area (Scottish Government classification). Outdoor learning is currently provided at Easdale Primary. The pupils would then be transitioning to Oban High School with an established friendship group.

In Easdale Primary School children are taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children of their own gender, take part in team activities and move with their peers to secondary school.

8.6 Summary

The majority of people who attended the consultation were not in favour of closing Luing Primary as a school, and realigning the

catchment area of Easdale Primary School due to the remote nature of the school's location. They also commented on the potential for the school premises to be used as a community asset.

Current capacity for Easdale Primary School is 78.5%. There are currently two pupils in the Luing catchment area, there is no additional annual cost to transport pupils to Easdale Primary school and use of the existing mini bus, ferry and West Coast Motors service bus would not incur additional costs.

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Luing Primary to Easdale Primary is 6 miles, including a ferry crossing of 4 minutes which runs to public timetable. Travel time to Easdale Primary is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, this could be slightly longer or shorter, depending on ferry times, and where children live on the Isle of Luing. The protocol for travel arrangements has already been described in Section 6.4.2 but has not been used by the existing family as the arrangements are viewed by them and some members of the community as being unsafe and putting children at risk. They also feel there is a lot of expectation for young children. The travel arrangements have been available since the school was mothballed. The existing family has chosen to take and pick up their child themselves, incurring personal financial costs and also dedicating time during the working day. The family with the current pupil attending Easdale Primary has expressed concern about the sustainability of the current situation and is dissatisfied. The child travelling from Luing to Easdale Primary was in Primary One in May 2022 and indicated as he spoke to the Education Officer as part of the pre-consultation process that he was tired of travelling and would prefer to attend the local school.

The closure of Luing Primary School would have a neutral effect on the environment in terms of travelling arrangements. Easdale Primary currently accommodates pupils from Luing School and pupil numbers are not projected to increase significantly. Easdale Primary has capacity to continue to accommodate the projected pupil numbers.

In Easdale Primary School, children benefit from a positive learning environment with learning and teaching which is well matched to the needs of the young people who attend the school. In addition there are more opportunities for personal and social development in this setting.

In summary of all the aspects outlined above, this has been identified as the most reasonable option for further consideration of the future of Luig Primary School.

11. OVERVIEW OF OPTIONS

Option	Option Description	Outcome
A	Re-open Luig Primary School with the existing catchment area	A requested option, as identified by the community.
B	Continued Mothballing of Luig Primary School with the pupils zoned to Easdale Primary School	A requested option, as identified by the community.
C	Close Luig Primary School and realign the catchment area of Easdale Primary School to include the current catchment area for Luig Primary School.	The most reasonable option to address the underlying reasons for considering the future of Luig Primary

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF REASONABLE OPTION C: CLOSE LUIG PRIMARY SCHOOL AND REALIGN THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR EASDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL TO INCLUDE THE CURRENT LUIG CATCHMENT AREA

12.1 Pupil Projections

Luig Primary	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028
Approved Capacity	49	49	49	49	49	49
Roll Projection	2	3	4	5	6	6

12.2 Educational Benefits

This statement focusses on Easdale Primary School, which is the school Luig pupils have been attending since December 2020.

12.2.1 Learning and Teaching

The curriculum includes a broad range of experiences which are planned for children and young people through

their education, to help every child and young person to develop knowledge, skills and attributes for success in learning, life and work.

In Easdale Primary School, children are encouraged to be eager and active participants who are engaged, resilient and highly motivated during their learning. Children know that their views are sought, valued and acted upon. The learning environment encourages high level of achievement, providing a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential within the four contexts of learning.

In Easdale Primary School children may be taught in classes composed of children from more than one year group. Children benefit from being part of a social context in which they can build relationships with different groups and individuals, develop social skills, meet challenges and exercise responsibilities as members of a social group. They are able to interact and socialise with groups of children of varying sizes and composition, take part in team activities and move with their peers to secondary school.

There is a continual challenge for all schools to deliver a school improvement agenda and deliver effectively the principles and outcomes of curriculum for excellence. The National Improvement Framework priorities include raising attainment for all, and closing the gap between the most and least disadvantaged children.

The principles of Curriculum for Excellence recognise the professionalism of teachers and the importance of this in exercising the freedom and responsibility associated with broader guidance. This means that schools are able to design their curriculum to meet the specific needs of their children and community. At Easdale Primary School, staff are challenged and supported through a range of continuous professional development and review opportunities gained by working and learning with a range of colleagues. Easdale Primary School is part of the Oban, Lorne and the Isles (OLI) Schools Cluster, which means that staff can be supported together, moderation and tracking of pupil progress is enabled and staff work

across stage appropriate groups. Colleagues within Easdale Primary School are able to support and challenge each other on a daily basis. The whole staff are able to bring a range of talents and skills to benefit outcomes for learners.

Easdale Primary School encourages nurturing and positivity. One aspect of this work is a successful Buddy System. Children from different stages work and learn together. This vertical support is particularly evident on numerous occasions when groups of children are together in a social context. This system develops and benefits both the 'buddy' and the 'buddied'. To implement this system there needs to be children across a range of stages in the school.

Both Easdale and Luing are very remote rural schools. Each school is set within a remote rural area (Scottish Government classification).

The co-location of the nursery and the primary classes at Easdale Primary School enhances the transition process for the children moving from Nursery in to Primary one, through joint educational processes and liaison between the two settings.

12.2.2

Outcomes

Through the GIRFEC practice model, meeting the needs of every child continues to be a priority and teachers carefully plan and assess to ensure each child has the opportunity to reach their potential. Careful tracking and monitoring procedures are in place to evidence pupil progress. This includes professional dialogue with teachers, learning discussions with children, classroom observations, assessment and looking at pupil work. Planning for Progress meetings are being further strengthened. These discussions between home and school improve parental engagement whilst focussing on next steps for learning. Where appropriate, intervention is put in place, while working effectively with other agencies and parents to ensure the needs of each child are met.

In the primary classes, standards of attainment have been maintained over the last three years. Most children

are achieving national expectations in reading, writing, listening, talking and numeracy. Easdale continues to develop within the PATHS program supporting positive behaviours and relationship within the school. A larger staff, parent body and partner group by nature increases the breadth of talent and interest that may be available to share within a school setting. This applies both in terms of the wider curriculum and within aspects of the curriculum that may be enhanced by staff individual expertise e.g. PE, language, science, expressive arts teaching.

12.2.3 *Experiences - Broadening the Range of Opportunities*

Children are offered a range of active, planned experiences which help them develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for their mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing both now and in the future.

12.2.4 *Environment for Learning*

Easdale Primary School is a suitably-equipped and well supported school, situated on the Isle of Seil. The entire building is well maintained and along with the surrounding scenery provides attractive accommodation for the primary school. The building has facilities for pupils and visitors with special access needs.

12.3 Assessment of Rural Factors

The reasons why the future of Luing Primary School is being reviewed are stated at Section 2 of this report. There is currently no expectation for the pupil numbers to increase significantly at the School. Luing Primary School is mothballed with two pupils accessing education at Easdale Primary from August 2022. Having considered all the alternatives above, the option to close Luing Primary School and realign the catchment area for Easdale Primary School to subsume the former Luing Primary School catchment area is considered the most reasonable means to address the reasons identified at Section 2 of this report.

12.3.1 *Community Impact*

The majority of the community who attended the consultation day in May 2022 did not support the closure of the school. There was a strong feeling that the sustainability of the Isle of Luing would be threatened

without a school of its own. There was also the benefits of island life that are enhanced by having a school on the island that community members valued and children have previously enjoyed. All people who attended the pre-consultation meeting strongly stated the school building should be also used by the community and not allowed to fall in to further disrepair, as that would adversely impact on the community's access to the premises. The difficulties in affordable housing on the island are a factor and the Community Trust are working to address these for the long term future. There is a history of school rolls fluctuating over a long period of time on the island.

12.3.2 Travel Arrangements

The travel distance (sourced from Google maps) from Luing Primary to Easdale Primary is 6 miles, including a ferry crossing of 4 minutes which runs to public timetable. Travel time to Easdale Primary is approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour, this could be slightly longer or shorter, depending on ferry times, and where children live on the Isle of Luing. The protocol for travel arrangements has already been described in Section 6.4.2 but has not been used by the existing family as the arrangements are viewed by them and some members of the community as being unsafe and putting children at risk. They also feel there is a lot of expectation for young children. The travel arrangements have been available since the school was mothballed. The existing family has chosen to take and pick up their child themselves, incurring personal financial costs and also dedicating time during the working day. The child travelling from Luing to Easdale Primary was in Primary One in May 2022 and indicated as he spoke to the Education Officer as part of the pre-consultation process that he was tired of travelling and would prefer to attend the local school.

Travel is an accepted aspect of living in the Luing community. Children throughout Argyll and Bute make very similar journeys on school transportation, ferries and service buses every day. Closure of Luing Primary School would have no effect on current staff travel. The small number of children has minimal effect on staffing within Easdale Primary, the receiving primary school.

This option would have no effect on the current travel arrangements in place for staff and pupils. However, the family with the current pupil attending Easdale Primary has expressed concern about the sustainability of the current situation and is dissatisfied. The community have also made their views known in terms of their concerns about what is available. The closure of Luing Primary School, in relation to travel would have a neutral effect on the environment. There is currently no additional annual transport cost for pupils to travel to Easdale Primary School and the use of the existing mini-bus, ferry and West Coast Motors service bus would not incur additional costs in the immediate future.

12.4 Financial Impact

The main elements included within a school budget are Teacher employment costs (ie basic salary costs plus related employer's National Insurance and Superannuation contributions plus any relevant individual allowances); Local Government employee costs and an allocation for discretionary expenditure incurred by the school (i.e. educational equipment, materials, staff travel, etc.). Teacher staffing budgets are calculated on an annual basis and within the Primary sector are determined, taking cognisance of the SNCT class size maxima, by the number of classes required to provide for the specific number and age of the pupils in each school. When a school ceases to be operational the Teacher staffing budget is adjusted (at the appropriate time), per entitlement information from Education HR, with the staffing budget resulting in a nil value. As a result of the authority's policy for no Teacher redundancies it is presumed that the staff are deployed elsewhere within the authority and therefore their salary costs still exist with an increase to the receiving school's budget, unless the member of staff is filling a vacancy. This is also in line with the national priority of maintaining teacher numbers. This methodology also applies to the school's discretionary budget which again is formula based. The budget of the receiving school, in terms of any pupils being transferred, will have increased. The figures outlined below take account of the fact that the staffing and discretionary budgets have been adjusted to nil.

The annual running costs during mothballing of Luing Primary School are a total of **£10,323**.

Annual savings generated through closing Luing Primary School would be **£10,323**.

The costs/savings outlined above assumes all revenue expenditure would cease. This includes non-domestic rates, utility costs, insurances, etc. If the school was to be formally closed, this would allow the council to take steps towards selling the school to a third party or local community.

12.5 Environmental Impact

From August 2022, two pupils will travel to Easdale Primary. However this option would have a neutral environmental impact on the current position and would have no impact on the current travel arrangements for staff and pupils. Eventually all pupils will attend Easdale Primary School. Travel is an accepted aspect of rural life.

13. CONCLUSION

Three alternative options have been reviewed in considering the future of Luing Primary School. For each option, information was collated and consideration was given to:

- Community feedback;
- Pupil numbers;
- Financial Information;
- Assessment of rural factors, including community impact, economic impact and travel arrangements, and
- Educational Benefits.

An authority that is contemplating a rural school closure proposal must satisfy the preliminary requirements set out in Section 12A of the 2010 Act before formulating a proposal.

After consideration of the preliminary requirements, as set out in the Act, and the options, and having regard to the specific reasons identified at Section 2 of this report, closing Luing Primary School and realigning the catchment area of Easdale Primary School to include the current catchment area for Luing Primary School is the most reasonable option in order to address the reasons for the possible proposal.

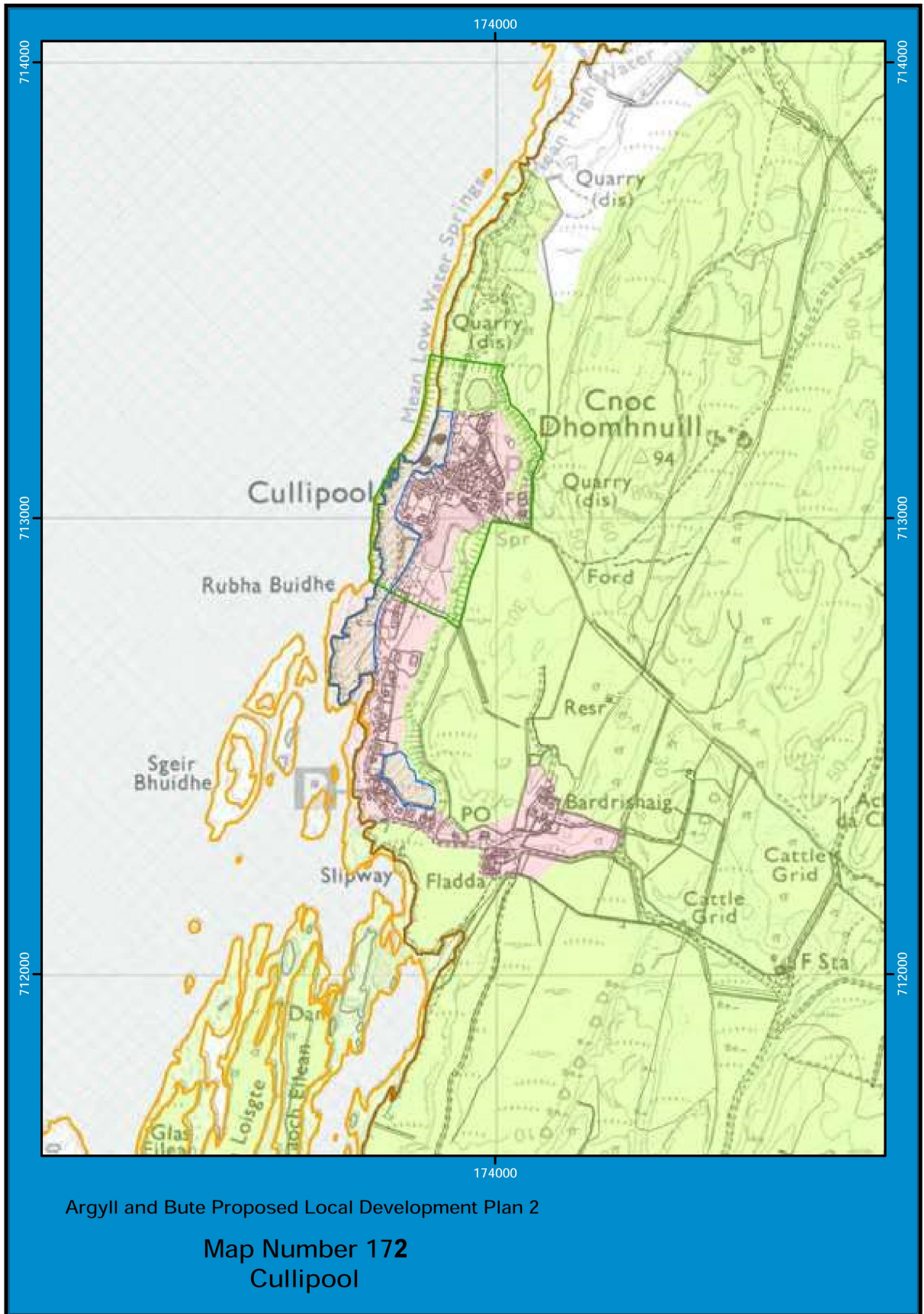
It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

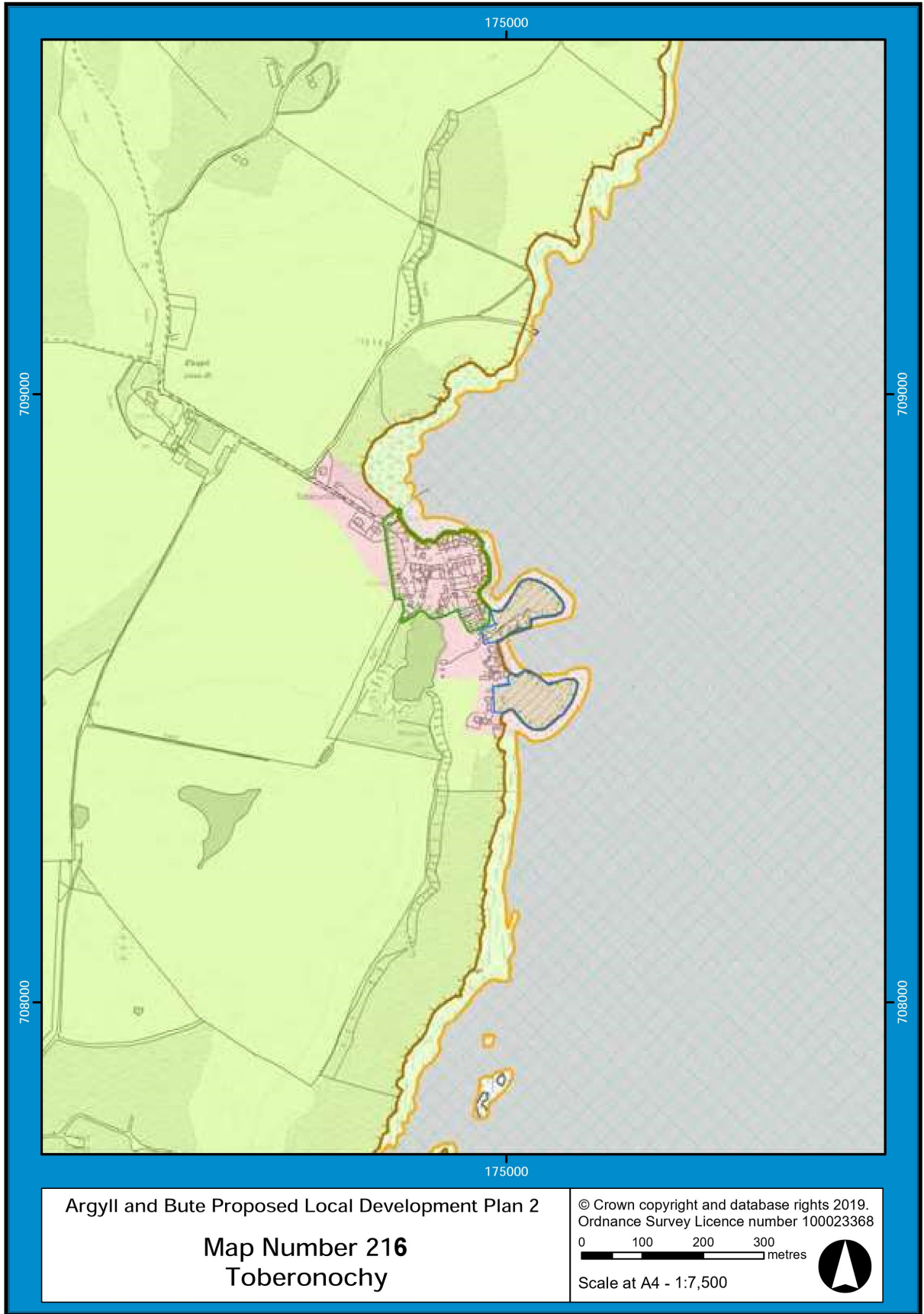
- a. Note the outcome of this consideration of the preliminary requirements; and,
- b. Agree that officers now formulate a draft proposal that will come back to the June 2023 meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal

consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

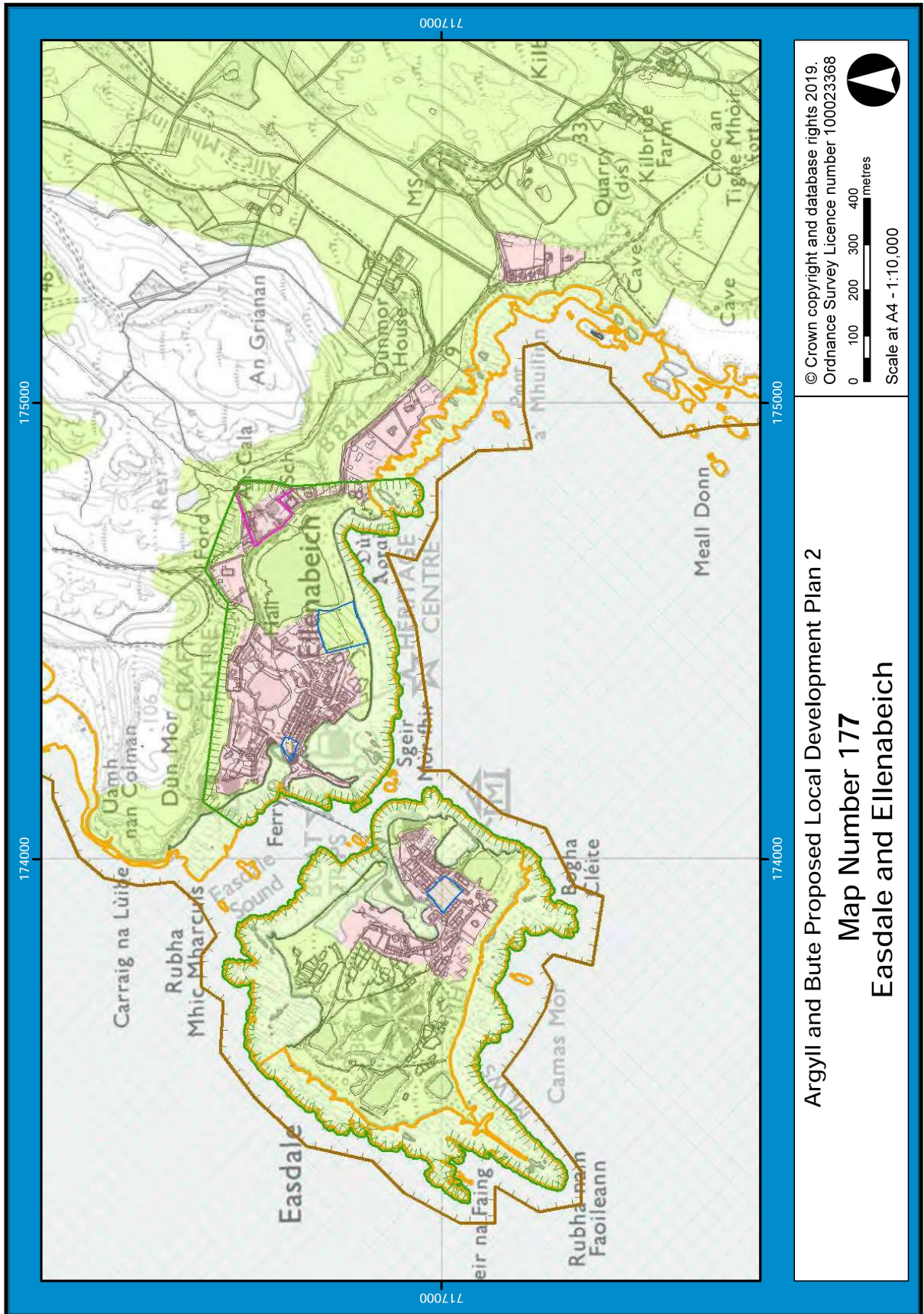
Appendix 1 Local Develop Plans for Luing Area





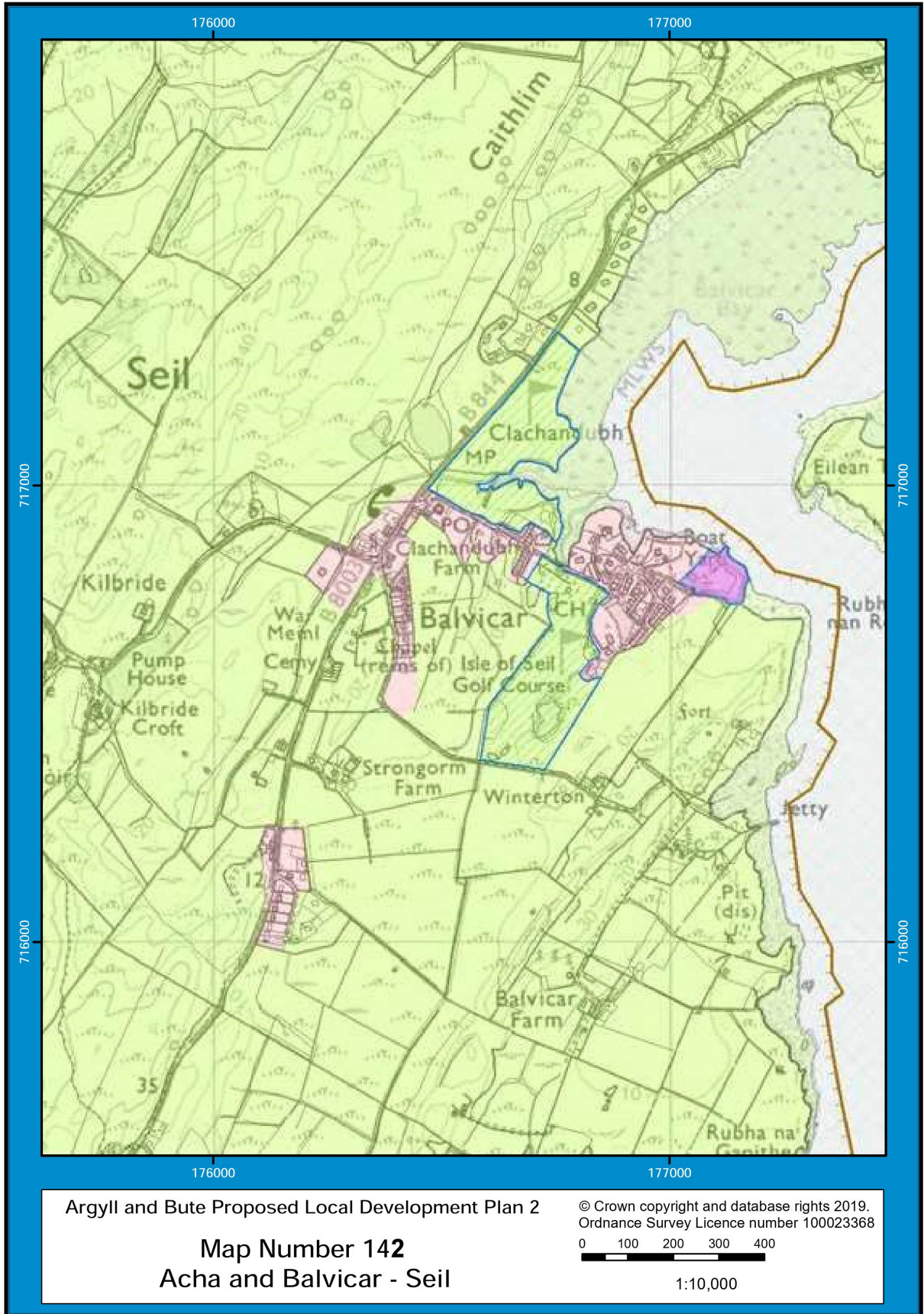


Appendix 2 Local Development Plans for Easdale Area



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Ordnance Survey Licence number 100023368
0 100 200 300 400 metres
Scale at A4 - 1:10,000

Argyll and Bute Proposed Local Development Plan 2
Map Number 177
Easdale and Ellenabeich



Argyll and Bute Proposed Local Development Plan 2

Map Number 142
Acha and Balvicar - Seil

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0 100 200 300 400

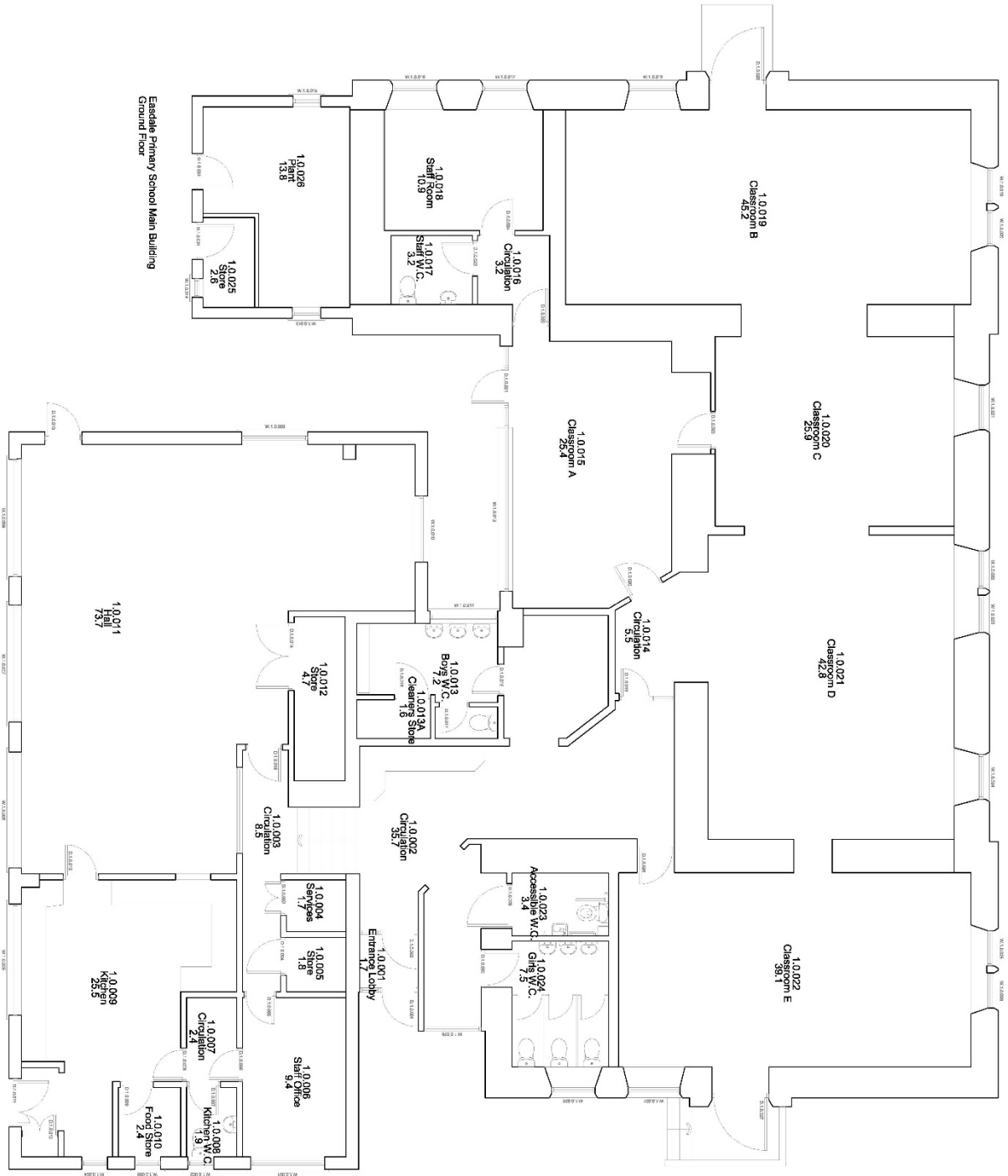
1:10,000

Appendix 3

Proposed Local Development Plan 2 Key

 Settlement Area	 Open Space Protection Area
 Greenbelt	 Wild Land
 Countryside Area	 Site of International Importance - Ramsar
 Remote Countryside Area	 Site of International Importance - Special Area of Conservation
 Strategic Masterplan	 Site of International Importance - Special Protection Area
 Allocation	 Site of Special Scientific Interest
 Potential Development Area	 National Nature Reserve
 Main Town Centre	 National Scenic Area
 Edge of Town Centre	 Garden & Designed Landscape
 Core Shopping Area	 Local Landscape Area
 Strategic Economic Investment Location	 Conservation Area
 Established Business & Industry Area	 Tourism Infrastructure
 Area for Action	 Marine Consultation Area
 Transport Infrastructure	 National Park
 Waste Management Site	 Other Council Area

Appendix 5 Easdale Primary



Easdale Primary School Main Building
Ground Floor

Notes
 Contractor to check all dimensions on site.
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Client: Easdale Primary School	Project: PA34 4RF
Customer Services: Presery Design Team	Project No: -
Phone: 01569 824127	Revision: -
Website: http://www.presery.co.uk	
Site: Easdale Primary School	
Location: Isle of Skell	
Project: -	
Drawing: Current Ground Floor Plan	
Site Ref: PE05604000001	Project No: -
Drawing No: AEL(00)001	Revision: -
Drawn By: mm	Date: March 2016
Scale: @ A1	1:50



Appendix 6

Luing – Community Consultation Day

26th May 2022

How has the mothballing of the school affected you, your family and the community?

x18 Keep mothballed for the time being until we are ready for it as a school, but ensure that the community can use it safely ie toddlers group and others as appropriate in the meantime.

x12 The building needs to be used sooner rather than later as it will deteriorate and I am sure others would like to use it.

x11 Continue to mothball for a while longer, with possible uses for other purposes eg playgroup. Gives the community time and can attract families to the area.

x11 Talk of the school being used by the community – we need to know how to go about that – obviously there has not been a lot of opportunity for this during the pandemic, but in the last six months, it could perhaps have been used.

x9 Feel need to continue with mothballing at current time – it is what is right for now, re-assess in 2-3 years time if things are looking more prosperous.

x9 negatively – can't attract families here to work (and no accommodation) – need the school.

x7 If the school is not viable, people will not come to the island.

x7 Do want it to be mothballed if it inhibits closing – need a bit more time to see what is happening.

x6 Extend mothballing – give us a chance to recover from COVID – everyone really pulled together and stuck together and we are adjusting to everything.

x13 We were not told as a Community Council about the school being able to be used by the community or details about the mothballing

x10 Why did the community not know they could use the school while it was being mothballed?

x8 Didn't know the school could be used whilst mothballed.

x6 Sad to see the school closed – this has a negative impact on the community – moral, future thinking etc.

x5 Holly Tea was a massive community event as was the school sports day and Burns celebrations.

x3 Lack of community involved in children of Luing's education – no involvement in Easdale School, sadly.

x3 Folk have changed the way they work from home. People are still reeling from COVID, these two years should not count. Beginning to think about the future. Folk are adjusting and need to look at and assess. I think we will get another influx on Luig.

x2 There was no consultation for mothballing.

x2 Achaleven PS – an example of a school that mothballed and communities change and needs of the population being met.

I was part of the group that helped to protect the school previously – I feel it is my duty as a resident to continue to do this. We need to continue to mothball the school.

There is a lack of awareness of what has happened.

Church are also concerned about this and the groups that support activities for all ages.

Mothballing and transport arrangements

x16 Current transportation for the children at the moment is not safe – no seatbelts on the buses, it is a public service. Unattended? Council not taking into account or taking concerns seriously.

x15 Transport arrangements for young children needs looking at. I would not want a member of my family to be travelling such a long way, unaccompanied.

x14 Transport arrangements not acceptable – why is the mini bus not being used?

x12 Feel transport – safety and use of mini bus – reinstated would be sought after.

x11 Current transport situation – need door to door service – the previous school minibus should take them.

x3 There are 3 stages for transporting young children to the school currently. There is the mini-bus – to ferry – to service bus.

x3 Thinking about transport – policy? This needs looking at – for young children – it is a lot to expect.

The bus times for transporting children are ‘peak’ times. Also, the time it takes out of the day for children and families to transport children.

These are obstacles for children – what if they are not in school?

What happens if bad weather happens and children are stranded?

One parent contacted the Officer leading the Pre-consultation and raised the following issues in relation to travel for his child. He wanted to ensure that the consultation recognised his dissatisfaction:

- The travel costs he has incurred in fuel, wear and tear on his car, costs in ferry travel as he is extremely unhappy that the arrangements in place for his child to travel puts his child at risk on a number of levels;
- The time taken as a family to transport his child;
- Travel times – the waiting time involved for the ferry;
- The arrangements suggested are unsafe, there are also no seatbelts on the buses the children are travelling in;
- Members of the public are allowed to sit with unaccompanied children that could be as young as 4 years, 6 months;
- The cancellation of ferries;
- The sustainability of the arrangements for them as a family and being able to ensure their child attends school.

Views on re-opening the school (with current catchment)

x17 A key point is that the Community Trust have been working hard to bring more families to the area but this can take few years. We need the authority to support us. This is a big thing for us.

x16 It's more than just a school.

x16 Smaller schools really support children of different ages P1-P7 looking out for each other – all generations benefit from the school opening.

x14 If no there is no school on the island, it is off putting to families considering moving to the area.

x12 As a former pupil, I understand the population fluctuates – housing is an issue – the Community Trust are pursuing this and it could create affordable housing which could support the school.

x12 In a wee community like this – the school was at the centre – the community were able to support the children – this is harder when the school is not on the island.

x10 When the ferry is involved, it does change everything – adds time to the commute.

x10 As a community we want to support the local parents.

x10 The prospect of a school gives hope to families moving to the island – there will be education locally for their children.

x7 A lot of families on Seil and Kilmelford would move back to Luing but housing that is affordable is a massive issue.

x6 Escort offered for two days? Unsafe.

x6 If you want to get more children on the island, it is not made very easy.

x5 A community needs to thrive – we need facilities to attract families.

x4 school is an integral part of the community.

x3 If no school is available, transport is not suitable – children on their own?
Bus?

x3 If they have a joint HT, there would be collaboration between both schools – there could be advantages.

x2 There are 2 issues – main one is that it is important to have a school on the island. Second, is that it may be that a village primary in which the numbers are low does not suit every child.

x2 Things can fluctuate and numbers can go up and down. A permanent closure would not be good – can we illustrate that there is potential for numbers to go up? Even with small numbers, it will attract more families to the area.

x2 Upset at lack of consultation over mothballing 2020 and sudden short notice about this latest Pre-consultation.

As parents, we move here 1 year ago and I felt I had no option but to send my child to Easdale PS. I am not willing to put my child on a public service bus.

The council need to understand that this is a historical cycle on the Isle of Luing, when I attended the school, there were 6 children, 7 children when my children went but then when my youngest son left there was around 30 children – the roll goes up and down and the school has remained open. This is nothing new in the last 55 years. We would ask that it continues to remain open as we believe the numbers will go up.

We are going through a difficult patch – we need to be very careful about preserving the community – if we do not have a school we will not attract families to the area.

Can understand why parents are not keen to send children to a school with low numbers in terms of education, but it only takes 1-2 families to move into the area for numbers to go up.

I believe there are 25 new residents on Luing.

A lot of young families on the island. This is really hard.

The school was an important part of previous children's lives here and it was an important part of our small community which supported it and seeing the children there.

Views on closing the school

x15 The school is vital to the future of the island. My substantial experience in education makes me very concerned. Previously the school was under threat,

we fought this and the roll has declined. However, there needs to be enough children to attend. There are potential pupils currently. We will campaign against closure as strongly as we did 10 years ago.

x9 Absolutely not – once it's gone it's gone and cancels any future of Luing children being educated on their island.

x8 Would be a shame for children not to have school on the island. Special community and school should be safe guarded.

x8 Having a school on Luing attracts more families and enterprises to the area, which is what we need. The proposals would be to campaign as before when the school was under threat, which I am sure people will do.

x7 I would like my child to be educated with more numbers.

x3 A great pity if the school were to close.

x2 My child has friends whose family would love to move over here but housing is hard. It would be wonderful to have them here.

Easdale ELC has 10 children – which is better socially and for educational purposes.

There is a really good community at Easdale PS for the children. My child likes going on the ferry.

I was part of the group that helped to protect the school previously – I feel it is my duty as a resident to continue to do this. We need to continue to mothball the school.

If the school closed, it would be the death nell for the community.

Need to bring some life to the area. Vibrancy. It would be tragic if it were to close.

The islands part of A & B make up and identity.

The future of the building

x5 Empty buildings are bad – use it for outwards bound activities with the High School.

x5 Could the school not now be our nursery?

x3 Could the building be used to link with UHI and Argyll College for learning? Adult learning? A study space in classes? This happens in Mull, Campbeltown and on Islay. Folk studying on the island could use this facility – you have less distractions than at home.

x4 Used as a Pre-school facility for early learning?

There must be other ways of using the school building – previously used as a café and for choirs to use.

Opportunity for others to use for other things – client groups would be interested.

Need to use the school for evening classes or ‘back up’ school if something happens to Easdale PS in the winter.

General comments

x8 Communication? Why has it taken so long from the decision in terms of the process, Dec 2020 until now?

x8 Planning system does not always support affordable housing.

x2 Cost of living here is high. Transporting children from Luing to Easdale, if you chose to do that yourself is an added cost. There are 6 houses being built currently.

Fibre broadband to all houses planned end of 2023

Feeling that we are at a ‘Pre-consultation’ which will inform decisions about the future of the school very quickly – and it is about closure or opening the school formally.

Communication prior to this meeting today did not provide us with an understanding of what was happening.

The community knows what the potential is.

Living on an island, it is already remote.

It is a lifestyle choice.

Peoples working habits will change post COVID. People do move.

Our community Trust are looking into affordable housing and jobs and business. Lots happening within the island, to generate jobs. Opportunities for ACA and A&B owned housing.

“Housing is an issue on the island. Easdale PS love having Luing children with them – it is brilliant as they get to be with their peers. While it would be nice to have a school on your doorstep, being with children of different ages is important.”

“It would be lovely to see the school open however, children’s welfare is not good if there are not many children there and they cannot reach their milestones. It is important that they mix with children of their own age and other ages.”

“Financially, it is hard. The staffing, support for pupils and teaching commitments need to be considered as all of this would be hard to find.”

The school at the heart of the community

x12 Luing PS was at the heart of the community and the whole community supported the children – local community raised amazing amounts of cash

and it gave the community a chance to get together – Christmas and Halloween parties – everyone was together.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****EDUCATION****25 AUGUST 2022**

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - ACHALEVEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Community Services Committee on the current situation of Achaleven Primary School, and invite Members to agree to the recommendations outlined.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The report recommends that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Agree that Achaleven Primary School continues to be mothballed on a temporary basis and the School premises be retained on a care and maintenance basis.
- b) Agree that Officers should start the pre-consultation process and produce an Options Appraisal paper for the March 2023 Committee meeting for a decision in relation to the future of Achaleven Primary School.
- c) Note that there have been no requests to use the building since 2021, however if any do come forward they would be considered in the light of the current condition of the building, and any recommissioning works required.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION

25 AUGUST 2022

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - ACHALEVEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 The Community Services Committee on 21 June 2021 agreed that Achaleven Primary School be mothballed on a temporary basis. There are no pupils attending Achaleven Primary School in August 2022. There are no children of pre-school age registered for Primary One at Achaleven School in session 2022-23. However, there is one deferred registration for a P1 pupil anticipating attendance session 2023/24.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Agree that Achaleven Primary School continues to be mothballed on a temporary basis and the School premises be retained on a care and maintenance basis.
- b) Agree that Officers should start the pre-consultation process and produce an Options Appraisal paper for the March 2023 Committee meeting for a decision in relation to the future of Achaleven Primary School.
- c) Note that there have been no requests to use the building since 2021, however if any do come forward they would be considered in the light of the current condition of the building, and any recommissioning works required.

5.0 DETAIL

5.1 It is proposed that Achaleven Primary School buildings be retained on a care and maintenance basis

5.2 As there are no registered pupils at the commencement of session 2022/23, it is proposed that a preliminary assessment of options regarding the future of the

school be undertaken by way of an Options Appraisal, in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. Should the school subsequently be considered for formal closure, a statutory consultation process in accordance with the 2010 Act will be necessary.

- 5.3 The school roll at Achaleven Primary School has been small over a number of years. In June 2021 a group of Primary 7 pupils moved to secondary school, and the remaining families chose to place their children in alternative schools. There are no Primary 1 pupils registered to attend Achaleven in session 2022 / 23. However, there is one deferred registration for a P1 pupil anticipating attendance session 2023/24.
- 5.4 At that time, all members of staff from Achaleven Primary School were redeployed in other posts within the Authority.
- 5.5 The mothballing of a school is a temporary closure. It does not require a statutory consultation to be carried out as it is an informal non-statutory measure. It is appropriate where the Authority considers that a school is not presently viable, but do not wish to close it immediately in order to assess the prospects of the number of pupils in the area increasing to the extent that the school should be re-opened in the future.
- 5.6 The Scottish Government's Statutory Guidance on the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*¹ stresses that this flexibility to close a school for a temporary period is not used to undermine the requirements of the 2010 Act to consult on all closure proposals. Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period, should be subject to at least an annual review and, in most cases, should last no more than three years in total.
- 5.7 As no pupils are in attendance at Achaleven Primary School in August 2022, it is recommended that the School is mothballed on a temporary basis until June 2023. In the intervening period, officers intend to monitor the situation and gather information in relation to the preliminary requirements with regard to rural school closures under the 2010 Act. In particular, this process will look to identify and assess the various options that are available regarding the future of Achaleven Primary School. The findings of these investigations will be presented to the Committee in the form of an Options Appraisal.
- 5.8 In the event of a sufficient number of school age pupils seeking to attend the School, the school may require to re-open at the next appropriate session. In this eventuality a further report would be brought before members.

6.0 CONCLUSION

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/schools-consultation-scotland-act-2010-statutory-guidance/> (See Paragraphs 63-65.)

- 6.1 It is proposed that Members agree to the Education Service to begin gathering the necessary information, carry out the exercise of assessing the options for the future of Achaleven Primary School, in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy – None
- 7.2 Financial – If the mothballing of the School is agreed, there will be costs associated with the upkeep and maintenance of the School premises.
- 7.3 Legal – The provisions of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* will subsequently apply if the Authority later decide to formulate a proposal under that Act in order to determine the future of Achaleven Primary School.
- 7.4 HR – None
- 7.5 Fairer Duty Scotland
- 7.5.1 Equalities – None at present
- 7.5.2 Socio-Economic Duty – None at present
- 7.5.3 Islands – None at present
- 7.6 Climate Change – None
- 7.7 Risk – None at present
- 7.8 Customer Service – None at present

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education

For further information contact:

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****EDUCATION****25 AUGUST 2022**

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION)(SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - SOUTHEND PRIMARY SCHOOL

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Community Services Committee on the current situation of Southend Primary School, and invite Members to agree to the recommendations outlined.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The report recommends that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Agree that Southend Primary School continues to be mothballed on a temporary basis and that the building be retained on a care and maintenance basis.
- b) Agree that officers should start the pre-consultation process and produce an Options Appraisal paper for the March 2023 Committee meeting for a decision in relation to the future of Southend Primary School.
- c) Note that there have been no requests to use the building since 2021 however if any do come forward they would be considered in the light of the current condition of the building, and any recommissioning works required.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION

25 AUGUST 2022

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION)(SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 - SOUTHEND PRIMARY SCHOOL

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Southend Primary School was mothballed in April 2021. As of August 2022 there will be no pupils attending Southend Primary School. Pupils residing within the Southend catchment area currently attend schools within Campbeltown. The pre-school aged children within the catchment area attend nursery settings in Campbeltown. There are no Primary 1 pupils registered to attend Southend Primary School in session 2022/23.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- a) Agree that Southend Primary School continues to be mothballed on a temporary basis and that the building be retained on a care and maintenance basis.
- b) Agree that officers should start the pre-consultation process and produce an Options Appraisal paper for the March 2023 Committee meeting for a decision in relation to the future of Southend Primary School.
- c) Note that there have been no requests to use the building since 2021 however if any do come forward they would be considered in the light of the current condition of the building, and any recommissioning works required.

5.0 DETAIL

5.1 At the Community Services Committee meeting on 10th June 2021, it was proposed that the Southend Primary School building be retained for two years on a care and maintenance basis.

- 5.2 As there are no registered pupils for the commencement of session 2022/23, it is proposed that a preliminary assessment of options regarding the future of the school be undertaken by way of an Options Appraisal, in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. Should the school subsequently be considered for formal closure, a statutory consultation process in accordance with the 2010 Act will be necessary.
- 5.3 The school roll at Southend Primary School was small but stable over a number of years but as of April 2021 there were no pupils attending the school.
- 5.4 The school roll declined rapidly over a short period of time, due to families moving outwith the catchment area and parental choice for placing requests to other schools, leaving no enrolled pupils at Southend Primary School.
- 5.5 As of April 2021 there were no pupils in Southend Primary School. Pupils residing within the Southend catchment area currently attend schools within Campbeltown. The pre-school aged children within the catchment area attend nursery settings in Campbeltown. There are no Primary 1 pupils registered to attend Southend Primary School in session 2022-23.
- 5.6 All members of staff from Southend Primary School have either been redeployed into other posts within the authority or accepted redundancy.
- 5.7 The mothballing of a school is a temporary closure. It does not require a statutory consultation to be carried out as it is an informal non-statutory measure. It is appropriate where the Authority considers that a school is not presently viable, but do not wish to close it immediately in order to assess the prospects of the number of pupils in the area increasing to the extent that the school should be re-opened in the future.
- 5.8 The Scottish Government's Statutory Guidance on the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*¹ stresses that this flexibility to close a school for a temporary period is not used to undermine the requirements of the 2010 Act to consult on all closure proposals. Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period, should be subject to at least an annual review and, in most cases, should last no more than three years in total.
- 5.9 As no pupils have been attending Southend Primary School since April 2021, and the School has been mothballed on a temporary basis beyond March 2022, it is recommended that members decide on whether to continue to mothball the school and begin the pre-consultation process in line with the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.
- 5.10 In the intervening period of mothballing, officers intend to monitor the situation and gather information in relation to the preliminary requirements with regard to possible rural school closures under the 2010 Act. In particular, this process will look to identify and assess the various options that are available regarding the future of Southend Primary School.

¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/schools-consultation-scotland-act-2010-statutory-guidance/>

- 5.11 In the event of a sufficient number of school age pupils seeking to attend the School, the school may require to re-open at the next appropriate session. In this eventuality a further report would be brought before members.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 It is proposed that Members of the Committee agree on a continued period of mothballing for the school and for the Education Service to begin gathering the necessary information, carry out the exercise of assessing the options for the future of Southend Primary School, in accordance with the preliminary requirements of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy – None
- 7.2 Financial – If the mothballing of the School is agreed, there will be costs associated with the upkeep and maintenance of the School premises.
- 7.3 Legal – The provisions of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* will subsequently apply if the Authority later decide to formulate a proposal under that Act in order to determine the future of Southend Primary School.
- 7.4 HR – None
- 7.5 Fairer Duty Scotland
- 7.5.1 Equalities – None at present
- 7.5.2 Socio-Economic Duty – None at present
- 7.5.3 Islands – None at present
- 7.6 Climate Change - None
- 7.7 Risk – None at present
- 7.8 Customer Service – None at present

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education

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27 June 2022

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****EDUCATION****25 AUGUST 2022**

SCHOOL HOLIDAY DATES – 2023-2026

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In June 2019 Community Services Committee agreed the school holiday dates for sessions 2020-2023.
- 1.2 The holiday dates for pupils across the Authority require to be set for the next 3 years ie 2023-2026.
- 1.3 To this end, a consultation on school holiday dates was carried out during May 2022 with an aim to set the in-service days for teachers and the holiday dates for pupils across the Authority for 2023-2026. The consultation included parents/carers, pupils and staff. The proposed dates are contained within Appendix 1.
- 1.4 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee agrees:
- The school holiday dates for 2023-2026 contained within Appendix 1.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION

25 AUGUST 2022

SCHOOL HOLIDAY DATES – 2023-2026

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 A consultation on School Holiday Dates was carried out during May 2022 with an aim to set the in-service days for teachers and the holiday dates for pupils across the Authority for 2023-2026. The consultation included parents/carers, pupils and staff. The proposed dates are contained within Appendix 1.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee agrees:

- The school holiday dates for 2023-2026 contained within Appendix 1.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 In June 2019 Community Services Committee agreed the school holiday dates for session 2020/2023. Following this a consultation was carried out to set the holiday dates for pupils across the Authority for 3 years ie 2023-2026.

4.2 This consultation was carried out with schools, parent councils and pupil councils during May 2022 and the outcome presented to the Head Teacher's, JSC for agreement prior to submission to the Community Services Committee. The proposed school holiday dates for 2023-2026 are contained in Appendix 1.

4.3 JSC members agreed that the proposed dates addressed the feedback from the consultation and that they should be brought forward to Community Services Committee for approval.

4.4 A summary of the responses from the consultation are contained within Appendix 2.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 In order for 3 years of school holiday dates to be published, school holiday dates for session 2023-2026 require to be agreed.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy – The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on Education Authorities to provide children and young people with school education

and (in terms of raising standards) requires Authorities to endeavor to secure improvement in the quality of that school education.

- 6.2 Financial – None
- 6.3 Legal – None
- 6.4 HR – None
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
 - 6.5.1 Equalities – None
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - None
 - 6.5.3 Islands – None
- 6.6 Risk – Reputational risk to the Education Service if we do not set holiday dates for 2023-2026
- 6.7 Customer Service – School holiday arrangements for 2023/2026 will be made available to the public via the Council Website.

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne Mcneilly - Policy Lead for Education

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Appendix 1 - School Holiday Dates 2023-2024 to 2025-2026

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS – 2023/24		
BREAK	DATES OF ATTENDANCE	
Start of term	Open	Friday 11 th August 2023 & Monday 14 th August Teacher In-service Days
	Open	Tuesday 15 th August 2023 Pupils Return
October	Close	Friday 6 th October 2023
	Open	Monday 23 rd October 2023
November	Close	Friday 24 th November 2023 Monday 27th November 2023 - Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 28 th November 2023
Christmas	Close	Thursday 21 st December 2023
	Open	Thursday 4 th January 2024
February Week	Close	Friday 9 th February 2024 Monday 19th February 2024 – Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 20 th February 2024
April	Close	Thursday 28 th March 2024
	Open	Monday 15 th April 2024
May	Close	Thursday 23 rd May 2024 Friday 24th May 2022 – Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 28 th May 2024
	Close	Friday 28 th June 2024

29th March 2024 – Good Friday

31st March 2024 – Easter Sunday

1st April 2024 – Easter Monday

27th May 2024 – Bank Holiday

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS – 2024/25		
BREAK	DATES OF ATTENDANCE	
Start of term	Open	Monday 12 th August 2024 & Tuesday 13 th August 2024 Teacher In-service Days
	Open	Wednesday 14 th August 2024 Pupils Return
October	Close	Friday 4 th October 2024
	Open	Monday 21 st October 2024
November	Close	Friday 22 nd November 2024 Monday 25th November 2024 - Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 26 th November 2024
Christmas	Close	Friday 20 th December 2024
	Open	Monday 6 th January 2025
February Week	Close	Friday 7 th February 2025 Monday 17th February 2025 – Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 18 th February 2025
April	Close	Friday 4 th April 2025
	Open	Tuesday 22 nd April 2025
May	Close	Thursday 22 nd May 2025 Friday 23rd May 2025 – Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 27 th May 2025
	Close	Tuesday 1 st July 2025

18th April 2025 – Good Friday
 20th April 2025 – Easter Sunday
 21st April 2025 – Easter Monday
 26th May 2025 – Bank Holiday

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS – 2025/26		
BREAK	DATES OF ATTENDANCE	
Start of term	Open	Tuesday 12 th August & Wednesday 13 th August 2025 Teacher In-service Days
	Open	Thursday 14 th August 2025 Pupils Return
October	Close	Friday 3 rd October 2025
	Open	Monday 20 th October 2025
November	Close	Friday 21 st November 2025 Monday 24th November 2025 - Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 25 th November 2025
Christmas	Close	Friday 19 th December 2025
	Open	Monday 5 th January 2026
February Week	Close	Friday 6 th February 2026 Monday 16th February 2026 – Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 17 th February 2026
March	Close	Thursday 2 nd April 2026
April	Open	Monday 20 th April 2026
May	Close	Thursday 21 st May 2026 Friday 22nd May 2026 – Teacher In-service Day
	Open	Tuesday 26 th May 2026
June	Close	Wednesday 1 st July 2026

3rd April 2026 – Good Friday

5th April 2026 – Easter Sunday

6th April 2026 – Easter Monday

25th May 2026 – Bank Holiday

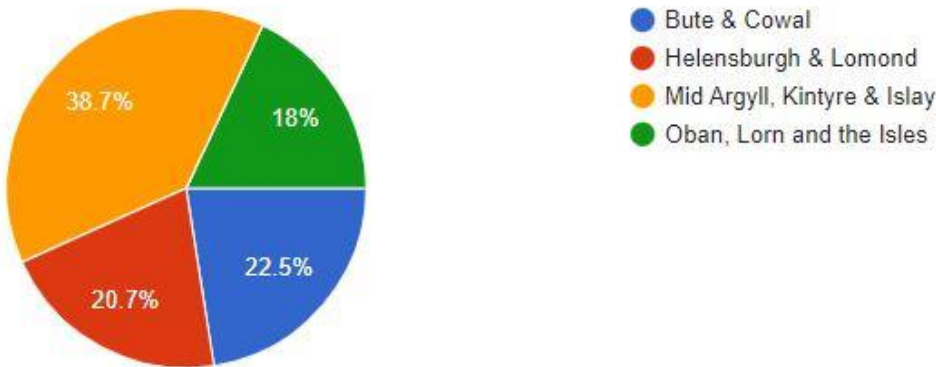


Education



School Holiday Consultation – Results

111 Responses received across Argyll and Bute.

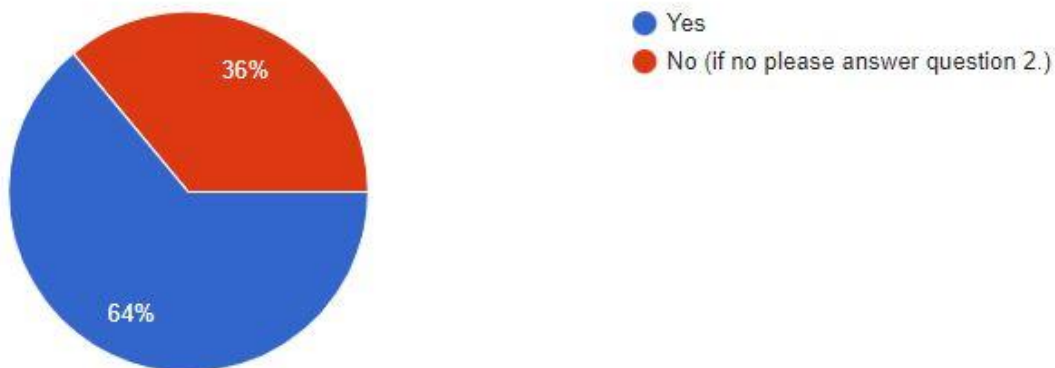


We asked respondents if residing on an Island, to indicate which one.

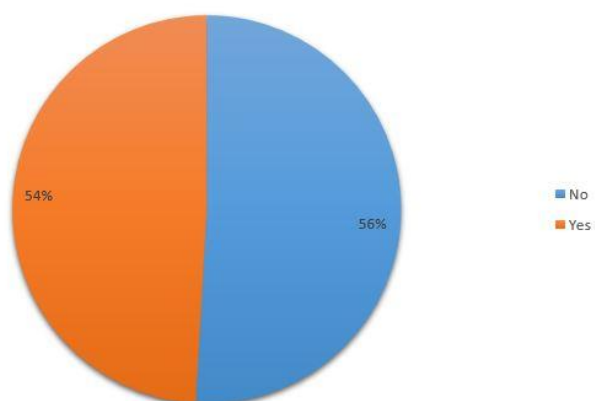
You said: 25% of overall responses were received from those living in or representing an Island.

We asked: Should the pattern of school holiday arrangements, which have been in place for the last 3 years i.e. from 2020-2023 continue?

You said:

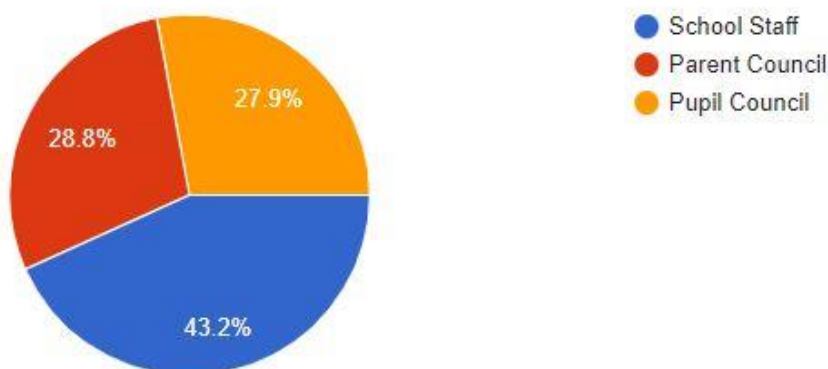


56% of respondents of live on or represent an Island said No; the pattern of school holiday arrangements, which have been in place for the last 3 years i.e. from 2020-2023 should not continue.



We asked: What body do you represent?

You said:



We asked: Please detail any changes you think should be considered in relation to the current pattern of school holidays.

Parent Council Said:

Shortening October holidays
Only comment by one parent was - if Easter weekend could fall either at start of middle to make travelling back easier for holidays.
Would it be possible to align school holidays with those in the rest of the UK, for those who have family and friends in England/Wales/Northern Ireland, there are very few periods when the holidays overlap. In addition please consider scheduling In Service days on bank holidays, to allow parents who work to enjoy bank holidays days with their children. also it would make childcare easier for the In Service days.
Take a week from the summer break and add to the Xmas break.
February week is too early & May holiday is a bit short
Our parent council is very supportive of the change made in recent years to extend the February long weekend to a half-term week and very much hope this remains in place. In addition, we wonder whether something similar might be possible with the November long weekend.

In a small community where the main income stream is during the tourist season, we mostly rely on the winter months to get away on holiday so having a proper opportunity in both November and February would be beneficial - we understand that this would likely mean a shortening of holidays at some other time of year (Easter, summer or October) and may therefore involve more detailed thought and consultation
Would there be the potential for the May Day holiday to be observed rather than the Friday at the end of May?
February week is too close to the children going back to school in January. They are just settling in and then they are off again. Some parents think in-service says are pointless too
Closer alignment with West Dunbartonshire holidays should be considered. When parents work across counties the current situation makes it exceptionally difficult to organise childcare.
Easter being close to the February Half term is always a tricky one. Also it was felt that there was far too many Inset days. Now COVID restrictions have been lifted it is generally felt by parents that there have been far too many with the Holidays as well.
We break up for Christmas too late and its better to attach in service days to holidays so teachers can prep for coming term. I don't like the August full week start, Monday to Friday . I think it's too much for kids of all ages to go straight back into a full week. Also, too much for parents to sort out a full weeks worth of washing and ironing. I do like the February one week break. As far as I know it's only Argyll & Bute that have this full week off so it means cheaper accommodation for families that are planning on going away. In August I dont like how the 2 in service days are the week before the children come back and then its a full week for the children (and staff) as they start new stage. Its a lot for the children, especially the poor primary 1 class. Wish they would go back to the old way of in service Monday/Tuesday or Tuesday/Wednesday then kids back the Wednesday or Thursday. The staff miss the last weekend as brains get back to work mode on the in service days. Its nice to have a week off at a time, like in February, but its a rubbish time of year to have off when the weather is so rubbish. Would much rather a few days holiday and the others could be spread throughout the year, like used to have a holiday in November as well as the in service and helped break up the term. The entire situation needs changed, if I use all of my annual leave and husband uses all of his separately then we still can not cover the amount of school holidays the children have for childcare. Therefore even though we both work full time we are financially strained and emotionally stressed trying to juggle childcare for school holidays and can not afford to have time off spent together as a family apart from some days at Christmas. It will make no difference saying this as it has been said for many years but the education holiday entitlement is completely outdated and needs attention to help families that don't work in schools survive financially.
I do agree about returning to school in August however as it is difficult for the children to have a full first week back after so long off.
October holidays could maybe be cut to 1 week and put in another time such as a few days extra before christmas, as 2 weeks is a long time for October and covering child care at the one time.
There is a minority suggestion (not disagreed with by anyone, as submissions have been anonymous) to move the October holiday back by a week or two to allow for stag season to complete and staking families to holiday within the school holiday period. It is also felt that the Christmas terms is rather long and that this change might positively affect that.
Can the schools break up a day earlier at Xmas? Could the May Bank Holiday be at the end of May? Could the Feb half term be shortened to allow the Xmas holiday?

Pupil Council Said:

The children were ok with the present holiday structure.
We need to have longer holidays at Christmas and definitely not break up the day before Christmas Eve. We live on an Island and ferries do not go Christmas day and New Years Day, plus the weather is bad and so we cannot get off to visit family. This is the time of year we want to see our family on the mainland. We need to break up at least 4 days before Christmas. We would prefer the extra days to come off the summer holidays which are very long.
A longer time for Christmas holidays - 2 or 3 days
Slightly later February week
There should be a longer break at Christmas . The holidays should begin earlier to allow people to get off islands and travel to visit family
Christmas holiday begins far too close to Christmas. We could do with finishing on 19th/20th. Does not allow time to travel to mainland to visit family. All staff and pupils exhausted.
The summer in-service days this year are on show day. Pupils expressed concern that parents who work in school won't be able to accompany them to dancing/outside of school clubs/events happening

at our annual show.
February holiday could be a week earlier as it used to be.
Happy with October and summer holiday as it is.
As Christmas is a time for seeing family could the 2 weeks at Christmas be 3 weeks and only 1 week in October.
Longer in summer because the weather is better
Comments from the pupil focus group One week in Easter to allow for us to finish earlier for summer. One week would be more than enough. It would be better for teaching staff to have more time with Seniors ahead of SQA examinations. Like the February week because it allowed for a break in the term between Jan and April. We would like to finish up earlier for Summer – the 1st of July is too late this year.
Our Pupil Council would like to start back school on a Wednesday, so a part week rather than a full week.
Take a week off the summer holiday and add to the Xmas break so mums and dads can be organised for Xmas.
We would prefer to have one week in October instead of two.

School Staff Said:

Staff felt it is important that the summer holiday should be 6 weeks long including 6 weekends. Another suggestion was that the February break was too soon after returning after Christmas. The October Holiday is usually the first two weeks in October but this session it was the 2nd and 3rd. The first two weeks is preferred. 2 days inservice at August then one in November, Feb and May please.
Some staff would prefer the in-service days at the start of Term 1 to be closer to the beginning of a week, meaning the term does not start with a full teaching week. Some staff would prefer to break off 1-2 days earlier at Christmas and return 1-2 days earlier in January. However, staff also stated that they would be happy to maintain current arrangements.
More equal terms - e.g. the one between Christmas and February is very short whilst the one between Easter and summer is extremely long. This is particularly difficult for teaching and learning. Ending so close to Christmas is particularly difficult and would be better for the end of term to finish earlier and return sooner.
School staff would like to see the February holiday moved so that it happens in the middle of the term. For session 2022/23 the February holiday happens 4 weeks after pupils return to school leaving 7 weeks after. For continuity of learning it would be better to be split in the middle. Also the summer term is very long and only has an inservice and public holiday. Is there scope for moving some additional days to this term, especially as the weather tends to be better during these months allowing everyone time to spend outdoors. Finally it would be helpful if ALL council offices were either open or closed on the May public holiday
A longer period from Christmas to February half term would be beneficial and then from February to Easter (where possible as Easter dates are changeable). This would make curriculum delivery after Christmas and after Easter far more enriching as it would not be a very short session in school followed by a lengthy one. Thank you!
Staff in both schools gave the following feedback; A couple of days should be taken from the beginning of the summer holidays and added to the Christmas - 1 at beginning and 1 at end to allow staff to enjoy Christmas and visit family on the mainland. This is a time of year when sickness is more prevalent so staff often feel that they haven't had a holiday because it's so short and also very busy. Most staff host Christmas celebrations/ family events and are exhausted because we finish so late. There is a high level of tourists visiting the island at this time of year and staff struggle to get food they want because of the late finish. Staff don't want to lose the February week

<p>Consideration should be given to major local events at the holiday planning stage. This year - Aug 22 Inservice days clash with the Islay Show. Businesses close on this Thursday to enable islanders to participate in the events. Fairs/ Stalls visit the island providing opportunities and experiences for our children that they don't often get.</p> <p>Children dance, showcase animals , vegetables, baking, plants etc- all important for community participation.</p>
<p>February holidays should be shorter and days added to summer holidays</p>
<p>67% Retain Holidays 33% Change Holidays</p> <p>The holiday schedule should allow for the summer break to start in June, not July. Less in February added on to summer break, finish earlier in June.</p> <p>More in line with neighbouring authorities (West Dun) and ensuring 6 full weeks for teachers in the summer. A long weekend in Feb (Friday Monday off) would allow this and the May holidays.</p> <p>For a couple of years we were finishing for the Summer term into a date in July could the finish be late June if possible please.</p> <p>This year and next year the February holiday does not match with any of the surrounding local authorities. Whilst for a fair chunk of Argyll & Bute this probably isn't an issue for most staff. However, it is problematic for those who live in other authorities. Many school staff, both primary and secondary, in the Rothesay, Dunoon and Hermitage clusters live in other authorities and therefore are not able to have some of time (2 or 3 days) off with their children which seems unfair. This has the potential to lead to staff taking their children out of school as we are already restricted to when we can have time off.</p> <p>More In line with East West Dunbartonshire.</p> <p>I think the holiday pattern should be more in line with authorities such as Glasgow City Council and West/East Dunbartonshire council as there are many staff/pupils from these areas that will have parents and children with drastically different holidays at times which is difficult to manage.</p> <p>Reduce the October break to one week and add this on elsewhere, possibly the summer holidays or September/May bank holidays.</p> <p>May and September public holidays should be school holidays</p> <p>Holidays should be broadly in line with Glasgow, as this causes difficulties for teachers with children.</p> <p>It would be useful if they were more in line with nearby local authorities, eg. West Dunbartonshire. A number of teaching staff have children attending schools in these other authorities and it can be challenging to manage childcare when holidays do not match up.</p> <p>The end of the school year should be during the month of June (not July)</p> <p>I think a fortnight in October is a little too long in term for Senior School pupils with an exam diet.</p> <p>Hermitage Academy and all of the Helensburgh & Lomond Area schools should align their holidays with schools in West Dunbartonshire Council area.</p> <p>The pattern is not a problem but many staff members have commented that they are not happy with the Summer holidays edging forward to the point where we are into July now. The other concern, coming mainly from teachers who are parents, is the late close before Christmas which leaves little time for cleaning, shopping, food prep etc. Many thanks.</p>
<p>Ensure that there are 6 whole weeks in the summer break. More equal length terms should be considered.</p>
<p>Shorter February break to allow longer block of teaching time - particularly important for senior phase students</p> <p>Earlier finish at Christmas with additional days taken off summer break</p>
<p>Staff feel that the February week is too long and this should be reduced to a long weekend, with the additional days added to the beginning or end of the summer holidays. Staff also feel that the Christmas holidays should always begin before 23rd December.</p>
<p>Comments from staff:</p>

February holiday + INSET far too long. Most secondary teachers would agree with this statement. This is the term when pupils/staff can least afford to be absent with deadlines/practical exams (can be from early Feb for music) etc. Also with the timetable this last session it was almost a fortnight between seeing S4.

I would prefer that the Feb mid-term was not one week + in-service (6 school days). The days removed from the Feb holiday could be then allocated to the end date of the summer term, therefore reinstating an end of term in June.

Im happy with the holiday pattern as a whole, I dont think it needs any changes. However looking at the dates every year with more care and tweak them if necessary would avoid having Christmas holiday starting on a Wednesday 23rd or 22nd of December, mid week, as was the case the least two years. Not only it is very inconvenient to have a holiday starting mid week but these last three days of school are also mainly a waste of teaching time really.

am more than happy with the current pattern, if that helps.
You know the reason behind (the affordability of travelling to Poland in February, rather than in Dec/Jan)

Summer holidays should always be 6 full weeks for staff.

Christmas holidays - we should not be working after 21st December, this causes real problems for those of us on Island communities if we are travelling to family.

Reduce the February break to make previous points possible.

There should be at least one in-service day, but preferably two in-service days, after each holiday, and before the school re-opens. This would enable staff teams to plan, prep, review/evaluate together more effectively every term.

In-service days should be at the start of a week (not at the end/before a weekend) which would also mean that pupils would have shorter weeks for the start of term. This would be beneficial to all, especially after longer holidays.

The summer holiday should be shortened. This would reduce some of the pressure working parents experience with child care and taking family holidays. It would also enable there to be an increase in the number of in-service days and extra holiday days at other times of the year.

The Christmas holiday could be extended (in December, not January).

The Easter holiday could be extended and the February break reduced to a long weekend.

If there were in-service days at the beginning of January and after the Easter holiday there wouldn't need to be in-service days in February.

A general pattern of six weeks at school then a holiday (even a long weekend) would help to improve everybody's wellbeing and work output (learners and staff), and also enable families to have more opportunities to be able to take holidays together, given their own work commitments.

With reference to all of the above: Eight weeks from school opening in mid-August to the October holiday is too long and then there isn't an in-service day again until the end of November and although pupils have an extra day to their weekend, staff don't. If there was an in-service day or two after the October holiday then this November long weekend could be a long weekend holiday for everyone.

Another consideration is that the current pattern of a holiday at the beginning of February is too soon to have a holiday after returning in January.

There was a mixed response with 7 Faculty areas saying no and 3 saying yes. A number of comments from staff about the week in February causing disruption to the preparation for SQA examinations.

Comments were also made about the production of folios/assessment pieces and the break in February causes disruption to this. The break causes a dip in motivation f young people. A number of other comments about finishing too late in June or this session July. Staff seem to want to finish a little earlier like other local authorities.

A mixed response from the staff body with the vote going 6 to no and 4 saying yes to keep the current holiday pattern. Two main concerns were raised - if we are trying to raise attainment why are we putting a week long holiday in February? The Summer term seems to be going on longer. It might be better having a shorter break in February and finishing earlier in June.

One week in October instead of two. Holidays re-instated in May and later start in August.

Inset days in the first term should be a Monday/Tuesday ensuring a 3 day first week for pupils

More equality in length of terms (some very short and some very long). Better co-ordination in regard to Bank Holidays (all council employees having the same Bank Holidays)

Shorter summer longer Christmas

There should be at least one in-service day, but preferably two in-service days, after each holiday, and before the school re-opens. This would enable staff teams to plan, prep, review/evaluate together more

effectively every term.

In-service days should be at the start of a week (not at the end/before a weekend) which would also mean that pupils would have shorter weeks for the start of term. This would be beneficial to all, especially after longer holidays.

The summer holiday should be shortened. This would reduce some of the pressure working parents experience with child care and taking family holidays. It would also enable there to be an increase in the number of in-service days and extra holiday days at other times of the year.

The Christmas holiday could be extended (in December, not January).

The Easter holiday could be extended and the February break reduced to a long weekend.

If there were in-service days at the beginning of January and after the Easter holiday there wouldn't need to be in-service days in February.

A general pattern of six weeks at school then a holiday (even a long weekend) would help to improve everybody's wellbeing and work output (learners and staff), and also enable families to have more opportunities to be able to take holidays together, given their own work commitments.

With reference to all of the above: Eight weeks from school opening in mid-August to the October holiday is too long and then there isn't an in-service day again until the end of November and although pupils have an extra day to their weekend, staff don't. If there was an in-service day or two after the October holiday then this November long weekend could be a long weekend holiday for everyone.

Another consideration is that the current pattern of a holiday at the beginning of February is too soon to have a holiday after returning in January.

The February holiday and October holiday should be in the middle of their respective terms. For example, the February holiday comes too soon after the Christmas holiday

The 1st July needs reviewed as its too late. We are owed a week because of covid.

No, July is too late to finish.

We asked: Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) were invited to provide a response to the School Holiday Consultation.

They Said: They stated **yes**, the pattern of school holiday arrangements, which have been in place for the last 3 years i.e. from 2020-2023 should continue

Responses represented all four locality areas of Argyll and Bute.

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****EDUCATION SERVICE****25 AUGUST 2022**

SQA SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2022

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to elected members on the initial outcome of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) 2022 examination diet for young people in Argyll and Bute.
- 1.2 Following the release of the initial examination results by the SQA, awards for pupils in academic year 2021/22 will be updated by the SQA in September 2022 following the processing of appeal requests submitted by candidates or schools. As a consequence of the decisions associated with these requests, minor changes to the statistical data contained within this report may occur.
- 1.3 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:
 - I Notes the outcome of the initial SQA examination results for pupils in academic year 2021/22, and that the performance of Argyll and Bute Schools in 2022 is above the current national performance in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in three of the four measures (National 4, Higher and Advanced Higher).
 - II Requests that the Executive Director provide further reports to the Community Services Committee to allow the consideration of updated statistical school and national information, scheduled to be released by Insight (school data analysis tool) in September 2022 and February 2023.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION SERVICE

25 AUGUST 2022

SQA SCHOOL EXAMINATION RESULTS 2022

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 In August 2022 the Council received SQA examination results for all pupils entered for National Qualifications in session 2021/22. This provided comprehensive information on the outcome of examination performance for all pupils in each of the ten Argyll and Bute secondary schools.

2.2 The purpose of this report is to inform Elected Members of the initial outcome of the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) 2022 awards for young people in Argyll and Bute. A range of statistical information is provided illustrating performance of pupils across the four National Qualification measures:

National 4
National 5
Higher
Advanced Higher

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

- I Notes the outcome of the initial SQA examination results for pupils in academic year 2021/22, and that the performance of Argyll and Bute Schools in 2022 is above the current national performance in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in three of the four measures (National 4, Higher and Advanced Higher).
- II Requests that the Executive Director provide further reports to the Community Services Committee to allow the consideration of updated statistical school and national information, scheduled to be released by Insight (school data analysis tool) in September 2022 and February 2023.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 Pupils in each of the ten secondary schools in Argyll and Bute in S4–S6 were presented for a range of SQA qualifications in May and June of 2022. Following the release of awards, Education Services conducted an initial analysis of the results to support the preparation of a summary report for presentation to and consideration by Elected Members.

2022 represents the first time since 2019 that young people have sat examinations, and all candidates in Argyll & Bute were experiencing SQA exam conditions for the first time. The Covid-19 pandemic dictated that examinations were cancelled in both 2020 and 2021, results having been based on teacher judgement and candidates' demonstrated attainment.

4.2 This paper presents a summary overview of the examination outcomes and draws comparisons of the overall attainment of pupils in Argyll and Bute with pupils nationally.

4.3 For A-C grades, the performance of Argyll and Bute schools in 2022 is **above** the current National performance in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in **three of the four of the national measures (A-C)**: National 4, Higher and Advanced Higher.

Table 1 presents the overall performance of candidates in Argyll and Bute across all course levels, and compares attainment in the two academic years 2019 and 2022 (A-C)

	2019	2022		2022	2022
	A&B Attainment A-C %	A&B Attainment A-C%	Difference from 2019 %	National A-C %	Difference A&B to National A-C%
Nat 4	100%	100%	0%	86.1%	+13.9%
Nat 5	79.43%	78.62%	-0.81%	80.8%	-2.18%
Higher	73.19%	79.51%	+6.32%	78.9%	+0.61%
Adv H	75.68%	83.72%	+8.04%	81.3%	+2.42%

4.4 Summary:

As a result of the cancellation of examinations in 2020 and 2021, and the adoption of an assessment model based on teacher judgement and demonstrated attainment, it is not valid to compare these two years with either 2019 or 2022 results. The most valid comparison for 2022 results is with 2019 – the last time awards were decided by examination:

- Our National 4 pass rate is **100%** for the 7th year running. This is **above** the 2022 national measure at 86.1%

- Our National 5 pass rate has **reduced** by 0.81% on 2019. This is **below** the 2022 national measure by 2.18%
- Our Higher pass rate has **increased** on 2019 by 6.32%. This is **above** the 2022 national measure by 0.61%.
- Our Advanced Higher pass rate has **increased** by 8.04% on 2019. This is **above** the 2022 national measure by 2.42%.

4.5 For A-D grades, the performance of Argyll and Bute schools in 2022 is **above** the current National performance in Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations in **three of the four of the national measures (A-D)**: National 4, Higher and Advanced Higher.

Table 2 presents the overall performance of Argyll and Bute across all course levels between the two academic years 2019 and 2022 (A-D)

	2019		2022		2022	2022
	A&B Attainment A-D %	Difference from previous year %	A&B Attainment A-D %	Difference from 2019 %	National A-D %	Difference A&B to National A-D%
Nat 4	100.00%	NA	100.00%	0%	86.1%	+13.9%
Nat 5	92.00%	NA	91.78%	-0.22%	92.1%	-0.32%
Higher	91.38%	NA	92.62%	+1.24%	91.5%	+1.12%
Adv H	87.64%	NA	96.51%	+8.87%	93.4%	+3.11%

As with A-C awards, the most valid comparison for 2022 results is with 2019 – the last time awards were decided by examination:

- Our National 4 pass rate is **100%** for the 6th year running. This is **above** the 2022 national measure at 86.1%
- Our National 5 pass rate has **reduced** by 0.22% on 2019. This is **below** the 2022 national measure by 0.32%
- Our Higher pass rate has **increased** on 2019 by 1.24%. This is **above** the 2022 national measure by 1.12%.
- Our Advanced Higher pass rate has **increased** by 8.87% on 2019. This is **above** the 2022 national measure by 3.11%.

Diet Year	Course	CGS	DGS	HA	IHS	LJC	OHS	RA	Tar A	Ti HS	To HS	A&B	Difference % A&B Attainment 2019 to 2022	National
2022	NAT 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0.00%	86.1%
2019	NAT 4	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		88.5%
2022	NAT 5	71%	79%	85%	86%	76%	75%	78%	66%	61%	78%	78%	-0.81%	80.8%

2019	NAT 5	73%	84%	84%	85%	79%	74%	66%	88%	68%	81%	79%		78.2%
2022	Higher	73%	78%	85%	85%	82%	75%	71%	64%	76%	91%	80%	+6.32%	78.9%
2019	Higher	67%	76%	78%	73%	70%	71%	54%	67%	50%	77%	73%		74.8%
2022	Adv H	77%	73%	87%	95%	76%	85%	74%	100%	NP*	100%	84%	+8.87%	81.3%
2019	Adv H	80%	70%	80%	82%	94%	52%	76%	67%	33%	77%	76%		79.4%

Table 3 presents the overall performance of Argyll and Bute Secondary Schools (A-C) across all course levels between the academic years 2019 and 2022.

Key to School abbreviations

CGS	Campbeltown Grammar School
DGS	Dunoon Grammar School
HA	Hermitage Academy
IHS	Islay High School
LJC	Lochgilphead Joint Campus
OHS	Oban High School
RJC	Rothesay Joint Campus
TAR A	Tarbert Academy
TI HS	Tiree High School
TO HS	Tobermory High School

4.6 Summary: In 2022

- All 10 secondary schools maintained their 100% pass rate for National 4 outperforming the national measure.
- Two of our secondary schools were above the 2022 national average measure for National 5.
- Five of our secondary schools matched or were above the 2022 national average measure for Higher.
- Five of our secondary schools were above the 2022 national average for Advanced Higher. One school did not present at this level. It should be noted that, as a result of the small number of presentations for Advanced Higher, statistical variance at this level must be carefully interpreted. For example, 100% pass rate can be as a result of one pupil being presented for a subject at Advanced Higher.

4.7 Overall, percentage pass rate data should be interpreted very carefully as schools have positive presentation policies that are designed to encourage pupils to achieve success at the highest level of qualification that they can. In some instances, and for some pupils, this may mean that they receive a D grade within a qualification level, which is a recognised award. It is also the policy in Argyll and Bute, as with other local authorities, that full discussion and consideration of both pupil and parent views are reflected in the final decision to continue with a course and to sit the external examination.

4.8 This policy may result in circumstances where pupils are given the opportunity to attempt a level that they may find challenging, as it may be their last opportunity to do so, for example in S6. Schools will offer these pupils the opportunity to sit the exam to improve their positive destination chances, for example, access to Higher or Further Education.

4.9 As a Local Authority we offer a wide range of opportunities that help to meet the needs of our individual learners, whilst also supporting a variety of pathways into secure, sustainable positive destinations.

The results reported within this briefing note **do not include** the following presentations for our young people at this time:

- 1) College courses at levels 4, 5 and 6
- 2) National Progression Awards (NPA) at levels 4, 5 and 6
- 3) Foundation Apprenticeships at level 6
- 4) Presentation of S3 pupils at levels 4 and 5

In recent years, the inclusion of such data, once added after the release of Insight data in September and again in February, has increased individual school attainment figures considerably.

5.0 Appeals

5.1 For those pupils who did not gain an award matching or exceeding the estimate submitted to the SQA, for 2022 only, SQA are offering a free appeals service for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses which allows candidates to request an appeal directly with the SQA. The appeal will involve schools collating and submitting demonstrated evidence of attainment for review

If an appeal is submitted there are 2 possible outcomes:

- The award is changed to a higher grade.
- The award grade stays the same.

An appeal may only be submitted if a grade awarded is lower than the estimated grade that was submitted to SQA.

If a candidate intends wishes to appeal, they can do so independently, but it is recommended that they discuss the appeal with the school. Schools will then send available evidence to SQA to support the estimate grade submitted.

5.2 Key Dates: Priority Appeals - candidates with a conditional university or college offer.

Tuesday, 09/08/22	Appeals service opens
Tuesday, 16/08/22	Deadline for submission of Priority Appeal requests to SQA via Learner Direct
Friday 19/08/22	Deadline for centres to submit

	appeal/candidate evidence via SQA Connect
Monday 05/09/22	SQA issue Priority outcomes to centres
Tuesday 06/09/22	SQA issue Priority outcomes to UCAS

5.3 Key Dates: General Appeals – for all other candidates

Tuesday, 09/08/22	Appeals service opens
Tuesday, 30/08/22	Deadline for submission of Non-Priority Appeal requests to SQA via Learner Direct
Friday 02/09/22	Deadline for centres to submit non-priority appeal/candidate evidence via SQA Connect
End October 2022 (subject to volume of appeals)	SQA issues results of non-priority appeals

SQA have sent directly to every candidate a copy of their Appeals Process Guidance.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This report presents a summary of the initial analysis of the 2022 SQA external examination outcomes for Argyll and Bute pupils at authority level and in each of the ten secondary schools.
- 6.2 In 2022 the performance of Argyll and Bute schools compared positively both with national measures and previous comparable authority figures.
- 6.3 The Education Service are taking forward a programme of support and challenge with schools across the authority, involving a range of actions and measures to support schools to secure further improvement in examination outcomes for pupils.
- 6.4 A further report on Educational Attainment and Wider Achievement will be presented to Community Services Committee in December 2022 following the publication of updated national performance information on Insight released in September of each year.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 **Policy:** This report links directly to Outcome 3 in the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan: Education, Skills and Training Maximise Opportunities for All
- 7.2 **Financial:** None.

- 7.3 **Personnel:** None.
- 7.4 **Equal Opportunities:** None.
- 7.5 **Legal:** None.
- 7.6 **Risk:** The performance of Argyll and Bute schools in national examinations can significantly enhance or detract from the Council's reputation and attractiveness as an area to work and live in.
- 7.7 **Customer Services:** This report provides Elected Members with an overview of Service Performance.
- 7.8 **Climate Change:** None.

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education

10 August 2022

For further information contact:

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2022 APPEALS PROCESS

Appeals Process 2022

For those pupils who did not gain an award matching or exceeding the estimate submitted to the SQA, for 2022 only, SQA are offering a free appeals service for National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher courses which allows candidates to request an appeal directly with the SQA. The appeal will involve schools collating and submitting demonstrated evidence of attainment for review

If an appeal is submitted there are 2 possible outcomes:

- The award is changed to a higher grade.
- The award grade stays the same.

An appeal may only be submitted if a grade awarded is lower than the estimated grade that was submitted to SQA.

If a candidate intends wishes to appeal, they can do so independently, but it is recommended that they discuss the appeal with the school. Schools will then send available evidence to SQA to support the estimate grade submitted.

Priority Appeal :

Priority reviews are for candidates with a conditional university or college offer. Results of priority reviews will be issued in line with UCAS deadlines. Candidates must submit their Priority Appeal requests to SQA by 16 August 2022; schools by 19th August.

Appeal :

Appeals, where a learner did not gain an award matching or exceeding the estimate submitted to the SQA, Candidates must submit their Priority requests to SQA by 30 August ; schools by 2nd September.

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES

25 AUGUST 2022

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FQ4 2021/22 – EDUCATION SERVICE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council's Performance and Improvement Framework (PIF) sets out the presentation process for regular performance reporting. As a consequence of Covid-19 alternative options for each PIF activity have been agreed by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).
- 1.2 This paper presents the Community Services (CS) Committee with the FQ4 2021/22 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Education Service.
- 1.3 It is recommended that the CS Committee reviews and scrutinises the FQ4 2021/22 KPI Report as presented.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FQ4 2021/22 – EDUCATION SERVICE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1. The Council's Performance and Improvement Framework (PIF) sets out the presentation process for regular performance reporting. As a consequence of Covid-19 alternative options for each PIF activity have been agreed by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

2.2 This paper presents the Community Services (CS) Committee with the FQ4 2021/22 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Education Service as agreed by Council.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 That members review and scrutinise the FQ4 2021/22 KPI Report as presented.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 To ensure appropriate monitoring and scrutiny of performance management during the Council's Covid-19 response and recovery the ELT have identified a Council-wide suite of 85 Success Measures detailed within the Service Plans.

From within the Service Plans some measures have been identified as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2021/22, and are currently reported quarterly to the appropriate Strategic Committees.

Pyramid remains 'live' with all Success Measures aligned to Service Plans and updated as agreed.

4.2 Attached are the KPIs for FQ4 2021/22 that are relevant to the CS Committee (Appendix 1).

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Simplifying and focusing the performance reports in this manner is a proactive approach to help minimise back office function/non-essential activities whilst maintaining a level of service that supports scrutiny, performance monitoring and out statutory duties.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy: None

6.2 Financial: None

6.3 Legal: The Council has a duty to deliver best value under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003

6.4 HR: None

6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None

6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics: None

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty: None

6.5.3 Islands: None

6.6 Climate Change: None

6.7 Risk: Ensures that all our performance information is reported in a balanced manner

6.8 Customer Service: None

Douglas Hendry

Executive Director with responsibility for the Education Service

Policy Lead: Councillor Yvonne McNeilly

25 April 2022

For further information contact:

Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Key Performance Indicators for -

- Education Service FQ4 2021/22

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FQ4 2021/22 Key Performance Indicators for Education

Indicator: EDU106_05-Increase the percentage of our care experienced young people that have the recommended additional tracking and monitoring plans in place.

Why measure this? This is specific to each child and helps to support the child's educational journey.

This indicator is above target with no change in performance since the last reporting period.

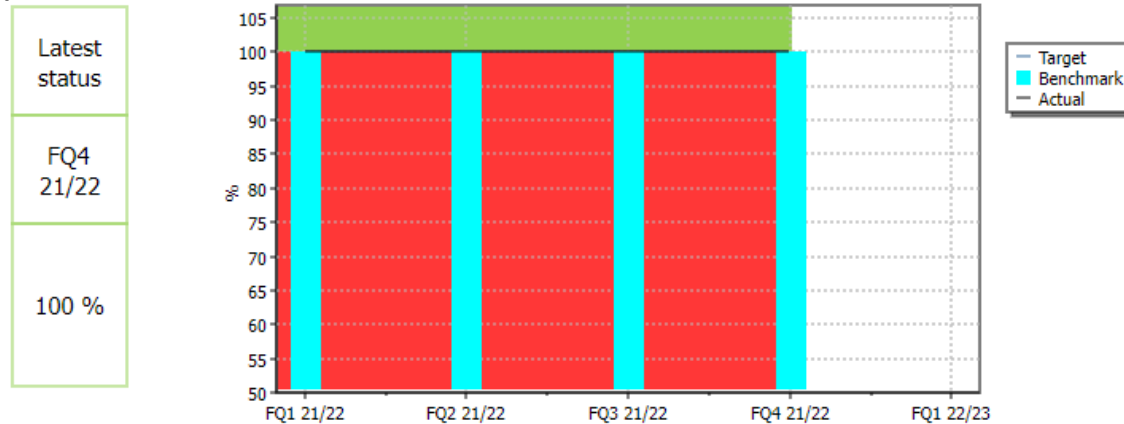
Commentary The Principal Teacher for Care Experienced Children and Young People regularly examines the tracking of individuals within SEEMIS. Where necessary schools are contacted to ensure the appropriate support is in place for those care experienced children and young people that are not meeting their potential.

Target: Quarterly FQ4: 100%

Actual: Quarterly FQ4: 100% **Green**

Benchmark: No Benchmark.

Graph illustration of performance:- EDU106_05-Increase the percentage of our care experienced young people that have the recommended additional tracking and monitoring plans in place.



Indicator: EDU107_01-Support the increase in the update of available grants, allowances and entitlements.

Why measure this? To demonstrate the support that we are putting in to the most vulnerable families in the Authority to support children. This also maximises the Pupil Equity Fund allocation to schools through Scottish Government.

This indicator is below target and performance has decreased since the last reporting period.

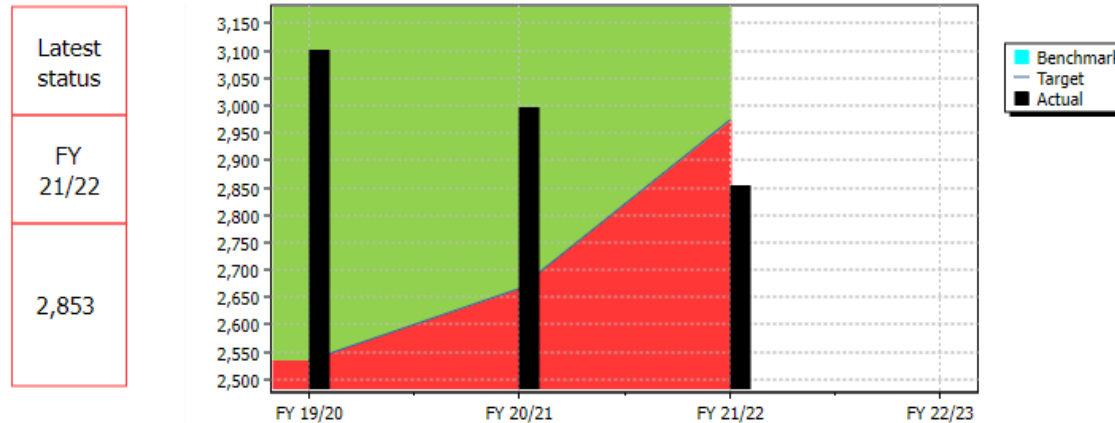
Commentary The full year uptake for clothing grants is slightly down on last year which could be due to the effect of Covid and the high uptake in FQ4 2019/20. The current information shows a reduced uptake in Free School Meals (FSM). The reason for this is that we are only reporting on FSM for P6 to S6 now as all P1-P5 pupils automatically receive a FSM. Applications for Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) have also fallen slightly during 2021/22. Work will continue with schools to promote EMA to eligible students over 16, and a step has been added to the process to ensure this information is shared with home educated pupils. We will also get information over social media outlets to promote as widely as possible for next session.

Target: Annual FQ4: 2,973.

Actual: Annual FQ4: 2,853 **Red.**

Benchmark: No Benchmark.

Graph illustration of performance:- EDU107_01-Support the increase in the update of available grants, allowances and entitlements.



Indicator: EDU107_02-A counselling service is available in all secondary schools.

Why measure this? This will provide support for mental health and wellbeing in our young people.

This indicator is on target with no change in performance since the last reporting period.

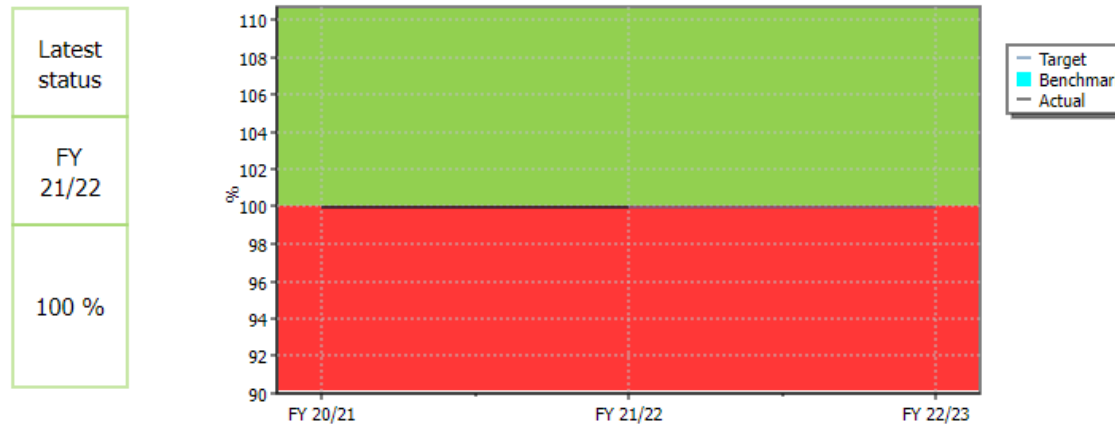
Commentary This service is directed at providing support for children and young people with mental health and wellbeing needs from the age of 10 years upwards. Beginning in February 2021, the Counselling in Schools Service has been accessed by 351 pupils from all secondary schools and 24 primary schools. Common reasons for referral include anxiety, depression, self-harm, and relationships. The timing of this service has been critical in terms of responding to increased need resulting from the pandemic. Qualitative and quantitative information is gathered to evaluate the efficacy of counselling sessions. On the Young People-CORE 10, young people who engaged with counselling reported an 18% reduction in scores. On the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), young people reported a 27% reduction in pre and post scores. The service has recently expanded through the Council recovery funding with a further two counsellors joining the team, which will increase service capacity.

Target: Annual FQ4: 100%.

Actual: Annual FQ4: 100% **Green.**

Benchmark: No Benchmark.

Graph illustration of performance:- EDU107_02-A counselling service is available in all secondary schools.



Indicator: EDU108_02- The percentage of children that achieve their appropriate developmental milestones by Primary 1.

Why measure this? This measure demonstrates that children are given the best start possible.

This indicator is above target with no change in performance since the last reporting period.

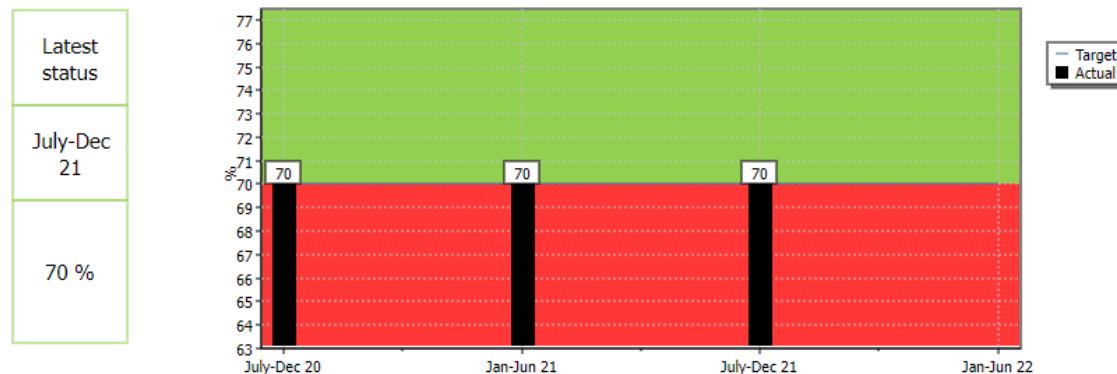
Commentary Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings, who have children moving up to P1 in August 2021, submitted developmental milestone data mid academic year, December 2021. In total 99% of ELC settings, including Childminders submitted developmental milestone data.

- Total of 876 Records
- 31 children access a blended placement
- Total of 845 children
- 33 children were not assessed or no data was recorded

During December 2021 96% of children were assessed. At this midpoint 45% or more of children are achieving stage 2 across all milestones. There is an upward trend in Bute and Cowal and Helensburgh and Lomond with both areas achieving on average 63 percent.

Target: Bi-Annually FQ1 & FQ3: 70.0%.
Actual: Bi-Annually FQ1 & FQ3: 70.0% **Green.**
Benchmark: No Benchmark

Graph illustration of performance:- EDU108_02- The percentage of children that achieve their appropriate developmental milestones by Primary 1.



Indicator: EDU108_04-Digital technology is used to deliver the curriculum wherever necessary as a cover for teacher vacancies or low rolls.

Why measure this? By making best use of digital technology also demonstrates the best use of staff across the area.

This indicator is above target with no change in performance since the last reporting period.

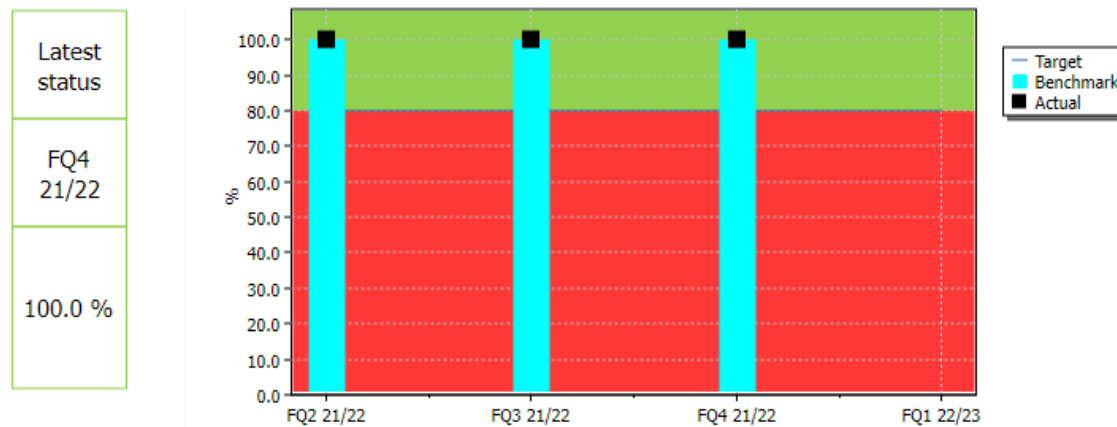
Commentary All schools are able to deliver curricular provision via digital platforms, as was consistently evidenced during the periods of Covid-related school closure. Capability and confidence are being further developed via a programme of targeted training and support from the digital learning team, and through the increasing availability of nationally available digital learning resources eg. e-Sgoil and Scotland Learns. Further expansion will form part of the education change programme

Target: Quarterly FQ4: 80.0%.

Actual: Quarterly FQ4: 100.0% **Green.**

Benchmark: 100.0%.

Graph illustration of performance:- EDU108_04-Digital technology is used to deliver the curriculum wherever necessary as a cover for teacher vacancies or low rolls.



Indicator: EDU117_01-Increase the percentage of our early years workers who have gained or are working towards professional qualifications.

Why measure this? To ensure effective delivery of 1140hrs for our children and to ensure our workforce are appropriately qualified to work with them.

This indicator is above target and performance has improved since the last reporting period.

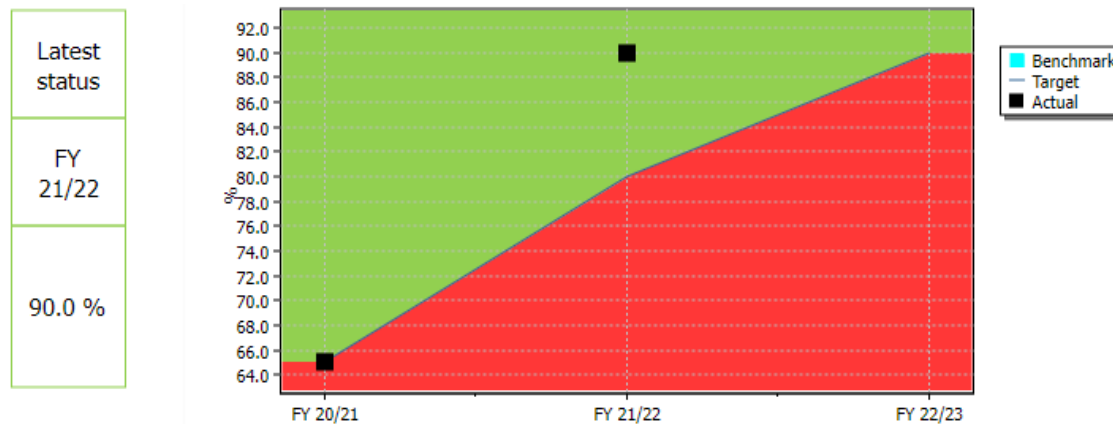
Commentary Our Early years staff training and development capacity grows year on year and staff continue to seek to increase their qualification levels from all funded providers. In session 2021/22 a total of 58 Early Level courses were offered. Professional development for staff was focused upon the Early Years Team priorities of: • Nurture • Floorbook planning linked to the Three Assets Approach • UNCRC • Curriculum for Excellence - Partner settings and childminders • The Leuven scales of Wellbeing and Involvement • Realising the Ambition, national practice guidance.

Target: Annual FQ4: 80.0%.

Actual: Annual FQ4: 90.0% **Green.**

Benchmark: No Benchmark.

Graph illustration of performance:- EDU117_01-Increase the percentage of our early years workers who have gained or are working towards professional qualifications.



Latest status
FY 21/22
90.0 %

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES

25 AUGUST 2022

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS 2021/22 – EDUCATION SERVICE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Council's Performance and Improvement Framework (PIF) sets out the presentation process for regular performance reporting.

This paper presents the Community Services Committee (CS) with the Service Annual Performance Review and Scorecard 2021/22 for the Education Service.

- 1.2 It is recommended that the CS Committee reviews and approves the Service Annual Performance Review (Service APR) and Scorecard 2021/22 as presented prior to publishing on the Council Website.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES

25 AUGUST 2022

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS 2021/22– EDUCATION SERVICE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Council's Performance and Improvement Framework (PIF) sets out the presentation process for regular performance reporting.

This paper presents the Community Services Committee (CS) with the Service Annual Performance Review 2021/22 and Scorecard for the Education Service.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the CS Committee reviews and approves the Service Annual Performance Review (Service APR) and Scorecard 2021/22 as presented prior to publishing on the Council Website.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 At the end of the financial year each Service presents a review that illustrates the positive contribution to our communities, the significant challenges and any consultations that the Service has carried out.

4.2 Case Studies contained within the review have been identified by Senior Officers and provide a broad range of imaginative and exceptional examples of service delivery throughout Argyll and Bute.

4.3 Each Service APR is supported by the Services' year-end Scorecard and as expected due to the nature of service delivery the Service APRs differ in style and content.

4.4 Following approval of the Service APRs a selection of outstanding and informative examples will be collated for inclusion in the Council Annual Report 2021/22 in due course.

4.5 The Service Annual Performance Review and Scorecard 2021/22 are presented in Appendix 1.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy None

5.2 Financial None

5.3 Legal The Council has a duty to deliver best value under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003

5.4 HR None

5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:

5.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics None

5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty None

5.5.3 Islands None

5.6. Climate Change None

5.7 Risk Ensures that all our performance information is reported in a balanced manner

5.8 Customer Service None

Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services

13 July 2022

Policy Lead: Councillor Yvonne Mcneilly

For further information contact:

Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services 01546 604466

Appendix 1

Education Service Annual Performance Review and Scorecard 2021/22

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SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

NAME OF SERVICE: EDUCATION	PERIOD: FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22
1. DELIVERING OUR OUTCOMES <p style="color: red;">Our case studies help illustrate the positive contribution the Service has made to our communities and provides examples of good service delivery.</p>	
<p>Corporate Outcome: Children and Young People Have The Best Possible Start Business Outcome BO106: Our Looked After Young People Are Supported By Effective Corporate Parenting</p> <p>EDU106_01-Increase positive destinations for our looked after children in Argyll and Bute a). A working party from Education, Social Work, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and Local Authority Talent Management was established to look at how we can improve destinations for our Care Experienced school leavers.</p> <p>b). Principle Teacher of Care Experienced Children and Young People and SDS Manager and Career Advisors share information to ensure that Care Experienced pupils are offered the maximum offer of careers guidance. This process has highlighted that 2 individuals were not getting the maximum offer and this was rectified.</p> <p>EDU106_02-Increase the percentage of successful examination presentations in levels 4 and 5 for Literacy and Numeracy by our senior phase pupils a). 100% of pupils presented for National 4 Literacy and Numeracy qualifications were successful.</p> <p>b). 100% of pupils presented for National 5 Literacy and Numeracy qualifications were successful</p> <p>EDU106_03-Maintain the low level of exclusion incidents experienced by our looked after children a). The number of formal exclusions continues to be low and below our target of <5.</p> <p>b). Exclusion guidance (Standard Circular 3.07) has been updated, reflecting the language of The Promise. The definition of Care Experience has been made explicit.</p> <p>EDU106_04-Ensure there is a completed transition plan in place when a care experienced young person changes school / establishment a). The transition Needs Analysis tool has been widely circulated by the PT. The PT will continue to remind schools of the need to complete the Needs Analysis Tool at the point of transition.</p>	

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

b). The Principle Teacher works to support both schools to share appropriate levels of information and to arrange transition activities.

EDU106_05-Increase the percentage of our care experienced young people that have the recommended additional tracking and monitoring plans in place.

a). The Principle Teacher of Care Experienced Children and Young People is tracking children through regular updates from Designated Managers in schools. This is additional tracking to what is recorded in the SEEMiS Tracking and Monitoring module.

b). The Needs Analysis Tool will be included in the Transitions Guidance from the Transitions Workstream.

Business Outcome BO107: The Support and Lifestyle Needs of Our Children, Young People and Their Families Are Met.

EDU107_01-Support the increase in the uptake of available Grants, Allowances and Entitlements

a). Free school meals show a reduction of 12% compared to recent years, this is a direct result of the roll out of Free School Meals (FSMs) to all P1-P5 children. Families are still applying for FSMs in order to be eligible for the hardship payments paid to eligible families. The Council is working towards the roll out of FSMs for all Primary aged pupils in line with the Scottish Government.

b). The Authority has processed 30 less School Clothing Grant (SCG) payments over the last 12 months and this is the second year in a row that there has been a slight reduction.

c). Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) grants that have been processed are 12 less than 2020/21 – we will continue to promote to all young people over 16 and promote as widely as possible through social media channels as well as direct mailing to increase uptake.

EDU107_02-A counselling service is available in all secondary schools

a). The Education Psychology Service has supported the development of the Counselling in Schools Service in line with Scottish Government expectations. This service is directed at providing support for children and young people with mental health and wellbeing needs from the age of 10 years upwards, led by a skilled and experienced Team Leader.

b). Beginning in February 2021 to date, the Counselling in Schools Service has been accessed by in excess of 350 pupils from all 10 Secondary schools and 24 Primary schools. Common reasons for referral include anxiety, depression, self-harm and relationships. The timing of this service has been critical in terms of responding to the increased need resulting from the pandemic.

c). Qualitative and quantitative information is gathered to evaluate the efficacy of counselling sessions. On the YP-CORE 10, young people who engaged with counselling reported a positive impact with an 18% reduction in scores. On the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, young

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

people reported a 27% reduction in pre and post scores. The service has recently expanded with a further two counsellors joining the team on a temporary basis from Council Covid recovery funding.

d). The evaluation of counselling in schools is led by the EPS and, moving forward, consideration is being given to how this service delivers and enhances the suite of mental health supports for children and young people, including the views of young people themselves to identify any gaps in service provision.

EDU107_03-All children and young people identified as requiring an adapted timetable will have a flexible learning plan put in place

a). A total of 34 Flexible Learning Plans (FLPs) have been put in place across Secondary schools in 2021-22. Each FLP has represented a targeted response to an issue with school engagement or another barrier to learning and achievement. Individual FLPs have been the product of close consultation between the young person, his/her family, the school and the employer with whom the young person engages for part of the week in the form of placement. Each FLP is monitored rigorously to ensure it remains relevant and is meeting the needs of the learner. Thus far, seven FLPs have led to employment post-school and almost all have improved young people's engagement with education and allowed them to achieve and develop to their potential.

EDU107_04-Maintain the percentage of 16-19 year olds in Argyll and Bute participating in education, training or employment

a). The level of participation in education, training or employment for 16-19 year-olds in Argyll and Bute in the data released in September 2021 was 93.5%. Although constituting a slight fall from the 2020 measure of 94.1%, the Argyll and Bute figure is still 1.3% above the national average and the Authority remains in the top 10 authorities nationally for participation levels. Strong and enhanced partnership working between Education, Developing the Young Workforce, Skills Development Scotland and third sector partners, involving training and sharing of data, is contributing to the Authority's strong performance in participation.

EDU107_05-Maintain the percentage of all young people leaving school achieving a positive destination into further education, training or employment

a). In Argyll and Bute in 2021-22, 95.02% of young people left school into a positive destination. This is an increase of 2.7% on the 2020-21 figure. This can be attributed to improved planning of attainment, achievement and vocational pathways in schools, which have been enhanced by the work of the Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Co-ordinators appointed in August 2021 to support work-based vocational learning in schools. Equally, the widening of college courses available to senior pupils in schools via virtual learning through video conferencing, and the dedication of a common column in all Secondary school timetables for this purpose, will extend the reach of further education and encourage the uptake of college courses post-school. The ongoing engagement of Secondary schools with initiatives, such as Top Up and Focus West, is also encouraging pathways for senior pupils into higher education.

Corporate Outcome: Education, Skills and Training Maximise Opportunities For All

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Business Outcome BO108: All Our Children and Young People Are Supported To Realise Their Potential

EDU108_01-Increase the uptake of wider achievement opportunities which complement traditional SQA awards and offer alternative ways to develop learning, life and work skills

a). In 2021, young people in Argyll and Bute gained Wider Achievement awards at SCQF levels 4-7. 90% of all entries in Wider Achievement gained an award. A total of 1067 young people across Argyll and Bute gained a Wider Achievement Award in 2020/21. These figures represent a significant recovery from 2020, when pandemic-related restrictions negatively affected young people's opportunities to complete Wider Achievement awards.

EDU108_02-The percentage of children that achieve their appropriate developmental milestones by Primary 1

a). Authority wide, 37% of children currently assessed during December 2021 are achieving stage 2 across all of their milestones, a change of -5% in comparison to December 2020. This is in keeping with the trends nationally as a result of the Covid pandemic.

EDU108_03-Maintain the number of primary pupils that become digital leaders

a). Due to Covid and the Digital Learning team being unable to access schools, no digital leaders were trained. However, all young people enhanced their digital learning skills as a result of learning from home.

EDU108_04-Digital technology is used to deliver the curriculum where ever necessary as a cover for teacher vacancies or low rolls

a). We have funded the procurement and installation of digital video conferencing equipment across all Secondary schools. As a result, we are in a position to continue to develop the expanded curriculum offer via digital platforms as appropriate. Consequently, young people disadvantaged by the remoteness of a locality have access to the same curriculum offer as those in more populous areas.

EDU108_05-All secondary establishments have a minimum of two community business partners

a). The work of the Developing the Young Workforce Co-ordinators, appointed in August 2021, has increased and enhanced the number of schools' community business partnerships. Almost all schools have more than one employer partnership, which is evaluated as 'Influencing' in terms of the Scottish Government's criteria for grading the quality of such partnerships. 'Influencing' is the highest level of partnership, and entails an employer not only offering work-based vocational learning opportunities for young people, but also engaging regularly and effectively with the school in areas such as curriculum design, curriculum delivery and joint staff training opportunities.

Business Outcome BO109: All Our Adults Are Supported To Realise Their Potential

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

EDU109_01-Maintain the number of adults engaged in community learning and development (CLD) employability programmes

a). Community Learning Services managed to maintain some Adult Learners via online and distanced blended learning provision for those who wanted to continue with non-face to face contact. The NOLB (No One Left Behind) employability programme was revised to accommodate learners. We were able to access digital devices for some of our learners who did not have one through various projects/initiatives running across the Authority and nationally so they could continue with their learning.

b). We maintained Some Adult Learner through this, albeit not all. Factors contributing to this included the lockdown and Covid restrictions as there were restrictions in face to face provision and the reduction to the Community Learning Service through budget constraints and service cuts. Staffing resources were significantly reduced along with service provision e.g. the removal of Adult Literacy, Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALN) workers and the ALN Service Team.

EDU109_02-Increase the number of adults with Individual Learning Plans that identify and address employability barriers such as training needs and skills gaps

a). We were not able to significantly increase numbers due to Covid restrictions and lockdowns, though continued to support and work with Adult Learners that remained engaged in addressing and working to reduce some of the barriers and challenges they faced around employability.

Corporate Outcome: Getting It Right

Business Outcome BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective

EDU115_01-Our Grant spend is maximised

a). Gaelic Specific Grant funding awarded through Bòrd na Gàidhlig supports the identified targets for Education within the Gaelic Language Plan. The Gaelic Language Plan has three areas of focus; promoting a positive image of Gaelic, increasing the learning of Gaelic and increasing the use of Gaelic. Gaelic Specific Grant funding supports the Education Service in the delivery of Gaelic Medium Education (GME) across the Primary and Secondary sectors as the majority of the funding is utilised for staffing costs. Grant funding has allowed for the increase in one promoted post in GME in the Oban area, and additionally in the Mull cluster, for a focus on transition from Primary and Secondary as well as wider Authority work on progression pathways. Maximising the use of this strategic grant allows the Service to develop and promote Gaelic Medium Education particularly in our more remote communities, such as the islands.

Business Outcome BO117: We Encourage Creativity And Innovation To Ensure Our Workforce Is Fit For The Future

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

EDU117_01-Increase the percentage of our early years workers who have gained or are working towards professional qualifications

a). We are increasing the percentage of Early Years (EY) workers who have gained their qualifications, steadily, year by year. Actual figures for this session have not been completed as the session has not come to a close, however, we can confirm that this will be a positive picture this session.

EDU117_02-Provide 6 probationer learning days to our probationer teachers

a). Due to Covid restrictions, professional learning activities for probationers were provided online from August 2021 to April 2022. Fifteen twilight sessions were provided for probationers over the course of this period which has developed their skills and knowledge of Learning and Teaching. The sessions over the course of this school year included Nurture training, Application and Interview Skills, Learning Intentions and Success Criteria, Learning for Sustainability and Getting It Right For Every Child GIRFEC. Early feedback from the current cohort highlights that probationers have found the majority of sessions helpful and useful for their own practice.

b). Professional learning activities were delivered by both employees within Argyll and Bute Council and our partners, including West of Scotland Development Education Centre and the Northern Alliance. The Northern Alliance also provided a range of sessions for Newly Qualified Teachers which our probationers were encouraged to attend. These sessions were over and above the Argyll and Bute Probationer Programme.

c). One face to face session took place in Inveraray in May 2022 which focused on Enquiry presentations and there are three further online sessions planned to take place before the end of the school session.

EDU117_03-The Percentage of new head teachers who have or are working towards headship qualifications.

a). Since April 2021, 13 new Head Teachers were appointed, with 10 remaining in post in April 2022. Of the 10 who remained in post 40% have the Standard for Headship, 10% are currently participating in the Into Headship programme, 30% are due to start the Into Headship programme in August 2022 and 20% do not have the qualification and are not working towards it. Of the three Head Teachers who are no longer in this position – due to secondments - 1 had the qualification, 1 was working towards the qualification and 1 did not have the qualification and was not working towards it.

b). New Head Teachers currently have up to 30 months to complete the Into Headship programme and the 20% of Head Teachers who are not working towards the qualification are within this timeframe.

c). Current Acting Head Teachers, who are not undertaking the programme from August 2022, have been encouraged to participate in the Aspiring to Headship programme. This programme is a new professional learning opportunity which has been designed for leaders who are keen to develop their understanding of the role of a Head Teacher. It is envisaged that participants of the Aspiring to Headship programme will undertake Into Headship the following year.

2. SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The significant challenges faced by the Service during 2021/22. These challenges either created specific pressures on the Success Measures or impacted on delivery. Specific additional activity or mitigating actions were carried out to reduce the negative impact on service delivery.

Corporate Outcome: Children and Young People Have The Best Possible Start

BO106: Our Looked After Young People Are Supported By Effective Corporate Parenting

EDU106_01-Increase positive destinations for our looked after children in Argyll and Bute

- a). Physical attendance in the school environment has become more of a challenge after periods of Lockdown. In order to approve this, a multi-agency Maximising Attendance working group has been established to address non-attendance.
- b). In some areas, it has been difficult to provide work experience due to Covid restrictions.

EDU106_02-Increase the percentage of successful examination presentations in levels 4 and 5 for Literacy and Numeracy by our senior phase pupils

- a). Due to gaps in education, following periods of non-attendance, some pupils are not being presented for levels 4 and 5 but level 3.

EDU106_03-Maintain the low level of exclusion incidents experienced by our looked after children

- a). Lack of clarity around the definition of "Care Experience". PT to present to HTs about the wording of The Promise and the commitment to end formal and informal exclusions.

EDU106_04-Ensure there is a completed transition plan in place when a care experienced young person changes school / establishment

- a). Social Work and Education require to establish a clear timescale around the sharing of information regarding the movement of children.

Business Outcome BO107: The Support and Lifestyle Needs of Our Children, Young People and Their Families Are Met

EDU107_02-A counselling service is available in all secondary schools

- a). The temporary nature of Scottish Government (SG) funding directed at counselling in schools has made planning to deliver services to meet the needs of children and young people in the longer term problematic. There has been concern over this valuable service being withdrawn when a clear need has been identified with over 350 young people engaging with the service over the last 15 months.
- b). It has now been confirmed that the SG funding for counselling in schools has been base-lined within Council funding moving forward. Plans are in place to review service delivery based on processes of ongoing evaluation and make the counselling posts and support structures permanent.

EDU107_03-All children and young people identified as requiring an adapted timetable will have a flexible learning plan put in place

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

a). Work experience is usually a very valuable part of an individualised timetable and is part of most Flexible Learning Plans. We were unable to provide this during periods of Covid restrictions. This was very challenging as the pupils really benefit from the practical skills and experience they gain in these situations.

EDU107_04-Maintain the percentage of 16-19 year olds in Argyll and Bute participating in education, training or employment

a). Four Developing the Young Workforce Co-ordinators were appointed in August 2021 to support schools in increasing the number and quality of work-based vocational learning opportunities for senior phase learners. The Co-ordinators have been line managed by the Regional DYW Lead, a position hosted until very recently by Argyll College. The Regional DYW Lead is the line manager for the four Co-ordinators. Argyll and Bute's Regional DYW Lead has been absent since October 2021, and resigned his post in March 2021. This has resulted in some compromises in the leadership of the Co-ordinators, which may have impacted on the scope, scale and impact of their work over that period. The Education Manager and management at Argyll College have worked together to mitigate the impact of the absence of a line manager, and recruitment of a new Regional DYW Lead will be completed by July 2022, hosted now by the Local Authority rather than Argyll College to increase coherence in strategic planning. Despite the challenges detailed above, the DYW Co-ordinators have had a positive impact on the number of young people engaging with employers' post-Covid, which is a key factor in increasing participation and positive destination figures.

EDU107_05-Maintain the percentage of all young people leaving school achieving a positive destination into further education, training or employment

a). Four Developing the Young Workforce Co-ordinators were appointed in August 2021 to support schools in increasing the number and quality of work-based vocational learning opportunities for senior phase learners. The Co-ordinators have been line managed by the Regional DYW Lead, a position hosted until very recently by Argyll College. The Regional DYW Lead is the line manager for the four Co-ordinators. Argyll and Bute's Regional DYW Lead has been absent since October 2021, and resigned his post in March 2021. This has resulted in some compromises in the leadership of the Co-ordinators, which may have impacted on the scope, scale and impact of their work over that period. The Education Manager and management at Argyll College have worked together to mitigate the impact of the absence of a line manager, and recruitment of a new Regional DYW Lead will be completed by July 2022, hosted now by the Local Authority rather than Argyll College to increase coherence in strategic planning. Despite the challenges detailed above, the DYW Co-ordinators have had a positive impact on the number of young people engaging with employers' post-Covid, which is a key factor in increasing participation and positive destination figures.

Corporate Outcome: Education, Skills and Training Maximise Opportunities For All

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Business Outcome BO108: All Our Children and Young People Are Supported To Realise Their Potential

EDU108_01-Increase the uptake of wider achievement opportunities which complement traditional SQA awards and offer alternative ways to develop learning, life and work skills

- a). Public Health restrictions continued to impact on the in-person nature and partnership working of many of these awards in 2021/22.
- b). Schools have continued to seek alternative qualifications to support life and work skills.

EDU108_02-The percentage of children that achieve their appropriate developmental milestones by Primary 1

- a). Mid-year figures are down by 5% to 37%, however, this is in line with a decline in developmental progress of this cohort of children nationally, as a result of Covid lockdowns.

EDU108_03-Maintain the number of primary pupils that become digital leaders

- a). The Service would wish to remove this measure as it's no longer relevant in the new context.

EDU108_04-Digital technology is used to deliver the curriculum where ever necessary as a cover for teacher vacancies or low rolls

- a). The challenge relating to the use of digital technology in learning has shifted post-pandemic from ensuring learning, through digital platforms, can continue in the home environment to mitigate against the Covid-related absence of pupils or teachers to the utilisation of digital technology in broadening the curriculum for all learners. The challenge of equipping schools with video conferencing technology, and increasing the skills and capacity of teachers to deliver learning via video conferencing to pupils in other schools, is being addressed via the work to establish commonality of timetabling across Secondary schools, the procurement and installation of the required hardware in schools and the planning of training for teaching staff.
- b). A key challenge has been to address the limitations of the Council digital network to permit the flexibility and capacity required for the great expansion in digital traffic entailed by the work at Council level to broaden the curricular offer to learners through video conferencing, within and between schools, and the Scottish Government's commitment to provide a digital device for every child and young person in Scotland. The digital consultancy firm Insight was contracted to complete an analysis of the network in these contexts and to make recommendations. Such recommendations have been delivered and have been a key component in the report to the Executive Director and Senior Leadership Team, on the aspirations for the Argyll and Bute digital network, as it relates to the requirements of Education and the associated costs.

EDU108_05-All secondary establishments have a minimum of two community business partners

- a). The absence for six months and subsequent resignation of the Regional DYW Lead has created a challenge in terms of leadership and line-management of the four DYW Co-ordinators. The Scottish Government Key Performance Indicator relating to the establishment of community business partners, and specifically those conforming to the "Influencing" level as defined by the Scottish Government, has been met through the Education

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Manager and management at Argyll College adopting aspects of the DYW Lead role in overseeing and monitoring the work of the DYW Co-ordinators and formally reporting progress to the Scottish Government.

Business Outcome BO109: All Our Adults Are Supported To Realise Their Potential

EDU109_01-Maintain the number of adults engaged in community learning and development (CLD) employability programmes

- a). Non and slow opening of venues and restrictions in place, not being able to resume face to face learning for everyone or able to meet with participants due to venues still being closed and not being able to access services from other partners/employers due to Covid restrictions for participants as part of their no one left behind support and development - again due to Covid volunteering and work experience opportunities not being available.
- b). Reduction to staffing through Service/budget cuts saw the removal of the Adult Literacy Workers and the Literacies Service support team. This left a provision gap and created additional barriers for Adult Learners who were trying to improve their reading, writing and use of Numeracy to improve their employability skills as a result some Adult Learners became disengaged.
- c). Staff training and Continuous Professional Development skills - Community Learning Workers pre-pandemic were face to face provision providers and staff had to upskill at speed to deliver and provide many different online learning platforms, before introducing some Adult Learners to them, alongside engaging with learners through digital and non-face to face provision.

EDU109_02-Increase the number of adults with Individual Learning Plans that identify and address employability barriers such as training needs and skills gaps

- a). Full targets were not met due to lockdown restrictions and Covid - face to face provision was offered where able, for example outdoor learning and continued delivery through digital and telephone provision with users that were willing to engage this way. Community Learning Workers contacted Adult Learners regularly to “check in” with them. Input to no one left behind 1/4ly reporting completed showing barriers identified and returned to the Scottish Government via the A and B Council Employability Team/Partnership.

Corporate Outcome: Getting It Right

Business Outcome BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective

EDU115_01-Our Grant spend is maximised

- a). The grant spend for the Gaelic Specific Grant, awarded through Bòrd na Gàidhlig, is primarily used to fund staffing across our Primary and Secondary sector. Staffing our schools remains a challenge across the Service and this is a particular challenge in Gaelic Medium Education. To mitigate this, the Service requests Gaelic teachers in their probationary year for vacancies within Gaelic Medium Education on a yearly basis. We have found that a

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

number of the probationers that have worked in Gaelic Medium in Argyll and Bute choose to stay on, growing the core staffing in Gaelic Medium. Additionally, the Service now provides advertisements for Gaelic specific posts bilingually to attract new staff to vacancies that arise.

Business Outcome BO117: We Encourage Creativity And Innovation To Ensure Our Workforce Is Fit For The Future

EDU117_01-Increase the percentage of our early years workers who have gained or are working towards professional qualifications

a). This is increasing year by year.

EDU117_02-Provide 6 probationer learning days to our probationer teachers

a). A large number of probationers opted to watch the recording of each session in their own time due to the timing of the sessions during the school day. As such, the programme next session will be delivered on a Friday and this information will be communicated to all schools once the probationer allocation has been confirmed.

b). The facility to record sessions on Google Meet was removed in January 2022 which impacted on the number of probationers accessing the recording of the professional learning sessions. As such, the probationer programme will be delivered through Microsoft Teams next session.

c). Restrictions at the time impacted the face to face delivery of 6 professional learning days. Moving forward, the programme next session will follow a hybrid approach between online and face to face sessions as a whole cohort and also in clusters.

EDU117_03-The Percentage of new head teachers who have or are working towards headship qualifications

a). Recruitment of Head Teachers with the Standard for Headship or Head Teachers currently undertaking the Into Headship programme.

3. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT - WE ASKED, YOU SAID, WE DID....

Please list all consultations and resulting actions that the Service has carried out during this period.

a). **Educational Psychology Service remote working survey** - Target Audience: Children and young people, parents and carers, SLT, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Social Work, and Education.

We asked: Young people, parents and carers, partners (Health, Education, Social Work) about their experiences of working with the Educational Psychology Service during restrictions from Covid and which elements we should take forward.

You said: Very positive experience across all groups, particularly around informal contact with EP's and flexibility to meet online and attend training.

We did: Production of "Working remotely with the Educational Psychology Service document" outlining how these will be incorporated into practice.

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

<p>b). Educational Psychology Service Small group consultation survey - Target Audience: Head Teachers (Primary and Secondary) We asked: We asked about the experiences of attending the small group consultations, including perceived benefits and challenges of the sessions. You said: Positive experiences from schools in the co-working element to share ideas and approaches they use within their setting. General view that sessions were difficult to attend due to time constraints. We did: Decision not to proceed with small group consultations in the session ahead.</p>
<p>c). Educational Psychology Service / School Counselling Youth Advisory Panel - Target Audience: Children and Young People We asked: Experiences of children and young people who accessed the Counselling in Schools Service. Session 1 focused on the self-referral process and raising awareness of the Service. You said: Children and young people reported that they valued the service and suggested several ways we could improve delivery. We did: Development of posters to promote service within schools. Review of Self-referral and professional referral with CYP comments.</p>
<p>d). Pupil Consultation on Transformation Programme. The consultation feedback informed the development of the pupil consultation materials to ensure that pupils could engage with the Transformational Change materials and had the opportunity to feedback.</p>
<p>e). Parental Involvement and Engagement Census. This has taken place and information will be shared with schools. Information is yet to be returned to the Scottish Government. Within the census, it is clear that there is a lack of confidence from parents in relation to UNCRC. Aberdeen City Council's approach to this is being investigated with parents and a PC Chair has been engaged in this.</p>
<p>f). Youth Scotland evaluated the Health and Wellbeing of pupils at Dunoon Grammar School and Lochgilphead Joint Campus. A dissemination plan has been created and meetings have been established to identify key improvement priorities for the school and community to engage with.</p>
<p>g). A limited number of consultations have taken place in relation to poverty. This was following a group working session with Education staff involved in Poverty Alliance training. A small number of parents have been consulted via a school in relation to their experience using an empathy tool. A small number of pupils have been consulted using the same approach. Information will be fed into a Child Poverty Action Plan.</p>
<p>h). Consultation took place with the PC at Furnace Primary. This resulted in agreement to proceed with shared headship following the retirement of the Head Teacher in the summer.</p>
<p>i). Health and Wellbeing Leads were consulted in relation to the establishment of a network to share information and best practice. This has resulted in the group being established and two meetings have taken place. The agreement is for the group to meet termly.</p>

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

j). In the development of an Authority wide digital moderation platform, central Education Officers worked closely with staff trained as Quality Assessment and Moderation Officers to develop the bespoke platform for Argyll and Bute Schools. During the pilot period, school leaders were consulted in the next iteration of development. Consulting with practitioners and school leaders has led to a high quality digital resource that all schools are able to access, despite geography. This resource supports robust professional discussions to impact improvements in attainment.

k). An 1140 hours parental satisfaction survey ran in all localities.

EDUCATION SERVICE – ANNUAL SCORECARD 2021/22_FINAL

'Making Argyll and Bute a place people choose to live, learn, work and do business'

Argyll Bute COUNCIL **Education Service Scorecard 2019-22**
 Scorecard owned by: **Douglas Hendry** **FY 21/22**

[Click here for Ex. Director Douglas Hendry Scorecard](#)

[Click here for all Business Outcomes and Success Measures](#)

[Community Learning & Development Team Scorecard](#)

[All Schools Team Scorecard](#)

[Quality Improvement Team Scorecard](#)

[Psychological Team Scorecard](#)

[Early Years Team Scorecard](#)

[Click here for Management Information](#)

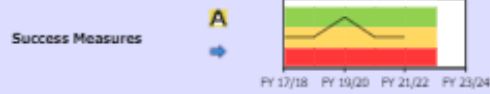
BO106: Our Looked After Young People Are Supported By Effective Corporate Parenting [EDU]



BO109: All Our Adults Are Supported To Realise Their Potential [EDU]



BO107: The Support And Lifestyle Needs Of Our Children, Young People And Their Families Are Met [EDU]



BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective [EDU]



BO108: All Our Children And Young People Are Supported To Realise Their Potential [EDU]



BO117: We Encourage Creativity And Innovation To Ensure Our Workforce Is Fit For The Future [EDU]





Education Service Scorecard 2019-22

Scorecard owned by: Douglas Hendry FY 21/22

[Click here for Full Scorecard](#)

Management Information

RESOURCES

People	Actual	Trend
Total LGE Staff Absence (EDU)	2.66 Days	↓
Total Teachers Staff Absence - (EDU)	5.6 Days	↓

	Target	Actual	Status	Trend
EDU % of PRDs completed	90 %	9 %	R	↓

Financial	Budget	Forecast	Status	Trend
Finance Revenue totals EDU	£K 94,614	£K 94,592	A	↓

IMPROVEMENT

	Status		Trend			
EDU Service Improvements 2017-22	Actions	Total No	Off track	On track	Complete	
		22	0	19	3	↔

Education Audit Recommendations	Overdue	Due in future	Future - off target
	0	4	0

Health & Safety	Overdue	Rescheduled	Actions in Plan	Complete
Service H&S Plan Actions	0	0	16	0
H&S Investigation Actions	0	0	0	0

Customer Service EDU				
Stage 1 Complaints	83 %	G	↑	
Stage 2 Complaints	67 %	R	↑	



Education Service Scorecard 2019-22

Scorecard owned by: **Douglas Hendry**

FY 21/22

[Click here for Full Scorecard](#)

BO107: The Support And Lifestyle Needs Of Our Children, Young People And Their Families Are Met [EDU] Success Measure **A**

EDU107_01-Support the increase in the uptake of available Grants, Allowances and Entitlements	Actual: 2,853 Target: 2,973 Benchmark: 2,853	R ↓ Lowest Target
EDU107_02-A counselling service is available in all secondary schools	Actual: 100 % Target: 100 % Benchmark: 100 %	C ↑
EDU107_03-All children and young people identified as requiring an adapted timetable will have a flexible learning plan put in place	Actual: 100 % Target: 100 % Benchmark: 100 %	C ↑
EDU107_04-Maintain the percentage of 16-19 year olds in Argyll and Bute participating in education, training or employment	Actual: Target: Benchmark:	
EDU107_05-Maintain the percentage of all young people leaving school achieving a positive destination into further education, training or employment	Actual: 93.5 % Target: 95.0 % Benchmark: 93.5 %	R ↓

BO109: All Our Adults Are Supported To Realise Their Potential [EDU] Success Measure **A**

EDU109_01-Maintain the number of adults engaged in community learning and development (CLD) employability programmes.	Actual: Target: 50 Benchmark:	C ↑
EDU109_02-Increase the number of adults with Individual Learning Plans that identify and address employability barriers such as training needs and skills gaps.	Actual: Target: 25 Benchmark:	

BO106: Our Looked After Young People Are Supported By Effective Corporate Parenting [EDU] Success Measure **A**

EDU106_01-Increase positive destinations for our looked after children in Argyll and Bute	Actual: 71.1 % Target: 90.0 % Benchmark: 71.4 %	R ↓
EDU106_02-Increase the percentage of successful examination presentations in levels 4 and 5 for Literacy and Numeracy by our senior phase pupils	Actual: 97.0 % Target: 60.0 % Benchmark: 97.0 %	C ↑
EDU106_03-Maintain the low level of exclusion incidents experienced by our looked after children.	Actual: Target: 5 Benchmark:	
EDU106_04-Ensure there is a completed transition plan in place when a care experienced young person changes school / establishment.	Actual: Target: 100 % Benchmark:	
EDU106_05-Increase the percentage of our care experienced young people that have the recommended additional tracking and monitoring plans in place.	Actual: Target: 100 % Benchmark:	

BO117: We Encourage Creativity And Innovation To Ensure Our Workforce Is Fit For The Future [EDU] Success Measure **A**

EDU117_01-Increase the percentage of our early years workers who have gained or are working towards professional qualifications.	Actual: 90.0 % Target: 80.0 % Benchmark: 90.0 %	C ↑
EDU117_02-Provide 6 probationer learning days to our probationer teachers	Actual: Complete Target: Complete Benchmark: Complete	C ↑
EDU117_03-The Percentage of new head teachers who have or are working towards headship qualifications	Actual: 48 % Target: 90 % Benchmark: 48 %	R ↓

BO108: All Our Children And Young People Are Supported To Realise Their Potential [EDU] Success Measure **A**

EDU108_01-Increase the uptake of wider achievement opportunities which complement traditional SQA awards and offer alternative ways to develop learning, life and work skills.	Actual: 16 Target: 16 Benchmark:	C
EDU108_02-The percentage of children that achieve their appropriate developmental milestones by Primary 1	Actual: Target: 70 Benchmark:	
EDU108_03-Maintain the number of primary pupils that become digital leaders	Actual: 0 Target: 54 Benchmark: 0	R ↓
EDU108_04-Digital technology is used to deliver the curriculum where ever necessary as a cover for teacher vacancies or low rolls	Actual: 100.0 % Target: 80.0 % Benchmark: 100.0 %	C ↑
EDU108_05-All secondary establishments have a minimum of two community business partners	Actual: 100.0 % Target: 90.0 % Benchmark: 100.0 %	C ↑

BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective [EDU] Success Measure **C**

EDU115_01-Our Grant spend is maximised	Actual: 400.0 % Target: 380.0 % Benchmark: 400.0 %	C ↑
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Keeping People Safe in Argyll & Bute

Our Purpose:- To improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland

Road Safety & Road Crime



Overall road casualties increased by 42.3% (+39) in Argyll & Bute during 2021/22 when compared to the previous year. Fatalities increased from 5 to 8, serious injuries increased from 33 to 49 and slight injuries from 54 to 74. However, figures for 2020/21 will have been significantly influenced by Covid-19 lockdowns. No fatalities were recorded during Qtr 4.

Year-end figures show the total number of offences recorded in A&B relating to motor vehicles reduced by 5.6% (n=129) in 2021/22 compared to the previous year. The figure also remained 10.9% (n=266) below the previous 5 year average. Speeding offences have seen the biggest reduction in terms of volume (-113) followed by offences relating to failure to insure against 3rd party risks (-59). Careless driving offences also reduced by 4% (-10) while dangerous driving offences have increased by 8.3% due to proactive, targeted patrols by Road Policing Officers, albeit both figures remained slightly below the 5 year average. Drink / drug driving offences increased by 30% from 130 to 169, 31.4% above the previous 5 year average however this has been influenced by the introduction of roadside drug tests.

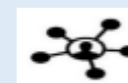
Public Protection

During 2021/22 Group 2 sexual crimes increased by 11.2% from 215 to 239 when compared to the previous year. The increase is primarily due to a rise in rape and indecent / sexual assault crimes. Rape crimes increased by 81.5% from 27 to 49, 31.7% above the previous 5 year average (37). Sexual assaults increased by 17.3% from 81 to 95, and also remained above the 5 year average figure (71). A high proportion (57%) of rape and sexual assault crimes related to non-recent reports, which create additional investigative issues, tracing suspects with some deceased, and enquiry time. 71% occurred in a private setting and 24% were domestic related. These increases have been slightly offset by a 31% reduction in crimes relating to indecent images / communication which have decreased from 87 to 60.

82.5% of rape & sexual assault crimes were committed by persons known to the victim.

During 2021/22 the detection rate for Group 2 sexual crime overall improved from 49.3% to 54.8% compared to 2020/21. Reflecting high levels of non-recent reporting, the detection rate for rape crime reduced from 74.1% to 42.9%, while the detection rate for indecent/sexual assaults increased from 48.1% to 61.1%

Serious & Organised Crime



Across Argyll & West Dunbartonshire 47 persons linked to serious and organised crime have been arrested and £523,899 seized under POCA.

Drugs supply crimes reduced significantly during 2021/22 with 22 crimes recorded compared to 55 in 2020/21. Drug possession charges also reduced by 29.8% year on year from 463 to 325. Both figures were considerably below the previous 5 year average, however a high number of absences through Covid resulted in a reduced capacity compared to previous years with Officers being moved to other core responsibilities



There were 222 cyber-crimes recorded within Argyll & Bute during 2021/22, which is a 7.1% reduction from 239 in 2020/21. The most commonly reported types are cyber-enabled fraud (113), threatening messages sent via social media (49) and crimes relating to indecent images/communication (40). Extensive preventative work has been carried out in this area, with a positive impact being observed.

Acquisitive Crime



18.6% increase
In vehicle crime



4.7% increase
In housebreakings

During 2021/22 acquisitive crime in A&B increased by 23.7% compared to the previous year however, this is mainly due to lower crime levels being recorded in 2020/21 during Covid-19 lockdown's. Figures for most crime types remained below the previous 5 year average. Housebreaking crimes increased by 4.7% (+4) due to slight increases in crimes at dwelling houses (+3) and commercial properties (+5) and vehicle crimes increased by 18.6% (+8) due to a slight rise in thefts of/from vehicles. In line with trends across Scotland, fraud crimes increased significantly from 148 to 200, well above the previous 5 year average (77). While shoplifting crimes also increased by 58.8% (+47) and common thefts by 20.3% (+40), both remained below the previous 5 year average. The detection rate for Group 3 Acquisitive crimes reduced slightly to 25.5% from 36.7%.



The number of bogus crimes recorded in A&B increased from 75 in 2020/21 to 92 in 2021/22, largely due to a rise in fraud crimes involving scam phone calls/texts or emails. Crimes relating to bogus workmen / callers remained low with 8 recorded across the 12 month period.

User Satisfaction / Complaints

User Satisfaction results show that in Argyll & West Dunbartonshire public confidence levels remain high with overall satisfaction levels at 70%. In 2021/22, 86 complaints against the police were recorded in A&B, which is a decrease from 116 last year. The number of allegations against officers has also reduced considerably year on year from 227 to 162.

Violent Crime & Antisocial Behaviour

Group 1 crimes of violence within A&B increased by 13.6% in 2020/21 (+12). In total 100 crimes were recorded compared to 88 the previous year, which is 31.9% above the previous 5 year average (76). Increased crime levels are primarily due to a rise in serious assaults from 30 to 41 and a rise in crimes relating to threats & extortion which have increased from 8 last year to 16, the majority of these have involved threats to disclose indecent images via social media while demanding money. Almost 60% of all serious assaults were committed by persons known to the victim and 43% occurred within a public space.

12 of the 16 threat & extortion crimes occurred online, 3 via Facebook, 3 on Whatsapp and 3 on Instagram

In line with a continued downward trend in public reported ASB, complaints relating to disorder reduced by 3.9% in 2021/22 (-1,401) while ASB related crimes increased by 13.3% (+202). The increase in ASB crime is mainly due to a 34.4% rise in common assaults (+176), with the current figure also 10.6% above the previous 5 year average. Approx. 47% of all common assaults took place in a private setting and around 1 in 4 were domestic related. Furthermore, in almost half of the crimes occurring in a public space the offender was known to the victim. Hate crimes increased from 65 to 80 and hate incidents from 59 to 73 with an increased confidence seen in the use of Third Party Reporting Centres.

480 stop searches were undertaken in 2021/22, 1 in 3 had a positive result

At the year-end the detection rate for Grp 1 crimes was 61%, which is below last year's figure (76.1%) and the previous 5 year average (81%). The detection rate for serious assaults was also lower at 70.7% versus 96.7% in the previous year and for common assault it reduced slightly from 75.8% to 72.5%. The detection rate for crimes involving threats & extortion remains low at 12.5%, likely due to the complexities involved in investigating online crime, along with the protracted time required to investigate fully.

Vulnerable Persons

Year-end data for 2021/22 shows a marginal change of 0.2% in the number of adult concerns being raised within Argyll & Bute. In total 1539 adult concerns were recorded versus 1536 in 2020/21. In contrast, child concerns continue to show a marked increase of 24.6% rising from 1912 last year to 2383 this year.



162 missing person reports were recorded by police within Argyll & Bute during 2021/22, which is an increase from 103 the previous year. While almost half of all MP reports related to adults, it is notable that 25% related to 5 repeat MP all of whom were aged 13 - 16 years.

Domestic related incidents increased by 9.5% in 2021/22. In total, 725 incidents were recorded compared to 662 in the previous year. 50.8% of incidents resulted in a crime being recorded. Domestic abuse crimes have also increased from 434 to 516 (+18.9%). Both figures remain above the previous 5 year average by 9.6% and 14.5%, respectively.

Argyll & Bute

Local Policing Plan (2020 – 2023) Quarterly Report (Qtr. 4 – 2021/22)

FRAUD PREVENTION

Continuing with our Pledge to Stop Scams across Argyll and Bute, we have carried out a number of face to face inputs during this period to vulnerable community groups. This has included Dunoon Senior Citizens Group, Strachur Hub, Oban Lorn and the Isles Mental Health Forum, Jeans Bothy as well as the Area Community Planning Groups under the Community Focus section. The community inputs took the form of the Scam Savvy Quiz which took participants through a range of scenarios, text messages, emails and phone calls to help them identify tactics used by scammers and provided hints on how to keep themselves safe. A range of funded printed material on fraud prevention including the "Little Booklet of Phone Scams", the "Little Leaflet of Cyber Scams" and no cold calling door stickers were also issued during sessions and have now been made available to Dementia Advisors and SFRS for issuing during Home Fire Safety Visits. Call Blockers have continued to be installed for those most at risk. Year to date, this has seen 130 call blockers being installed. It is estimated that over the 4 year life of these units they will have blocked 97,326 nuisance calls (of which 26,688 will have been scam phone calls), prevented 157 scams, saved vulnerable households £464,828, led to a reduction of £431,761 in NHS, social care & police costs, and an increase in wellbeing & quality of life valued at £515,511 - total benefits of £1,412,100.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

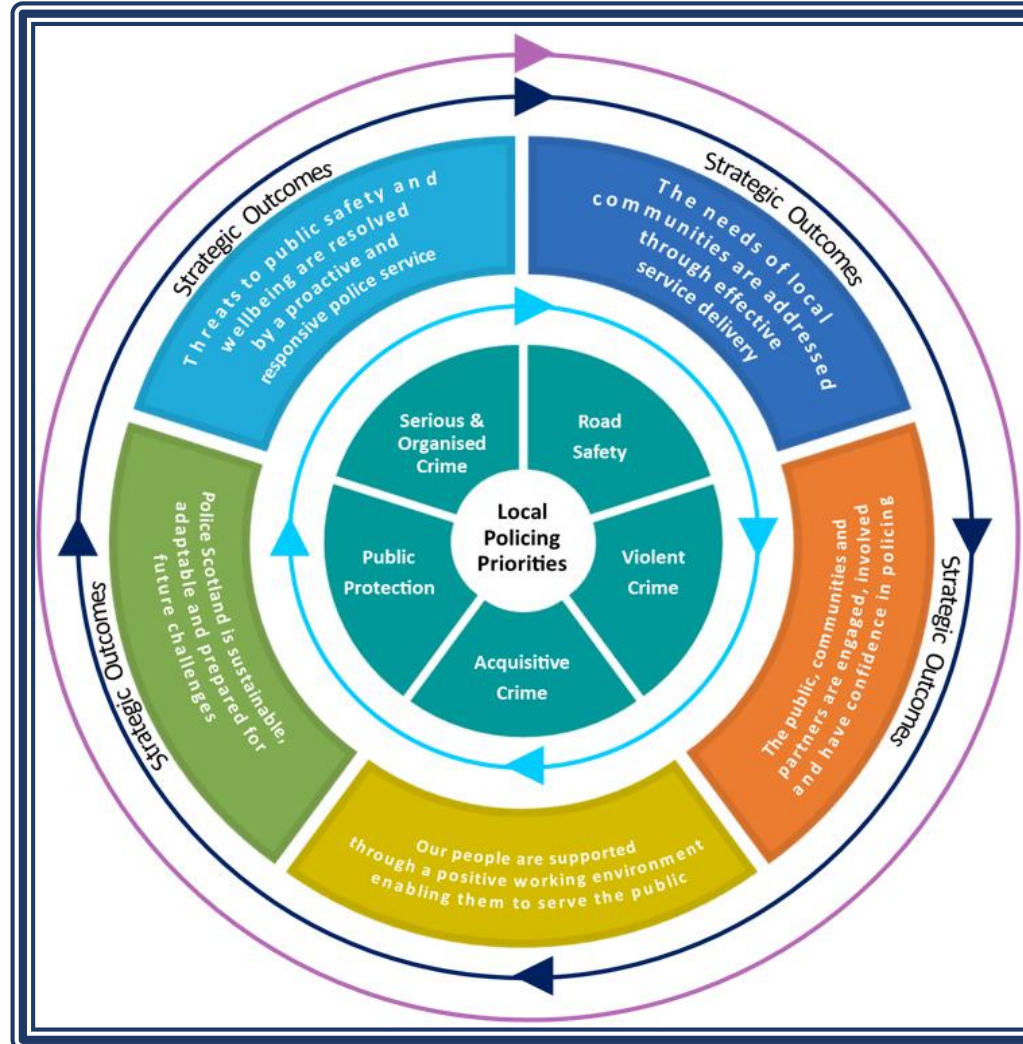
In January 2022, a new Youth Engagement Officer was appointed for Helensburgh and Cowal. This has enabled continuation of youth engagement activity that was in place pre-Covid 19. This activity has included inputs for secondary school pupils on Online Safety which also included a session for parents and carers on "using the internet safety".

Cyber Scotland Week was held in March 2022 which included a free online webinar for everyone in our community hosted by Neighbourhood Watch Scotland. This included an input on "Child Protection – their safety, our responsibility" which aimed to acknowledge the risks faced by young people and how this has changed over the years.

KEEP SAFE IN ARGYLL AND BUTE

On Wednesday 23rd March 2022, Police Scotland celebrated National Keep Safe Awareness Day. New premises have been brought on board during 2021/22 included Argyll and Bute Council Service Points at Helensburgh, Dunoon, Lochgilhead and Oban, Campbeltown Shopper-Aid, Carr Gomm in Dunoon and University of Highlands and Islands Resource Centres in Dunoon, Helensburgh, Oban, Rothesay and Tobermory. This brings the total number of Keep Safe premises in Argyll and Bute to 60 which is the 3rd highest number in Scotland.

We also trained a further 2 local police officers as Keep Safe Ambassadors who can provide inputs to community groups with adults living with learning difficulties and young people. This will help develop a zero tolerance approach to hate crime within our communities.



ROAD SAFETY

Our Road Safety Campaign continued into the start of 2022 focussing on winter driving and drink/drug driving. Roads Policing officers carried out a number of vehicle stops with detections for those under the influence of alcohol and drugs, careless driving, no insurance, speeding and other road traffic offences.

February 2022 saw the National Seatbelt Campaign with Roads Policing Officers in partnership with Road Safety Scotland engaging with members of the public in supermarket car parks to focus on seatbelts as well as ensuring child seats were properly fitted and secured in vehicles.

Education messages to support changes to the Highway Code in January 2022, saw us push out messaging around safe passing distances for vulnerable road users including cyclists and horse riders. This work will continue into 2022 with more community days of action including Close Pass and Lose the Blinkers.

PARTNERSHIP APPROACH TO WATER SAFETY

Minister for Community Safety, Ash Regan attended Loch Lomond to launch the national Water Safety Action Plan. This included upgrading of public rescue equipment, new 999 signage with grid references and what3words location information, new hazard warning signs. This accompanies work with school pupils in and around the National Park to increase education and raising awareness of water safety risks at hotspot locations.

RURAL CRIME PREVENTION

On Friday 11th February 2022, local partners from across Argyll and Bute gathered at Carloonan Farm, Inveraray to launch the new livestock worrying bill that is now live across Scotland. Representation included Police Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council, National Farmers Union Scotland, Dalriada Vets, Emma Harper MSP and Jenny Minto MSP. The Bill will significantly increase the powers of investigation and penalties to tackle the ongoing problem of dog attacks and worrying on livestock. Our message is clear, it's your dog and it's your responsibility. Don't allow your dog to approach animals or people uninvited and where possible avoid anywhere there is livestock, particularly around lambing season. A number of waterproof fence post-ers have been provided to community councils, community groups and others in the community to help educate people walking their dogs to do so responsibly and lawfully.

LOOKING AHEAD

- **Planning for Summer Safety.**
- **Distress Brief Intervention training for local officers.**
- **Roll out of Naloxone.**
- **Additional funding forthcoming from Police Scotland to enable Dementia Safeguarding Initiative and additional fraud prevention tools.**

HATE CRIME

February 2022 was LGBT History Month, with Police Scotland remaining firmly committed to delivering equality and diversity across the Service.

March 2022 also saw the launch of the National Hate Crime Campaign with the aim to counter under-reporting of hate crime, targeting both victims and bystanders.

POLICING IN A DIGITAL WORLD

Cybercrime poses a real threat to our communities, therefore it's critical that we adapt our policing to better respond to these incidents. This has led to the creation of the Policing in a Digital World Programme which includes a First Responder Guide for our front line officers.

Keeping People Safe in Argyll & Bute

Our Purpose:- To improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland

Road Safety & Road Crime



Overall road casualties decreased by 3 in Argyll & Bute at the end of Qtr.1 compared to the previous year. Despite the overall reduction, fatalities increased from 1 to 6 in Qtr.1. Both serious and slight injury incidents have reduced from 16 to 11 (-5) and 16 to 13 (-3) respectively.

At the end of Qtr.1, the total number of motor vehicle related offences recorded remain relatively unchanged with 668 crimes compared to 662 the previous year. The current figure is also 3.7% (n=26) below the previous 5 year average. Drink/ drug driving offences have seen the highest increase compared to last year (+24), followed by dangerous and careless driving offences with 29 compared to 15 crimes (+14) and 72 compared to 61 (+11) respectively. All 3 crimes are currently above the previous 5 year average. The increase has been offset by a 19.2% reduction in speeding offences from 240 to 194 crimes (-46), while drivers neglect of traffic directions have also seen a notable reduction of 59% (n=26).

Public Protection



During Qtr. 1, Group 2 sexual crimes increased slightly by 7.5% from 53 to 57 when compared to the last year. The increase is due to an increase in indecent/sexual assault crimes from 18 to 23 year on year, with the current figure 35.3% above the previous 5 year average (17). Rape offences have reduced by 2 from last year but remain above the 5 year average. Around 47% of all rape and sexual assault crimes related to non-recent reports, 67% occurred in a private setting and 25% were domestic related. Crimes relating to indecent images / communication have increased slightly from 14 to 20, with almost half being committed by persons known to the victim.

89% of rape & sexual assault crimes were committed by persons known to the victim.

At the end of Qtr.1, the detection rate for Group 2 sexual crime overall reduced from 62.3% to 54.4% compared to last year. This remains slightly above the previous 5 year average (53.1%). Reflecting high levels of non-recent reporting, the detection rate for rape has reduced slightly (from 7 to 3) and indecent/sexual assault (from 17 to 9) however several investigations are still ongoing.

Serious & Organised Crime



Across Argyll & West Dunbartonshire 4 persons linked to serious and organised crime have been arrested and £15,530 seized under POCA.

Drugs supply crimes increased slightly during Qtr. 1 with 11 crimes recorded compared to 8 the previous year. Drug possession charges reduced by 5.3% year on year from 95 to 90. Both figures remain below the previous 5 year average.



There were 18 cyber-crimes recorded within Argyll & Bute during Qtr. 1, which is a significant reduction of 64.7% from 51 last year. Cyber-enabled frauds were the most commonly recorded crimes (n=8) followed by threatening and abusive messages sent via social media (n=5).

Violent Crime & Antisocial Behaviour



Group 1 crimes of violence increased by 58.1% in Qtr.1 (+18). In total, 49 crimes were recorded compared to 31 the previous year, which is above the previous 5 year average (21). Increased crime levels are primarily due to a rise in offences relating to cruel and unnatural treatment of children from 5 to 15 crimes. These relate to 11 crimes relating to historic abuse at a former children's home in Rhu. Serious assaults have also risen from 11 to 17 crimes, which is 85% above the previous 5 year average (9). The remaining Group 1 crimes have seen little change.

11 of the 17 serious assaults occurred in a public space and 11 crimes were committed by persons known to the victim.

In line with a continued downward trend in public reported ASB, complaints relating to disorder reduced by 36.1% in Qtr.1 (-309) while ASB related crimes have increased by 13.1% (+54). These are in line with the previous 5 year average (n=464). The increase in ASB crime is mainly due to a 9.5% increase in common assaults (+16) and a 14.5% increase in crimes relating to breach of the peace and threatening and abusive behaviour. Common assaults are also 21.5% above the previous 5 year average (151.4). Nearly 46% of common assaults occurred within a private setting with 45% being domestic related. In almost half of all public space crimes, the offender was known to the victim.

153 stop searches were undertaken YTD, 29% had a positive result

At the end of Qtr.1, the detection rate for Group 1 crimes was 49%, which is slightly below last year's figure (51.6%) and the previous 5 year average (66%). The detection rate for serious assaults has risen by 21.9% and is currently high at 76.5%. The detection rate for cruel and unnatural treatment of children is low at 26.7% however this is reflected by non-recent reporting and protracted investigations. The detection rate for common assault is unchanged at 72.3% and is slightly below the previous 5 year average (78.7%).

Vulnerable Persons



Figures at the end of Qtr.1 show an increase of 24.6% in the number of adult concerns being raised. In total 435 adult concerns were recorded versus 349 the previous year. Child concerns have also seen an increase of 11.7% rising from 555 last year to 620 this year.

39 missing person reports were recorded by police within Argyll & Bute during Qtr. 1, which is a slight increase from 32 the previous year. The increase is largely due to a rise in MP reports relating to children from 9 to 19 year on year. Almost half of the 19 reports relating to looked after children.

Domestic related incidents increased by 34.5% in Qtr. 1. In total, 187 incidents were recorded compared to 139 the previous year. 51.3% of incidents resulted in a crime being recorded. Domestic abuse crimes have also increased from 108 to 138 (+27.8%). Both figures remain above the previous 5 year average by 20% and 23.2%, respectively.

Acquisitive Crime



61.5% decrease In vehicle crime



11.8% decrease In housebreakings

During Qtr. 1, acquisitive crime increased by 32.3% compared to the previous year (164 to 217 crimes) with the current figure above the previous 5 year average (n=197). The increase is largely due to a rise in common thefts (from 57 to 85) and shopliftings (from 19 to 51). Both figures are above the 5 year average. Fraud crimes have remained relatively consistent with 47 compared to 45 crimes year on year however remain above the previous 5 year average (n=25). Housebreakings have decreased at the end of Qtr. 1, due to a 36.4% decrease in housebreakings at domestic dwellings (from 11 to 7). The detection rate for Group 3 acquisitive crime has increased from 26.8% to 30.4% which is slightly below the 5 year average (33.1%).



The number of bogus crimes recorded in A&B remained fairly consistent compared to last year with 19 crimes recorded compared to 20 at the end of Qtr. 1. Approx. 89% of all crimes recorded related to social engineering frauds involving scam phone calls/emails or WhatsApp messages.

Argyll & Bute

Local Policing Plan (2020 – 2023) Quarterly Report (Qtr. 1 – 2022/23)

User Satisfaction / Complaints

User Satisfaction results show that in Argyll & West Dunbartonshire public confidence levels remain high with overall satisfaction levels at 73.4% at the end of Qtr. 1. 19 complaints against the police were recorded in A&B, which is a decrease from 30 last year. The number of allegations against officers has also reduced year on year from 74 to 63.

Keeping Ukrainian Families Safe

The well-known Keep Safe initiative has continued to develop in West Dunbartonshire. There are now 60 Keep Safe Places throughout Argyll and Bute with recent developments including having Keep Safe materials translated into Ukrainian. This will enable anyone seeking safety the ability to access these premises by knowing their remit and where to find them. Argyll and West Dunbartonshire Police Division have been involved in partnership discussions regarding Homes for Ukraine and ensuring full support is available to those from Ukraine now residing in Argyll and Bute with officers scheduled to attend the Ukrainian Welcome Fayres in Dunoon and Oban during August.

Scam Savvy Quiz

Fraud prevention work has continued with the "Scam Savvy Quiz" making its way around Argyll and Bute. This has included Hope Kitchen in Oban, Grey Matters Active Ageing in Helensburgh, Sandbank Seniors in Dunoon and the Millhouse and District Women's Institute. Further funding for much needed call blockers has been received with more devices being installed at addresses of our most vulnerable to keep them safe from scams in their own home.

Friday Night Football

Working with partners in Helensburgh including Ministry of Defence Police, Live Argyll, and Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, we have delivered football sessions each Friday evening during the summer holidays to young people aged between 12 and 17. There has been a consistently impressive turnout of between 40-70 attendees, both males and females. This has encouraged positive relationships between Police and the young people whilst enhancing awareness of the positive impact the young people can have on their communities.

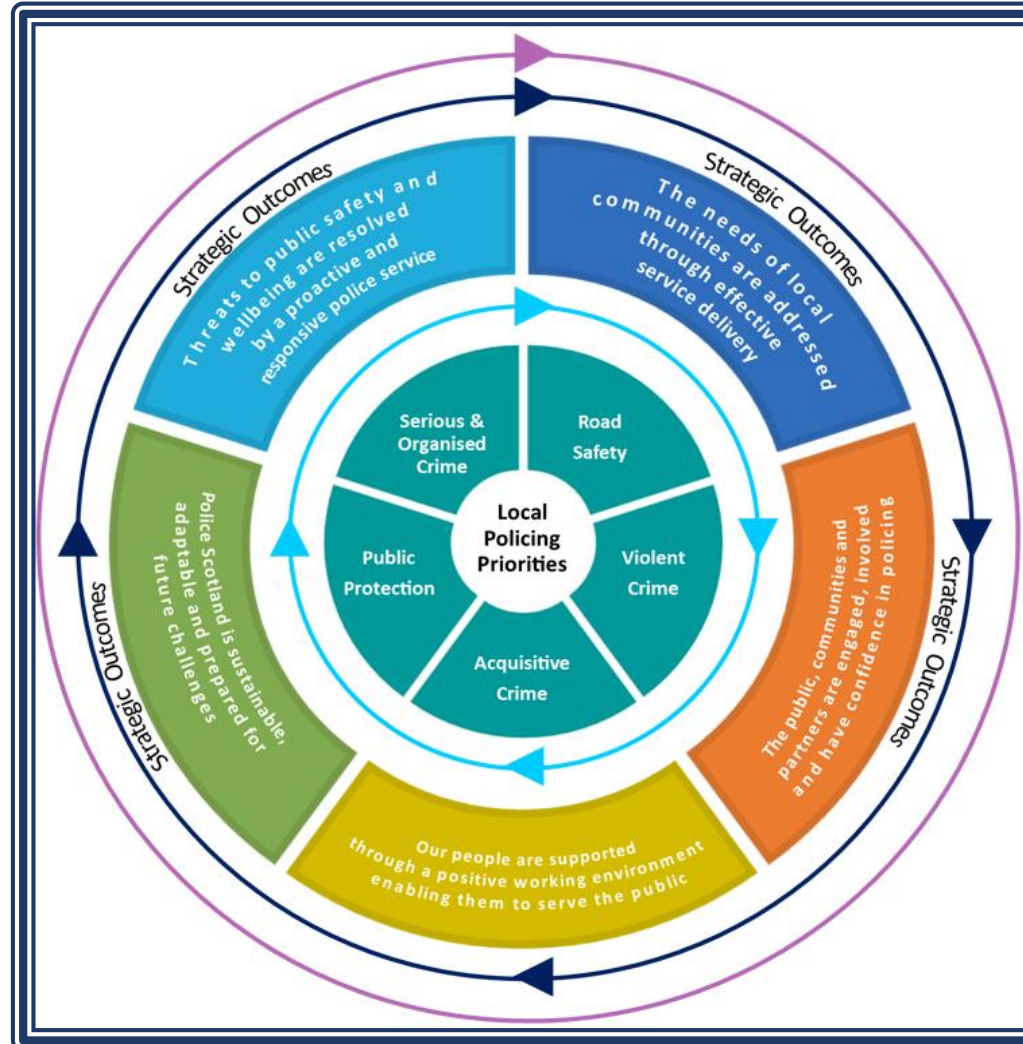
A new post for a Youth Engagement Officer dedicated to Cowal and Bute has been advertised to enable more of this excellent engagement, prevention and diversionary work to take place.

Internet Safety

Internet safety inputs continue with all primary 7 pupils in Dunoon and Helensburgh taking part to highlight the dangers that can be posed online as well as providing advice to use the internet safely. Information has been provided to teachers that can be disseminated to parents to support them while they are online as well.

Water Safety

Water safety inputs and workshops have been delivered to S1-S4 pupils from Dunoon Grammar School and Hermitage Academy alongside partners from Scottish Fire and Rescue Service. These inputs aimed to educate young people on the dangers around water and how to respond should they get into difficulty.



Anti-Social Behaviour Disclosures

Dedicated Anti-Social Behaviour and Disclosure officers provide real time disclosures to Local Authority and Registered Social Landlords of offenders and request warnings where appropriate. These roles monitor repeat addresses of ASB closely liaising with the relevant partners to tackle these addresses as quick as possible after the ASB was reported. This has been received well by the relevant partners and several warnings have been issued in response.

Oban Summer Safety Action Plan

This aims to support the prevention of anti-social behaviour within the Oban area by engaging in proactive high visibility patrols at key times and locations. This has also included additional licensed premises visits enabling officers to utilise cocaine wipes funded by the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. These wipes are a positive engagement tool used between Police Scotland, licensees and bar staff to detect any drug misuse within licensed premises.

Motorcycle Safety – Live Facebook Q&A

Our first Facebook Live Q&A session on motorcycle safety was met with a positive response. There were a number of excellent questions posed by motorcyclists, responded to in live time by our Roads Policing Officers. The summer motorcycle action plan also started in June which is a coordinated approach between several local authorities meaning the main routes used by touring motorcyclists have additional police presence. This will ensure safety of all on our road networks and has seen several detections for speeding and other road traffic offences.

Missing Person Co-ordinator

A new dedicated missing person coordinator is now in place with work ongoing to make introductions with the local Looked After and Accommodated Establishments in Argyll and Bute to break down barriers and raise awareness of missing person procedures.

This will assist Police Scotland meet their obligations as a corporate parent.

We are looking at opportunities to learn from the 'Respect' Programme and options to utilise our Youth Engagement Officers to deliver against the outcomes and provide support and reduce harms for Care Experienced Young People. Work is also ongoing in relation to repeat missing persons to ensure adequate support is in place for these individuals.

Forward Look

The Offensive Weapons Act 2019 forms part of the UK Government's response to the rise in serious violence.

The Act creates new powers and amends existing legislation with the first part of this coming into effect in June 2022 with further amendments in December 2022.

Your Police – Your Local Policing Plan

The 2020-2023 Local Policing Plan sets out the priorities that we have been focussing on in Argyll and Bute. Work is ongoing to revise this for 2023-2026 and understanding the views and priorities of our diverse communities is fundamental to how Police Scotland responds to the needs of the public. Our public engagement activities help us improve how we deliver our policing services in local communities, ensuring they are accessible for everyone.

The "Your Police" survey will help us improve how we deliver local policing services. The survey is designed to be completed online whether you work, visit or reside in Argyll and Bute with easy read formats available – visit consult.scotland.police.uk

Children & Young People have the best possible start

Education, skills & training maximise opportunities for all Page 558



**Argyll & Bute Performance Report Q4 -
1st January 2022- 31st March 2022**



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**



Argyll & Bute Performance Report

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Local Fire and Rescue Service Plan Priorities

The Local Fire and Rescue Service Plan has been developed to set out the priorities and objectives within Argyll & Bute and allows our local authority partners to scrutinise the performance outcomes of these priorities. We will continue to work closely with our partners in Argyll & Bute to ensure we are all “**Working Together for a Safer Scotland**” through targeting risks to our communities at a local level.

The plan has been developed to complement key partnership activity embedded across Argyll and Bute's Community Plan and associated Delivery and Thematic plans. Through partnership working we will seek to deliver continuous improvement in our performance and effective service delivery in our area of operations.

The Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Argyll & Bute identified six areas for demand reduction and is subject to regular monitoring and reporting through the Police & Fire and Rescue Committee. A summary of the priorities and current activity is detailed below with further detail and analysis contained within this performance report.

	Accidental Dwelling Fires	Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	Unintentional Injury and Harm	Deliberate Fire Setting	Non-Domestic Fire Safety	Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals
Cowal Ward	1	0	3	0	0	11
Dunoon Ward	2	1	2	0	1	4
Helensburgh and Lomond South Ward	5	0	1	4	0	8
Helensburgh Central Ward	2	0	1	2	1	15
Isle of Bute Ward	3	0	3	1	0	13
Kintyre and the Islands Ward	2	0	3	1	0	19
Lomond North Ward	1	0	2	2	0	10
Mid Argyll Ward	2	0	2	6	1	16
Oban North and Lorn Ward	2	0	2	2	0	20
Oban South and the Isles Ward	1	0	1	1	1	29
South Kintyre Ward	0	0	0	1	0	11
Total Incidents	21	1	20	20	4	156







Year on Year Change	▲ 0%	▲ 0%	◆ 18%	◆ 43%	● -33%	◆ 28%
3 Year Average Change	▲ -2%	● -56%	● -11%	◆ 8%	● -21%	● -6%
5 Year Average Change	◆ 1%	● -17%	▲ -4%	◆ 16%	● -7%	◆ 6%

About the statistics within this report

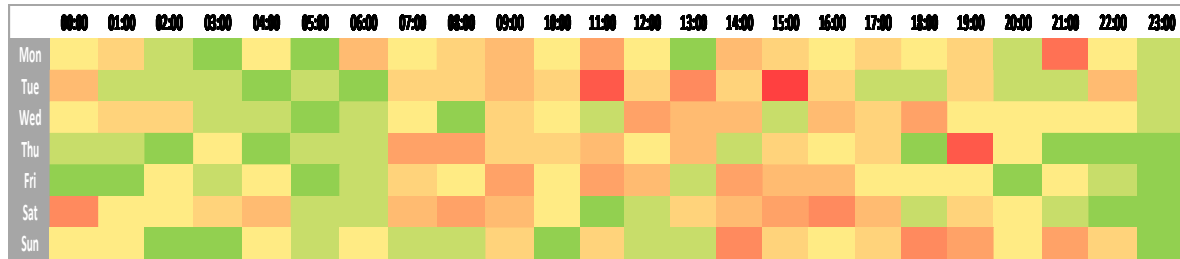
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- Activity levels have reduced by more than 5%
- ▲ Activity levels have reduced by up to 5%
- ◆ Activity levels have increased overall

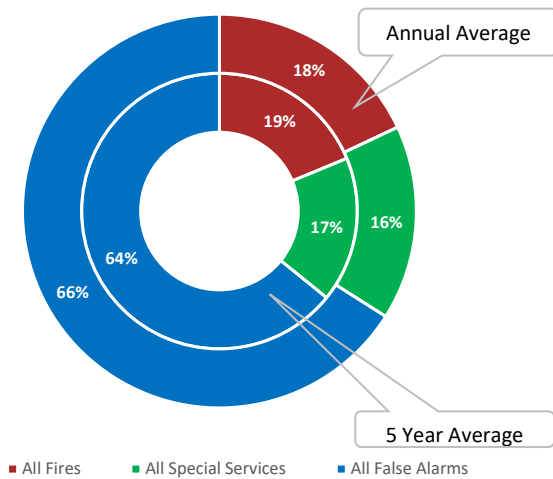
Argyll & Bute Activity Summary

 <p>72 fires primary & secondary</p> <p>-14% (-12)</p>	 <p>64 special services</p> <p>3% (2)</p>	 <p>264 false alarms</p> <p>12% (29)</p>
 <p>400 total number of incidents</p> <p>5% (19)</p>	 <p>21 fire & non-fire casualties</p> <p>11% (2)</p>	 <p>£307,320 economic cost of ufas incidents</p>

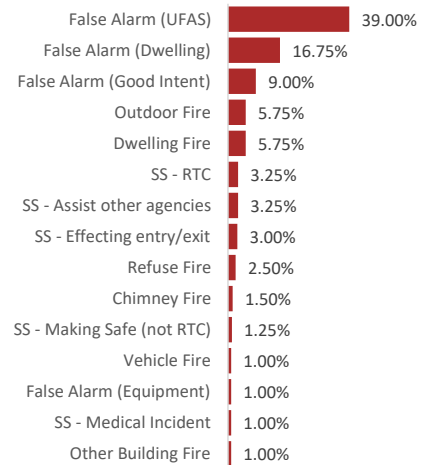
Activity by Time of Day



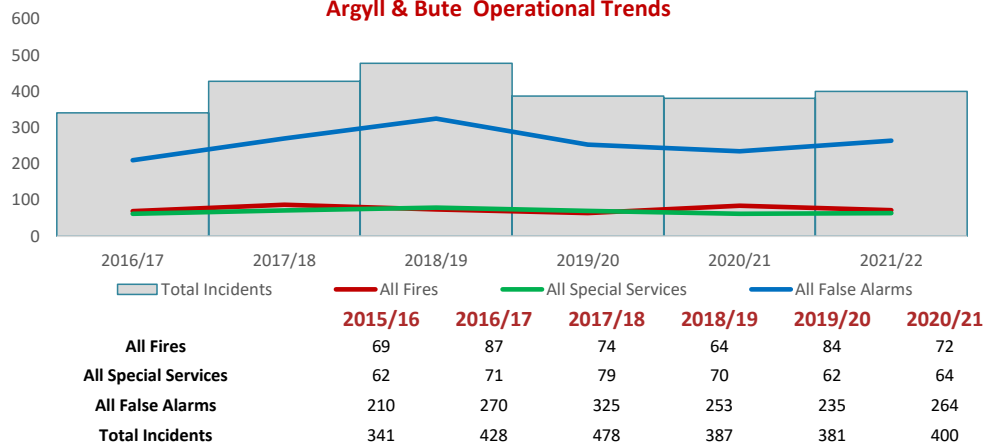
Incidents by Classification



Top 15 Incident Types by % of Total Incidents



Argyll & Bute Operational Trends



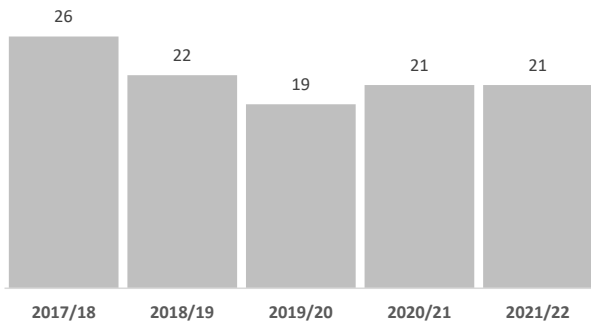
Domestic Safety - Accidental Dwelling Fires



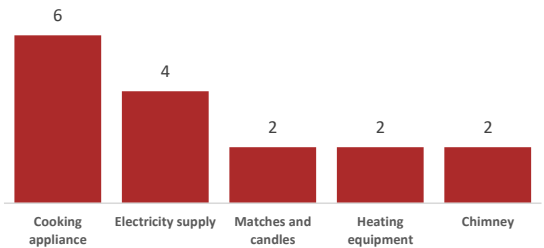
Performance Summary

Year on Year 3 Year Average 5 Year Average
 ▲ 0% ▲ -2% ◆ 1%

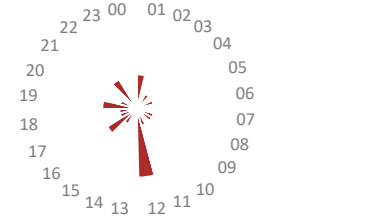
Accidental Dwelling Fires to Date



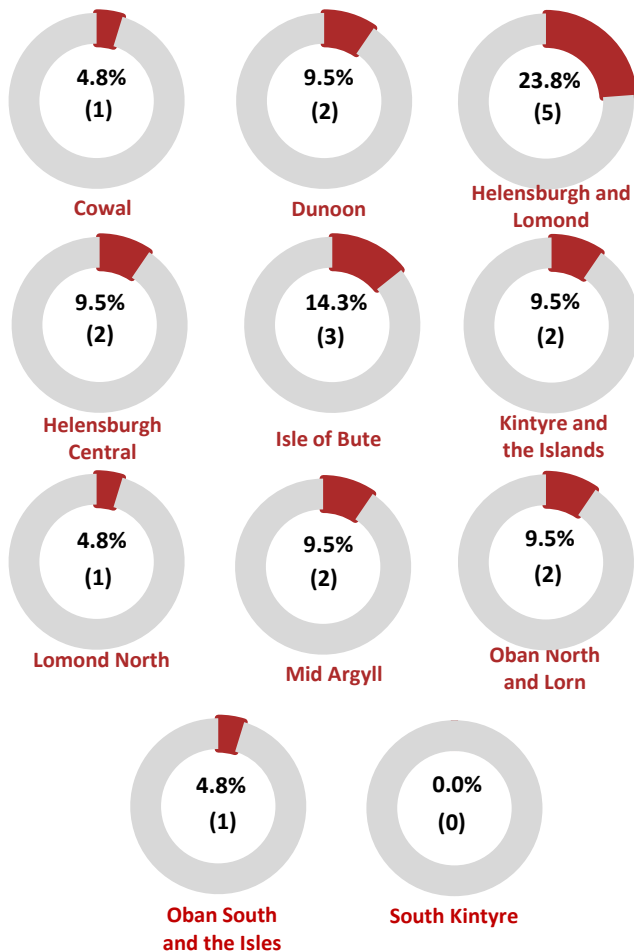
Main Source of Ignition



Accidental Dwelling Fires by Time of Day



Accidental Dwelling Fires Activity by Ward (% share)



Severity of Accidental Dwelling Fires



No Firefighting Action
57.1% (12)



Direct Firefighting
0.0% (0)



Heat/Smoke Damage Only
47.6% (10)



No fire Damage
76.2% (16)

Human Factors



Distraction
14.3% (3)



Alcohol/Drug Impairment
14.3% (3)

Automatic Detection & Actuation



Detection Present
85.7% (18)



Detection Actuated
88.9% (16)



Calls Made via Linked Alarms
76.2% (16)

Domestic Safety - Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties



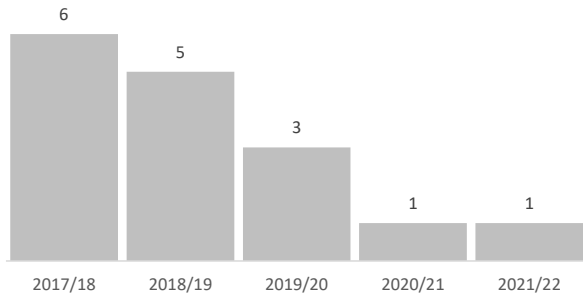
Performance Summary

Year on Year ▲ 0%

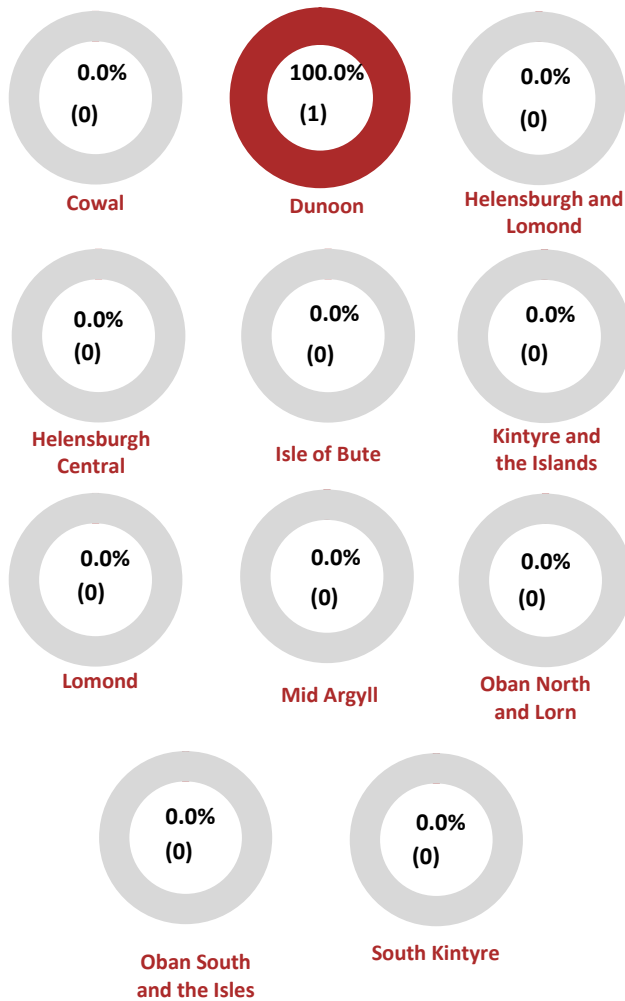
3 Year Average ● -56%

5 Year Average ● -17%

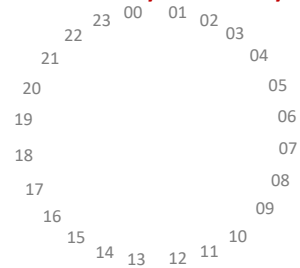
Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties Year to Date



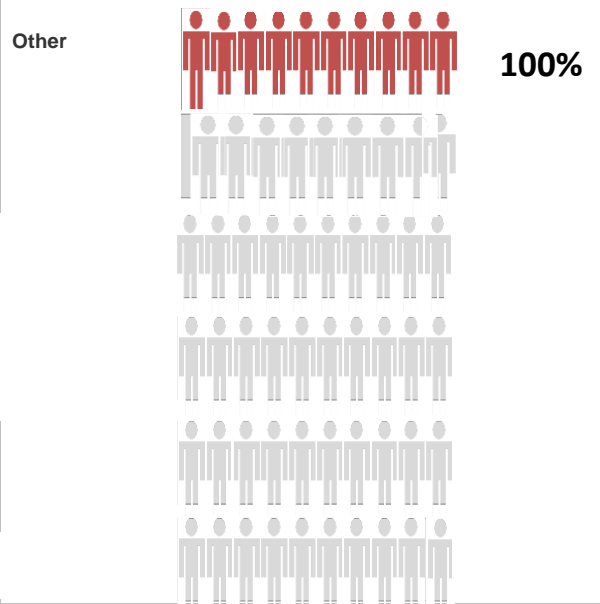
Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties by Ward (% share)



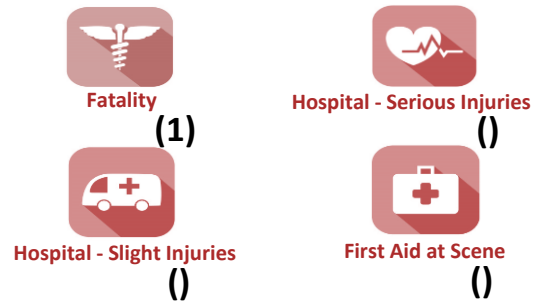
Fire Casualties by Time of Day



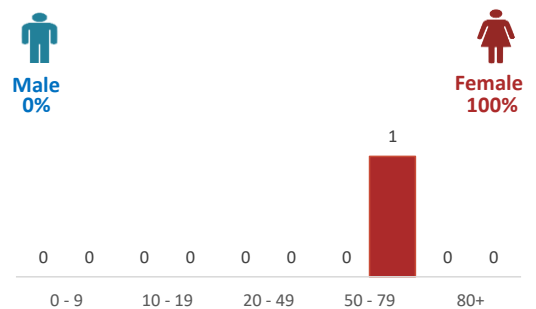
Nature of Injury



Extent of Harm



Age / Gender Profile



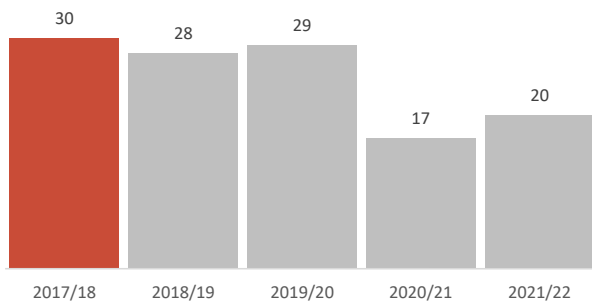
Unintentional Injury or Harm



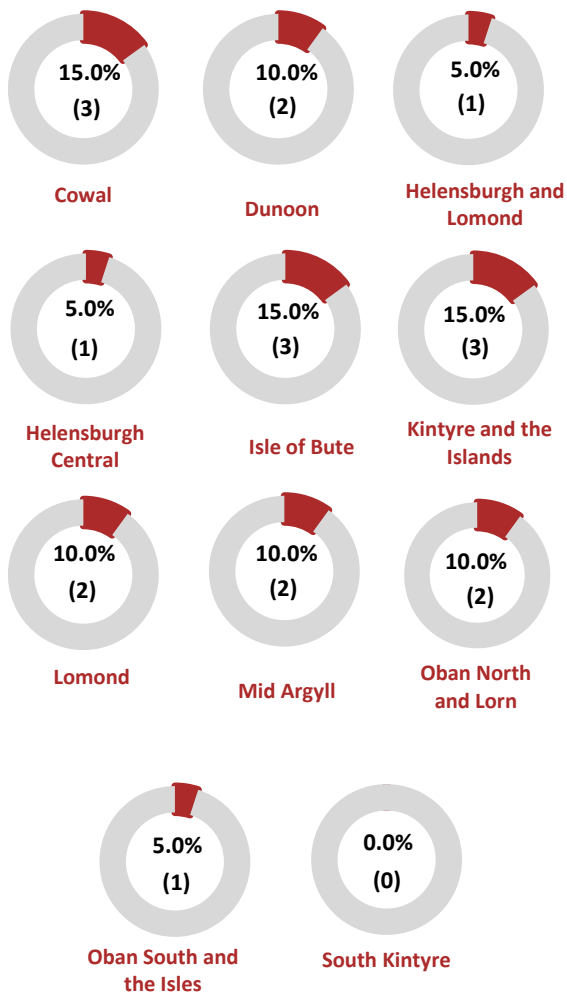
Performance Summary

Year on Year ◆ 18% 3 Year Average ● -11% 5 Year Average ▲ -4%

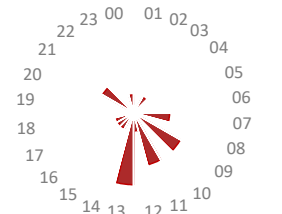
Non-Fire Casualties Year to Date



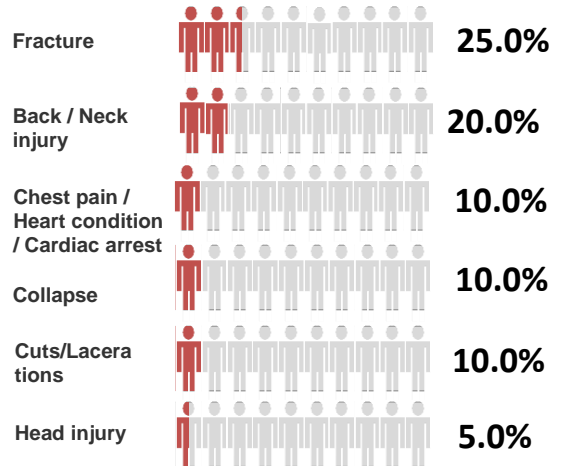
Non-Fire Casualties by Ward (% share)



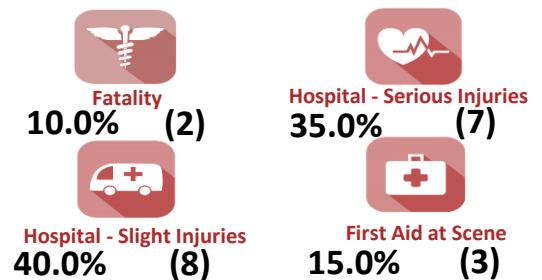
Non-Fire Casualties by Time of Day



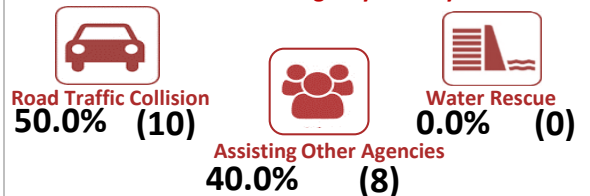
Nature of Injury



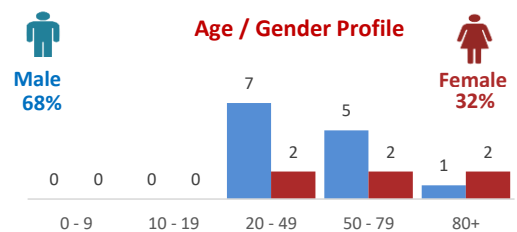
Extent of Harm



Non-Fire Emergency Activity



Age / Gender Profile



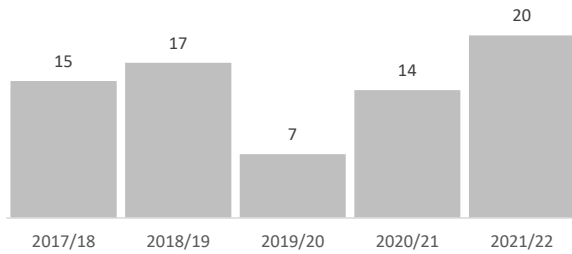
Deliberate Fire Setting



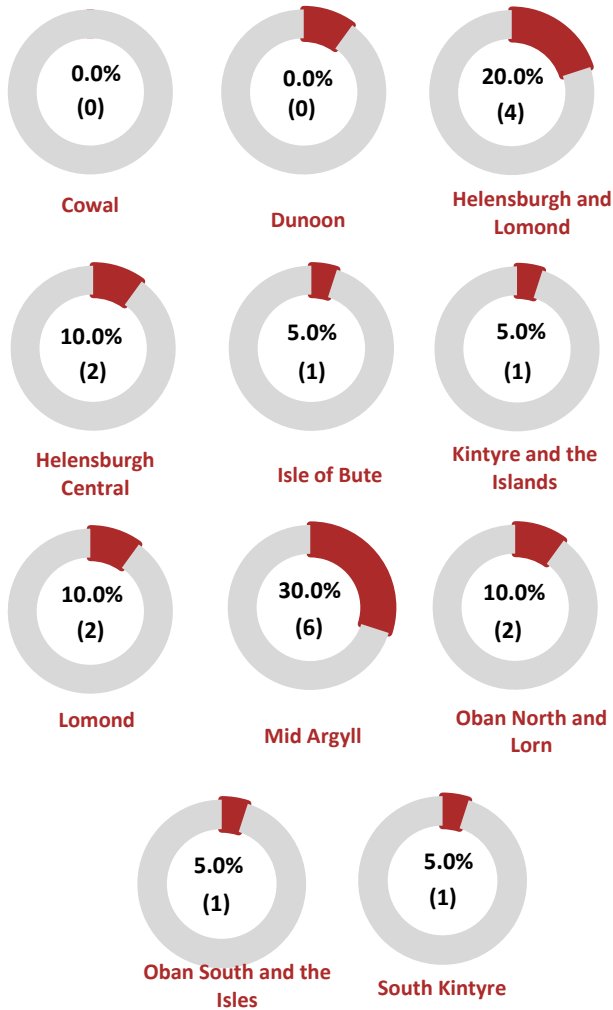
Performance Summary

Year on Year	3 Year Average	5 Year Average
43%	8%	16%

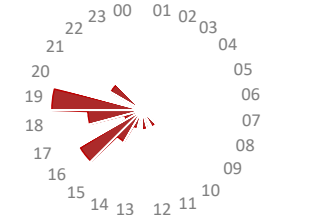
Deliberate Fires Year to Date



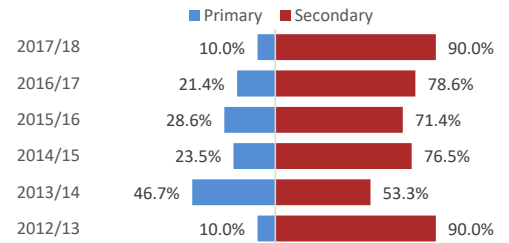
Deliberate Fires by Ward (% share)



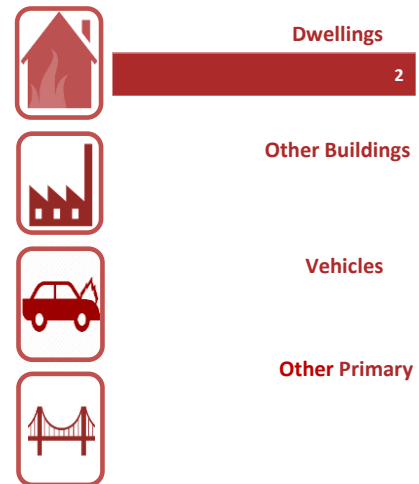
Deliberate Fires by Time of Day



Deliberate Fires by Classification



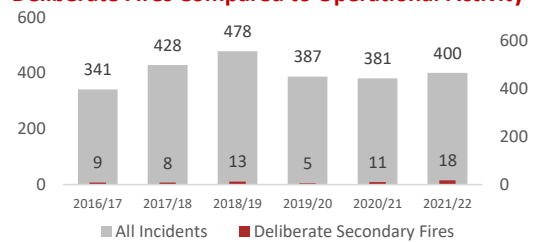
Primary Fire Ratio by Activity Type



Secondary Fire Ratio by Activity Type



Deliberate Fires Compared to Operational Activity



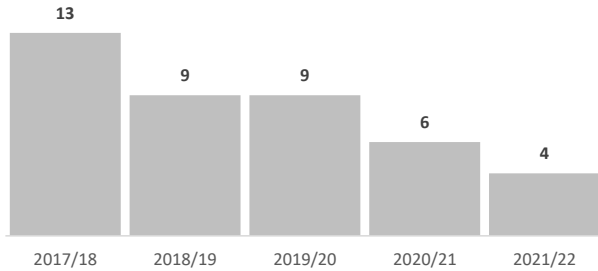
Non Domestic Fire Safety



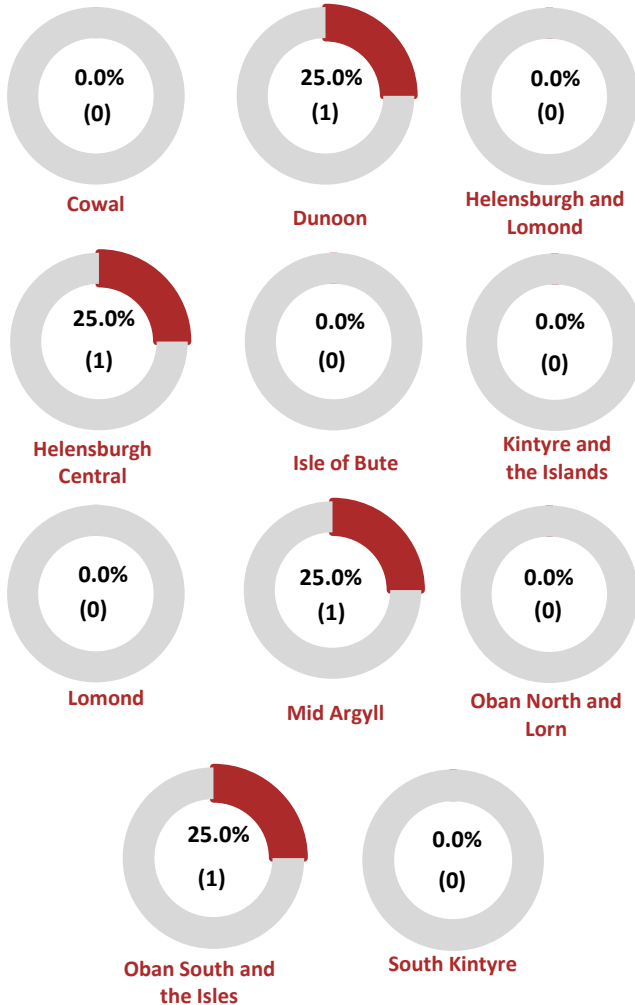
Performance Summary

Year on Year: -33%
 3 Year Average: -21%
 5 Year Average: -7%

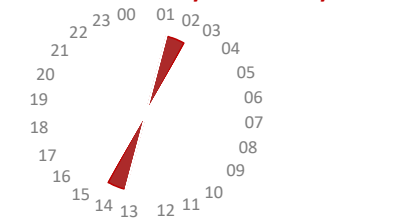
Non-Domestic Fires Year to Date



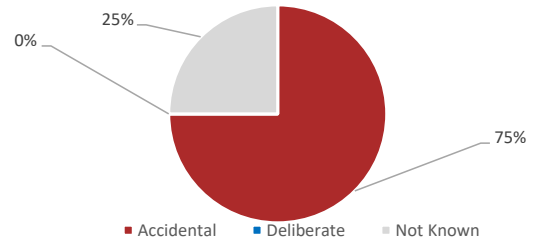
Non-Domestic Fires by Ward (% share)



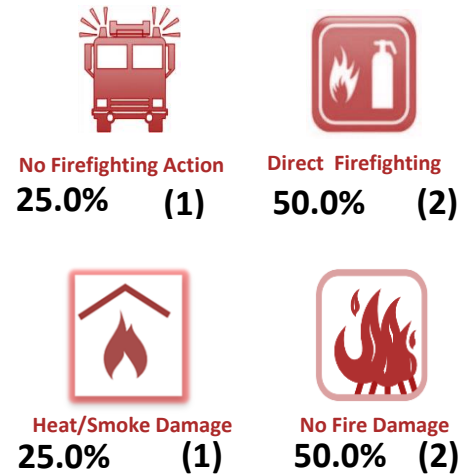
Non-Domestic Fires by Time of Day



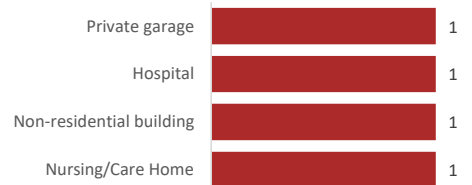
Non-Domestic Fires by Nature of Origin



Severity of Non-Domestic Fires



Non-Domestic Fires by Premises Type

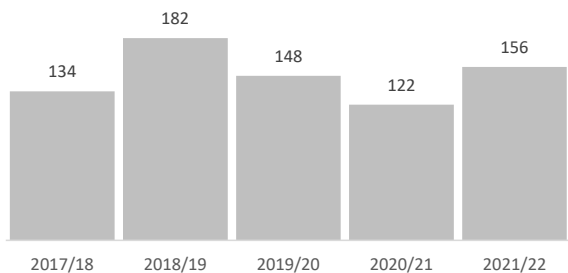


Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

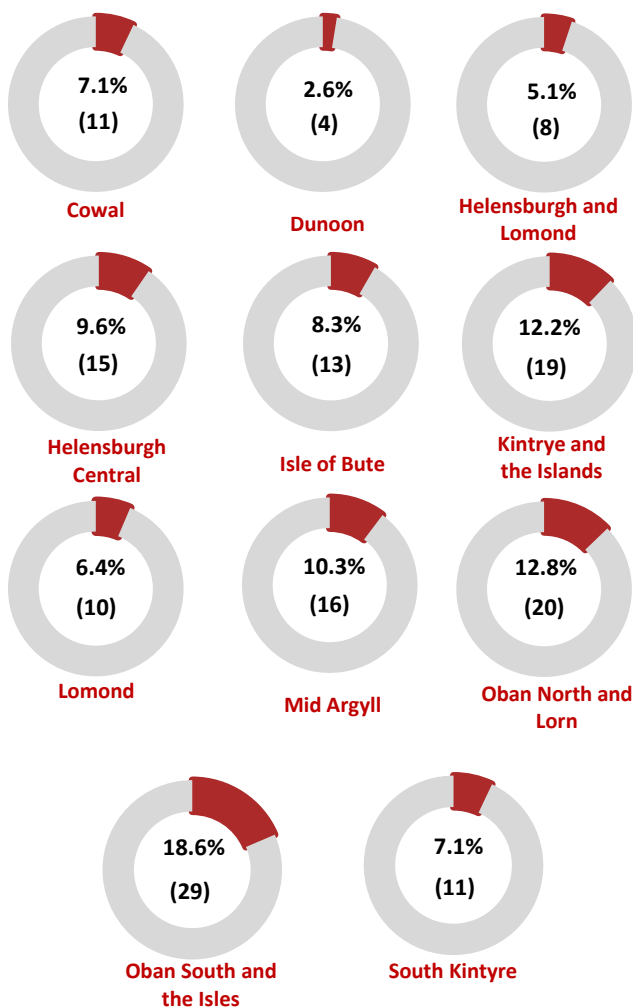


Performance Summary
 Year on Year: 28%
 3 Year Average: -6%
 5 Year Average: 6%

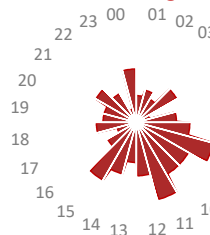
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Year to Date



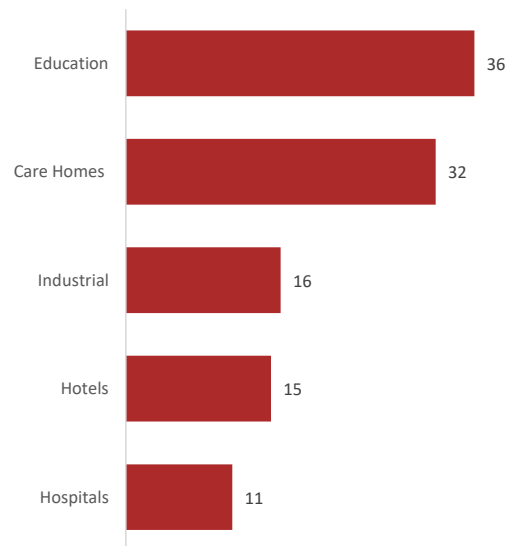
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals by Ward (% share)



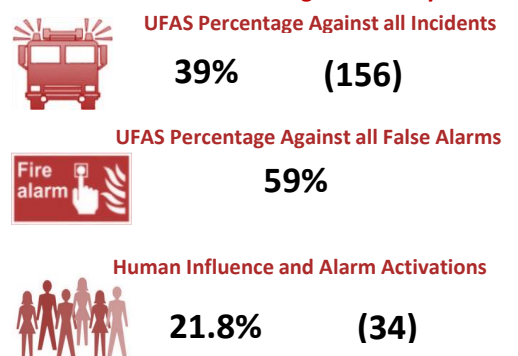
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals by Time of Day



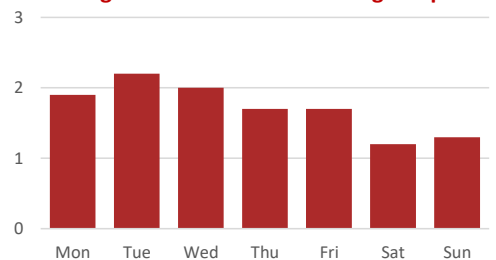
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals - Top 5 Premises



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Activity Ratios



Average Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals per Day





**Argyll & Bute Performance Report
Q1 - 1st April 2022 - 30th June 2023**



**SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**
Working together for a safer Scotland

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**



Argyll & Bute Performance Report

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	Accidental Dwelling Fires	Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties	Unintentional Injury and Harm	Deliberate Fire Setting	Non-Domestic Fire Safety	Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals
Cowal Ward	2	0	5	1	1	12
Dunoon Ward	0	0	4	1	0	14
Helensburgh and Lomond South Ward	1	0	0	8	0	5
Helensburgh Central Ward	4	0	1	7	1	15
Isle of Bute Ward	0	0	1	6	1	15
Kintyre and the Islands Ward	0	0	1	0	0	15
Lomond North Ward	1	0	2	6	0	9
Mid Argyll Ward	1	0	4	3	1	16
Oban North and Lorn Ward	0	0	2	5	1	7
Oban South and the Isles Ward	1	0	5	2	0	23
South Kintyre Ward	1	0	0	0	1	6
Total Incidents	11	0	25	39	6	137







Year on Year Change	● -39%	● -100%	◆ 92%	● -32%	● -50%	◆ 16%
3 Year Average Change	● -24%	● -50%	◆ 7%	● -15%	◆ 4%	● -6%
5 Year Average Change	◆ 14%	▲ 0%	◆ 31%	◆ 21%	◆ 16%	◆ 27%

About the statistics within this report

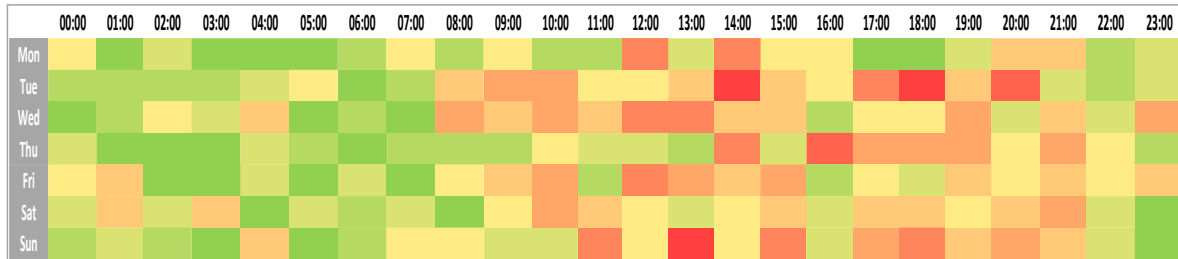
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- Activity levels have reduced by more than 5%
- ▲ Activity levels have reduced by up to 5%
- ◆ Activity levels have increased overall

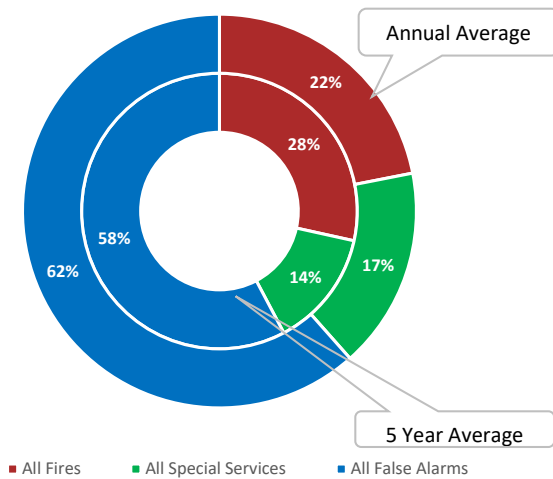
Argyll & Bute Activity Summary

 <p>94 fires primary & secondary</p> <p>-39% (-61)</p>	 <p>71 special services</p> <p>-4% (-3)</p>	 <p>264 false alarms</p> <p>-7% (-19)</p>
 <p>429 total number of incidents</p> <p>-16% (-83)</p>	 <p>25 fire & non-fire casualties</p> <p>56% (9)</p>	 <p>£269,890 economic cost of ufas incidents</p>

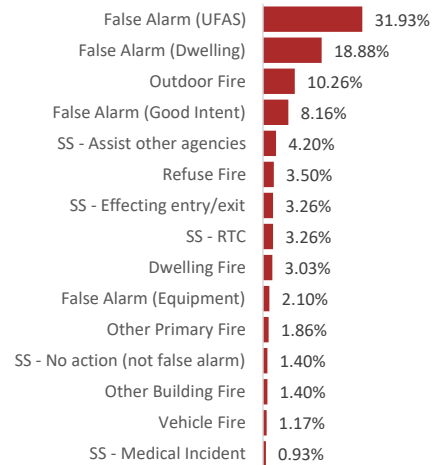
Activity by Time of Day



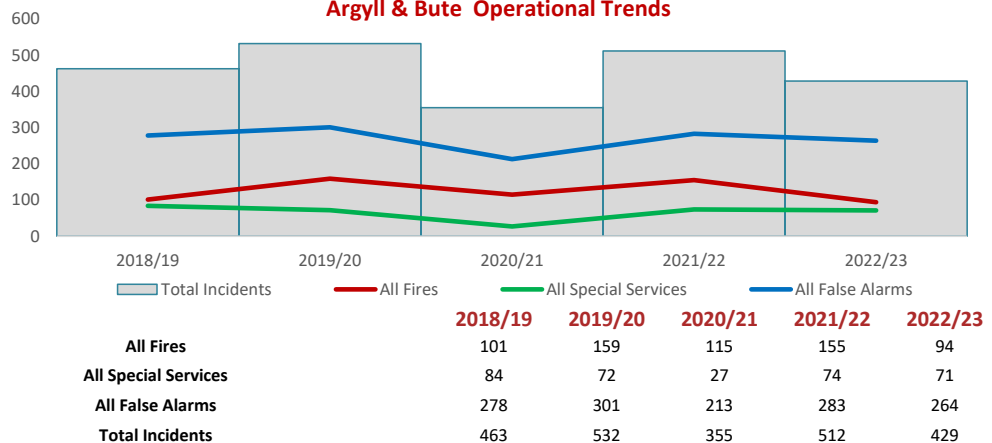
Incidents by Classification



Top 15 Incident Types by % of Total Incidents



Argyll & Bute Operational Trends



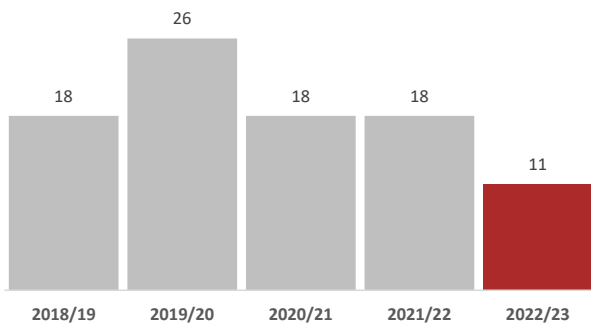
Domestic Safety - Accidental Dwelling Fires



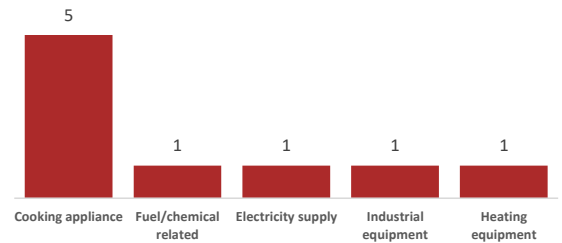
Performance Summary

Year on Year: -39%
 3 Year Average: -24%
 5 Year Average: 14%

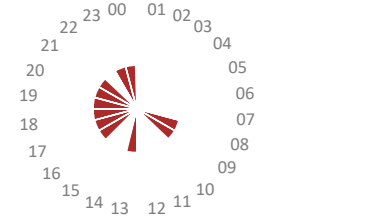
Accidental Dwelling Fires to Date



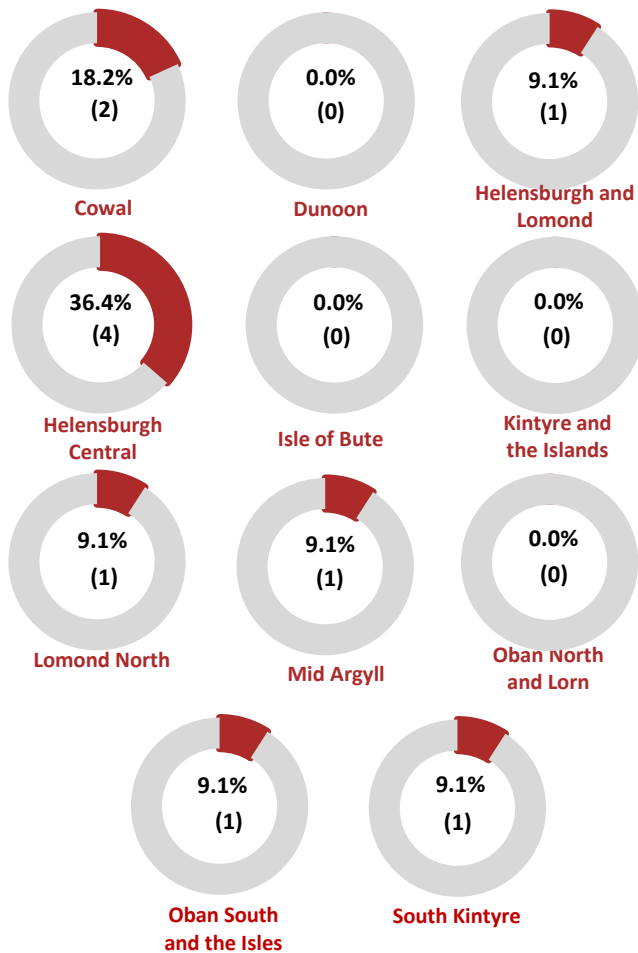
Main Source of Ignition



Accidental Dwelling Fires by Time of Day



Accidental Dwelling Fires Activity by Ward (% share)



Severity of Accidental Dwelling Fires



No Firefighting Action
27.3% (3)



Direct Firefighting
9.1% (1)



Heat/Smoke Damage Only
54.5% (6)



No fire Damage
63.6% (7)

Human Factors



Distraction
36.4% (4)



Alcohol/Drug Impairment
9.1% (1)

Automatic Detection & Actuation



Detection Present
81.8% (9)



Detection Actuated
88.9% (8)



Calls Made via Linked Alarms
81.8% (9)

Domestic Safety - Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties

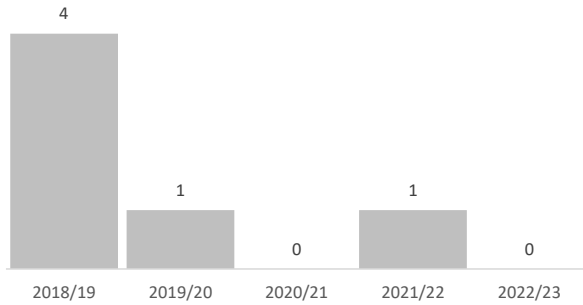


Performance Summary

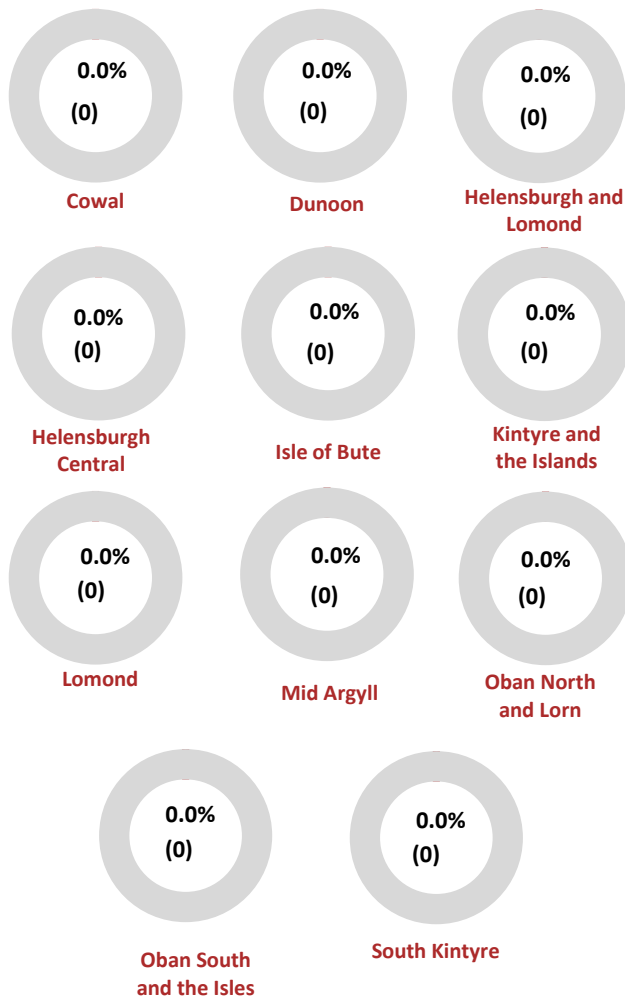
Year on Year 3 Year Average 5 Year Average

● -100% ● -50% ▲ 0%

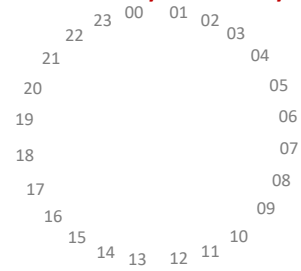
Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties Year to Date



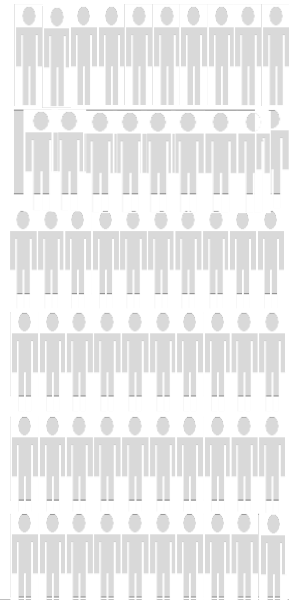
Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties by Ward (% share)



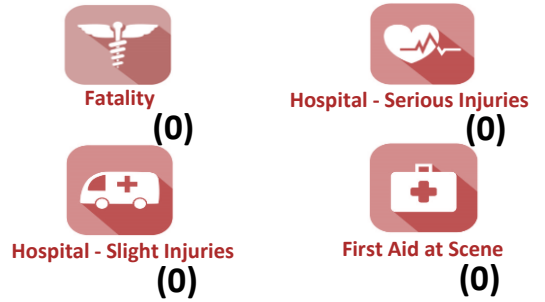
Fire Casualties by Time of Day



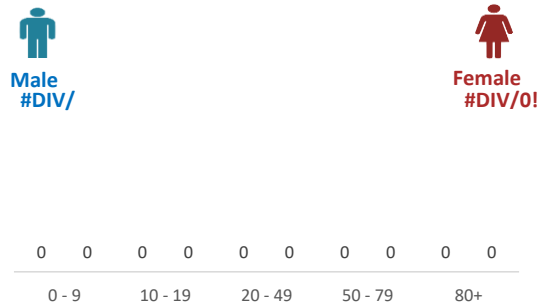
Nature of Injury



Extent of Harm



Age / Gender Profile



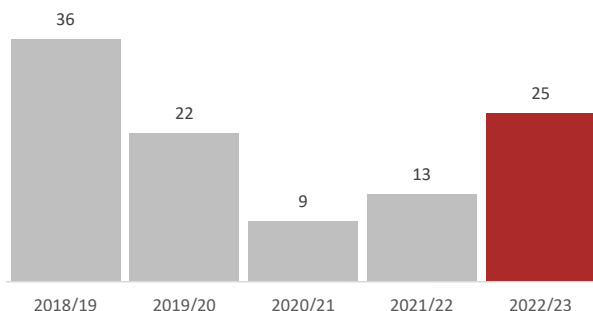
Unintentional Injury or Harm



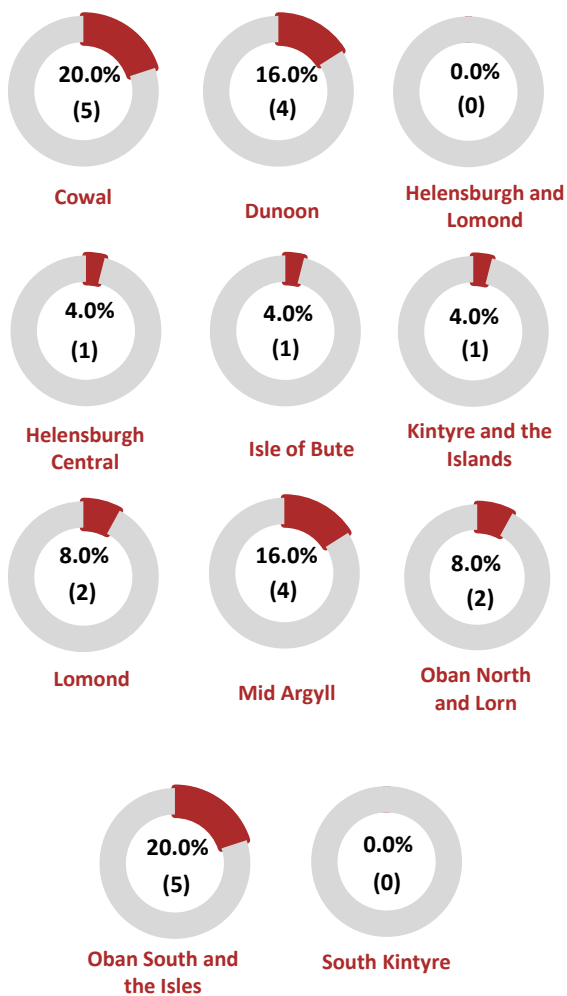
Performance Summary

Year on Year	3 Year Average	5 Year Average
92%	7%	31%

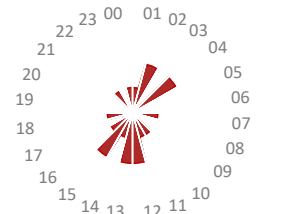
Non-Fire Casualties Year to Date



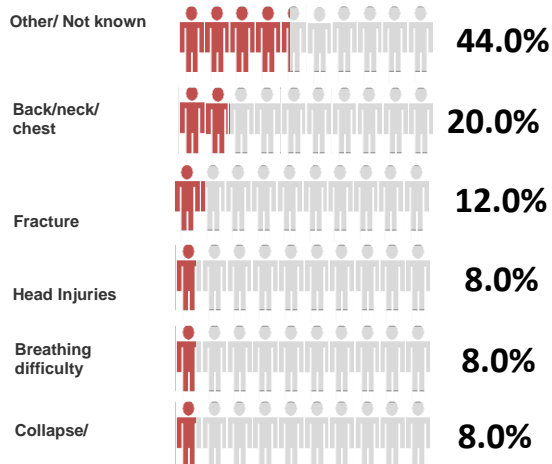
Non-Fire Casualties by Ward (% share)



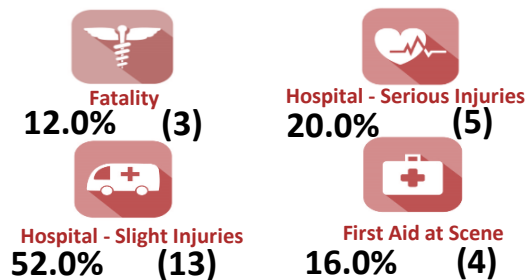
Non-Fire Casualties by Time of Day



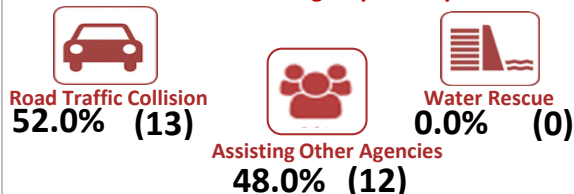
Nature of Injury



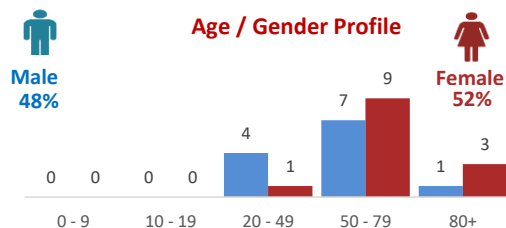
Extent of Harm



Non-Fire Emergency Activity



Age / Gender Profile



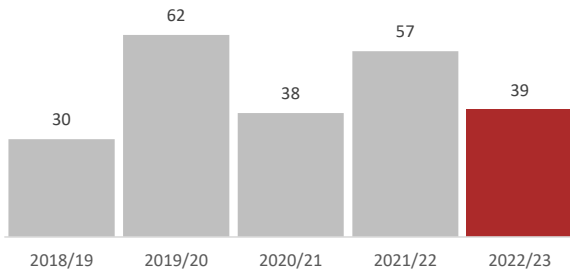
Deliberate Fire Setting



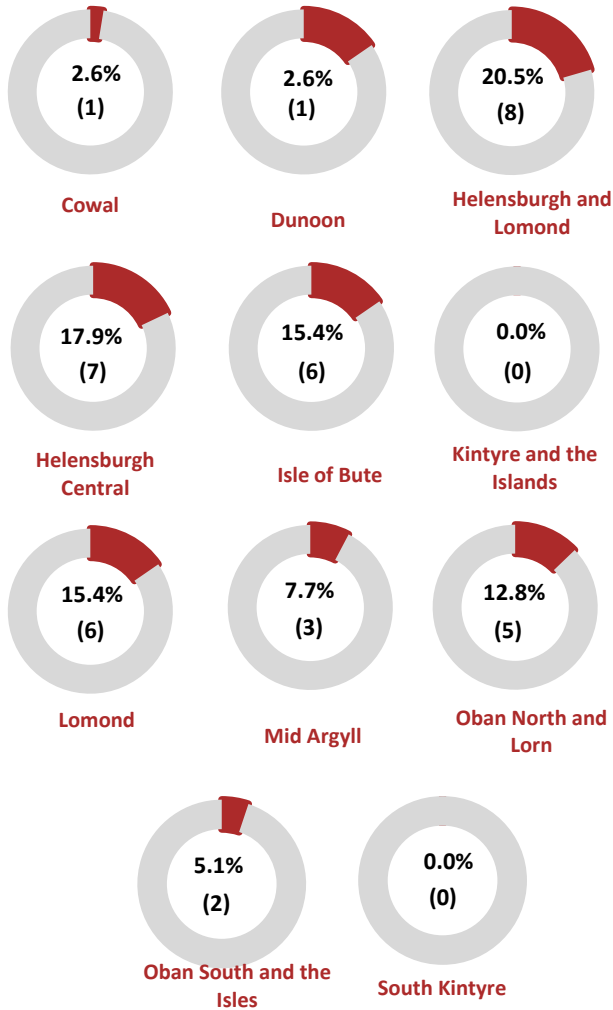
Performance Summary

Year on Year: -32%
 3 Year Average: -15%
 5 Year Average: 21%

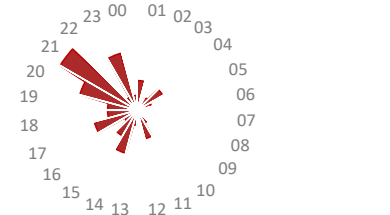
Deliberate Fires Year to Date



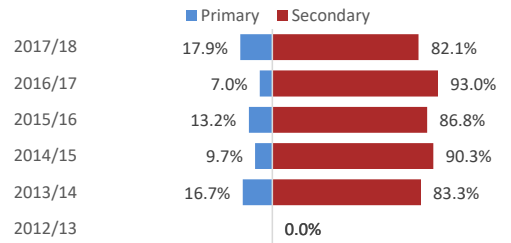
Deliberate Fires by Ward (% share)



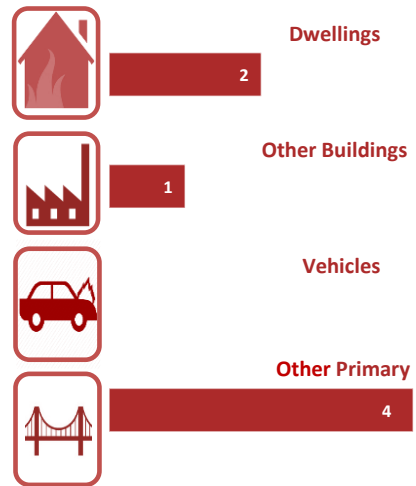
Deliberate Fires by Time of Day



Deliberate Fires by Classification



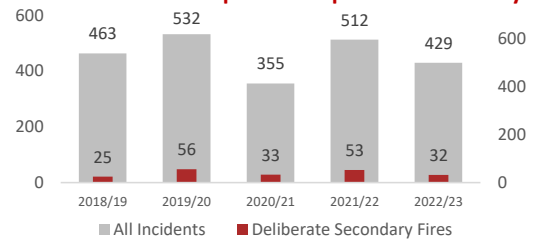
Primary Fire Ratio by Activity Type



Secondary Fire Ratio by Activity Type



Deliberate Fires Compared to Operational Activity



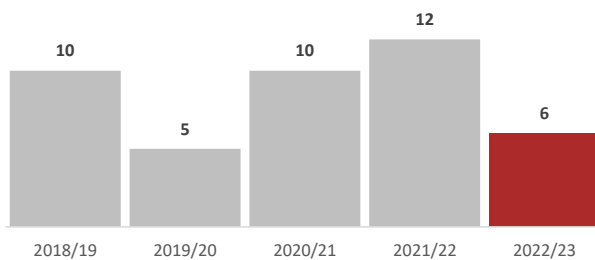
Non Domestic Fire Safety



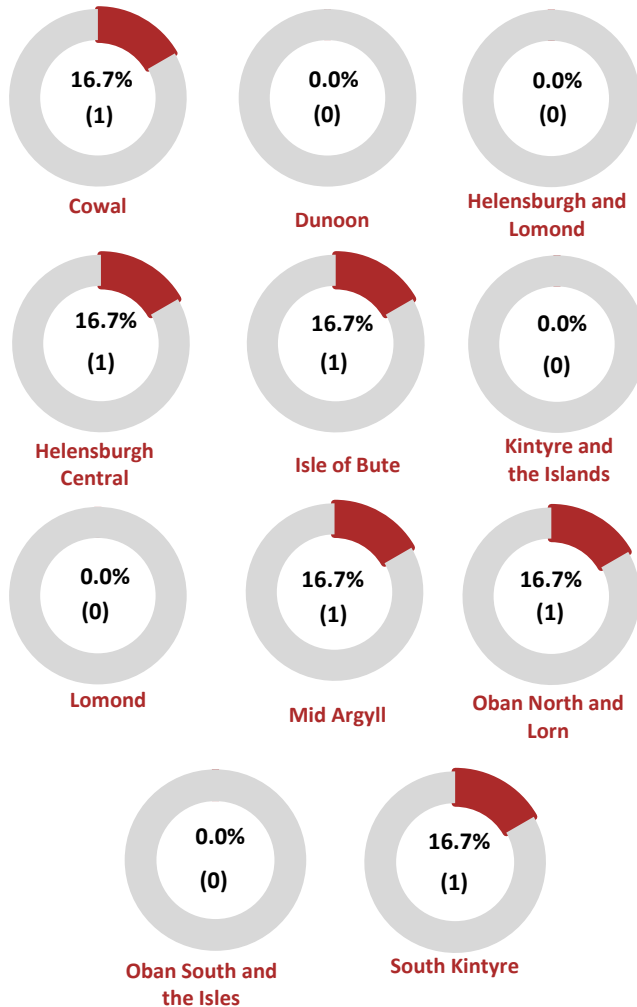
Performance Summary

Year on Year ● -50% 3 Year Average ◆ 4% 5 Year Average ◆ 16%

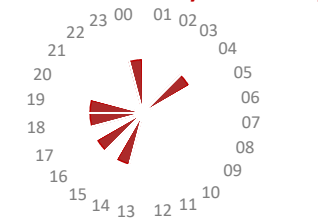
Non-Domestic Fires Year to Date



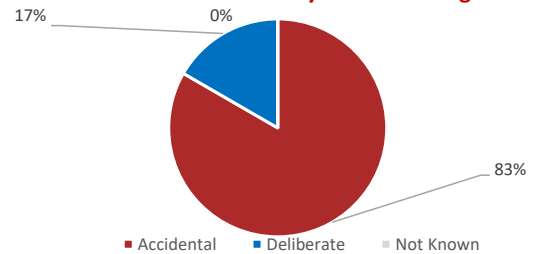
Non-Domestic Fires by Ward (% share)



Non-Domestic Fires by Time of Day



Non-Domestic Fires by Nature of Origin



Severity of Non-Domestic Fires



No Firefighting Action
33.3% (2)



Direct Firefighting
33.3% (2)



Heat/Smoke Damage
33.3% (2)



No Fire Damage
83.3% (5)

Non-Domestic Fires by Premises Type

Non Residential, Private garage	1
Hospitals and medical care, Hospital	1
Education, Infant/primary school	1
Hospitals and medical care, Other (including surgery)	1
Transport buildings, Ferry terminal	1
Entertainment and culture, Community centre/Village...	1

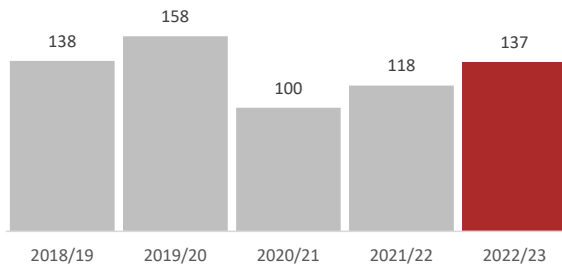
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals



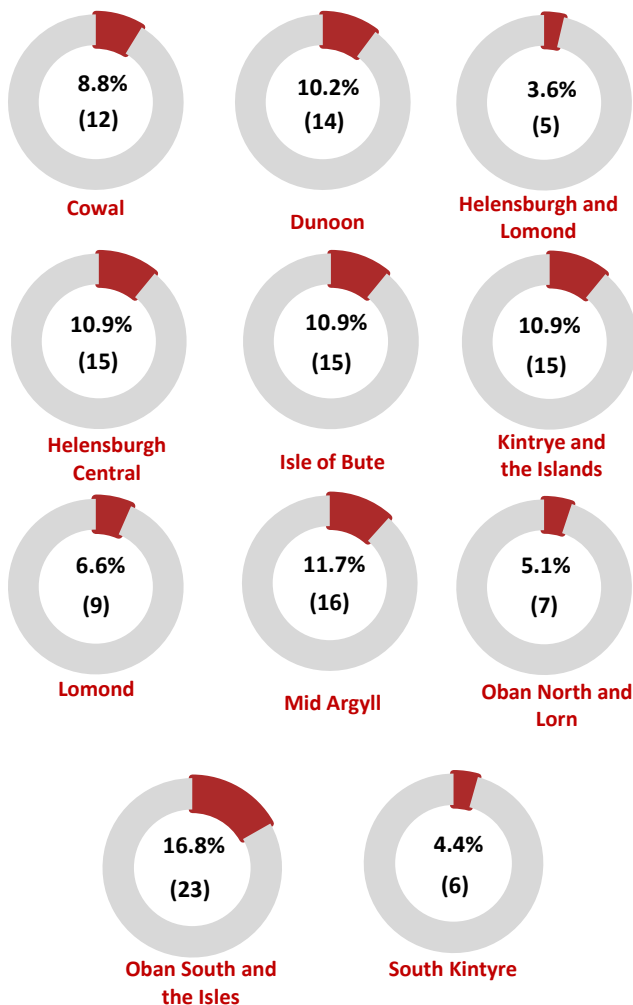
Performance Summary

Year on Year: 16%
 3 Year Average: -6%
 5 Year Average: 27%

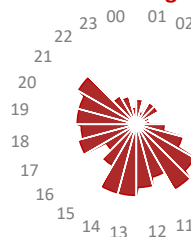
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Year to Date



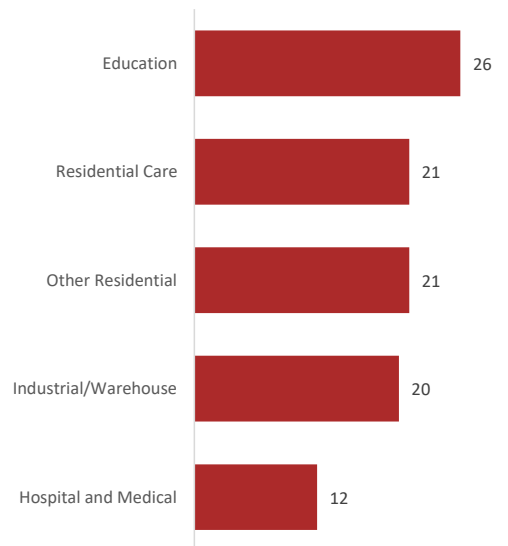
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals by Ward (% share)



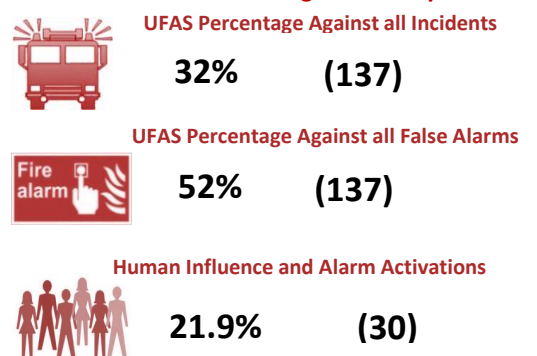
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals by Time of Day



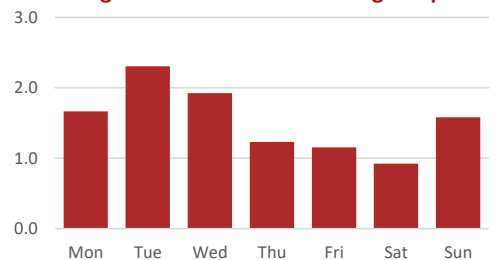
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals - Top 5 Premises



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Activity Ratios



Average Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals per Day





Argyll & Bute Health & Social Care Partnership

Community Services Committee

Date of Meeting: 25 August 2022

Title of Report: Argyll & Bute HSCP- Performance Report May 2022
Presented by: Stephen Whiston Head of Strategic Planning, Performance and Technology

The Community Services Committee is asked to:

- Consider the IJB HSCP performance report presented at the IJB in May 2022

1. Introduction

Reporting against the HSCP Health & Wellbeing Outcome Indicators continues to be affected by the recent re-escalation of Covid19 pandemic requiring health and care services remain on an “emergency” footing.

The remobilisation of services across both health and social care is a Scottish Government priority and frontline staff and managers are working hard to achieve this across the Health & Social Care Partnership. Our priority is on ensuring that key services and access as far as possible for people is managed and delivered locally and safely within the Covid19 pandemic operating context alongside the ongoing vaccination of staff and public and the delivery of test and protect.

The Covid19 pandemic second wave from March 2022 has seen a tightening of “lock-down” measures due to a new and more infectious mutation of the virus. This has once again compromised the full resumption of service. The Cabinet Secretary for Health in December 2021 directed Chief Executives in both Local Authorities and Health Boards that emergency and critical service provision should be prioritised until March 2022.

The attached report was presented to the IJB in May 2022

2. Performance Exception Reporting & Briefing Frequency

The Integrated Joint Board receives performance reports on a quarterly basis. This report will also be shared with its host bodies as detailed in the table below:

The performance reports for the period to December 2020 is attached for the committee to note.

Group	Briefing Frequency
Argyll and Bute Council – Community services Committee	Quarterly
NHS Board	Quarterly

Community Planning Partnership *	Quarterly
Area- Community Planning Groups*	Quarterly

3. Governance Implications

3.1 Financial Impact

The performance information presented has a variety of financial implications associated including increased Covid19 activity costs and remobilisation costs to address waiting lists etc

3.2 Staff Governance

Direct staff governance performance is not included in this report.

3.3 Clinical Governance

A number of the performance targets and indicators support the assurance of health and care governance and should be considered alongside that report

4. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The performance measures presented impact on a range of equality and diversity implications including access to services

5. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES COMPLIANCE

None

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

Ensuring timely and accurate performance information is essential to mitigate any risk to the IJB governance, performance management and accountability

7. PUBLIC & USER INVOLVEMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the Covid19 pandemic and remobilisation of service public and user feedback and engagement has informed service response.

8. Contribution to IJB Objectives

The Performance report is in line with the IJB objectives as detailed in its strategic plan and its responsibilities in responding to the Covid19 pandemic.

Stephen Whiston

Head of Strategic Planning Performance and Technology



Argyll & Bute Health & Social Care Partnership

Integration Joint Board

Agenda item: 11

Date of Meeting: 25 May 2022

Title of Report: Integration Joint Board- Performance Report (May 2022)

Presented by: Stephen Whiston - Head of Strategic Planning, Performance & Technology

The Integrated Joint Board is asked to:

- Consider the HSCP performance progress regarding remobilisation of activity in line with NHS Highland performance target for 2021/22 agreed with Scottish Government to 70%-80% of 2019/20 activity as at November 2021
- Consider Waiting Times Performance and a further reduction in Consultant and Nurse Led Outpatient breaches >12 weeks
- Acknowledge performance with regards to both Argyll & Bute and Greater Glasgow and Clyde current Treatment Time Guarantee for Inpatient/Day Case Waiting List and activity
- Note future performance reporting arrangements relating to the HSCP's Integrated Performance Management Framework
- Note Scottish Government's advice on timescales for the publication of 2021/22 Annual Performance Report (APR).

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The remobilisation of services across both health and social care is a Scottish Government priority and frontline staff and managers are working hard to achieve this across the Health & Social Care Partnership. This report therefore provides the IJB with an update on the impact on service performance and the progress made with regard to remobilising health and social care services in Argyll & Bute up to 31st March 2022. IJB are also asked to note future performance reporting arrangements associated with the development and roll out of the HSCP's Integrated Performance Management Framework, and also Scottish Government's advice on timescales for the publication of 2021/22 Annual Performance Report (APR).

2. INTRODUCTION

NHS Highland's (NHS) Remobilisation plan focuses on the areas agreed as priorities with the Scottish Government and includes information on 10 work streams and associated projects. Alongside this the Framework for Clinical Prioritisation has been established to support Health Boards with prioritising service provision and framing the remobilisation of services against 6 key principles within a Covid19 operating environment as below:

1. **The establishment of a clinical priority matrix** – as detailed below, at the present time NHSGG&C & NHS Highland are focusing on the P1 & P2 category:

- Priority level 1a Emergency and 1b Urgent – operation needed within 24 hours
- Priority level 2 Surgery/Treatment – scheduled within 4 weeks
- Priority level 3 Surgery/Treatment – scheduled within 12 weeks
- Priority level 4 Surgery/Treatment – may be safely scheduled after 12 weeks.

NHS Boards can decide to pause non urgent or elective services (P3 & P4) to ensure they retain capacity to cope with Covid19 emergency need and NHS Highland implemented this in August at Raigmore.

2. **Protection of essential services** (including critical care capacity, maternity, emergency services, mental health provision and vital cancer services)

3. **Active waiting list management** (Consistent application of Active Clinical Referral Triage (ACRT) and key indicators for active waiting list management, including addressing demand and capacity issues for each priority level)

4. **Realistic medicine remaining at the core** (application of realistic medicine, incorporating the six key principles)

5. **Review of long waiting patients** (long waits are actively reviewed (particularly priority level four patients))

6. **Patient Communication** (patients should be communicated with effectively ensuring they have updated information around their treatment and care)

3. DETAIL OF REPORT

The report details performance for March 2022 with regards to the Health & Social Care Partnership, NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and NHS Highland.

4. RELEVANT DATA & INDICATORS

4.1 Remobilisation Performance

The tracker below summarises the HSCP service remobilisation performance against agreed SGHD target (70-80%) for April 2021 to March 2022

HSCP Remobilisation Tracker April 2021 to March 2022

A&B HSCP - Remobilisation Plan Tracker															Cumulative Apr 2021 - Mar 2022	
Key Performance Indicators		Performance Overview													Target	Total
Description		Target	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Target	Total
Ref	TTG															
TTG 1	TTG Inpatient & Day Case Activity (All Elective)	44	34	36	39	41	36	35	24	36	37	35	49	41	528	443
Ref	REFERRALS															
R-1	Total Outpatient Referrals	803	807	780	846	705	780	706	818	798	667	691	729	997	9636	9324
R-2	Total Urgent Suspicion of Cancer Referrals Received	28	47	26	58	47	45	46	44	43	44	29	42	55	336	526
	OUT PATIENTS															
OP-1	Total New OP Activity Monitoring	652	602	685	723	630	682	668	642	810	525	600	661	634	7824	7862
OP-2	Total Return OP Activity Monitoring	904	1319	1286	1454	1424	1446	1459	1479	1631	1233	1419	1425	1526	10848	17101
OP-3	Total AHP New OP Activity Plan	556	889	926	1020	874	964	953	893	992	818	849	894	1066	6672	11138
OP-4	Total AHP Return OP Activity Plan	1312	2660	2691	2821	2368	2619	2549	2343	2527	2087	2014	2033	2455	15744	29167
Ref	DIAGNOSTICS															
DI-1	Total Endoscopy Activity Monitoring	50	67	88	66	58	65	61	63	62	55	15	52	51	600	703
DI-2	Total Radiology Activity Monitoring	462	485	509	581	560	503	508	468	528	463	410	469	699	5544	6183
Ref	CANCER															
CA-1	Total 31 Days Cancer - First Treatment Monitoring	9	3	4	7	10	2	4	3	1	4	3	4	3	108	48
Ref	UNSCHEDULED CARE															
UC-1	Total A&E Attendances Monitoring (LIH)	685	552	729	812	786	813	745	660	598	591	622	608	759	8220	8275
UC-2	Total A&E Attendance (AB Community Hospitals)	1244	1880	2152	2234	2276	1986	2190	1882	1882	1823	1793	1741	2022	14928	23861
UC-3	Total % A&E 4 Hr (LIH)	95%	98%	96%	96%	95%	91%	93%	92%	96%	96%	97%	92%	90%		
UC-4	Total Emergency Admissions IP Activity Monitoring	165	151	176	200	177	203	175	176	167	151	159	157	188	1980	2080
UC-5	Emergency Admissions IP Activity Monitoring (AB)	148	178	180	176	204	192	182	188	203	183	163	174	178	1776	2201

Ref	ADULT CARE															
AC-1	Total Number of Adult Referrals	716	517	549	585	628	618	576	598	686	573	583	592	758	8592	7263
AC-2	Total Number of UAA Assessments	224	275	288	344	216	257	252	235	264	174	196	209	261	2688	2971
AC-3	Total Adult Protection Referrals	24	24	24	21	24	28	32	27	42	28	19	36	32	288	337
AC-4	Total New People in Receipt of Homecare	36	40	39	32	46	28	29	29	24	28	38	35	52	432	420
AC-5	Total New Care Home Placements	16	22	22	20	14	24	17	27	18	21	9	13	37	192	244
AC-6	Total No of Delayed Discharges Awaiting Care Home	5	4	4	5	7	8	13	12	10	4	10	13	16		
AC-7	Total No of Delayed Discharges Awaiting Homecare	5	8	7	12	13	13	9	15	14	18	13	11	18		
Ref	COMMUNITY HEALTH															
CH-1	Total Mental Health – New Episodes	80	52	60	59	64	76	69	38	41	50	41	60	48	960	658
CH-2	Total Mental Health – Patient Contact Notes	584	885	828	881	769	794	747	735	851	757	689	685	794	7008	9415
CH-3	Total DN – New Episodes	92	130	136	123	150	124	112	101	112	93	105	91	82	1104	1359
CH-4	Total DN – Patient Contact Notes	4032	4490	4428	4634	4883	5046	4715	4758	4628	4677	4429	4054	4411	48384	55153
CH-5	Total AHP - New Episodes	276	350	352	410	373	388	356	375	441	337	311	374	384	3312	4451
CH-6	Total AHP - Patient Contact Notes	3096	2895	3083	3354	3289	3247	3514	3365	3820	3309	3350	2940	3763	37152	39929
Ref	CHILDREN & FAMILIES SOCIAL CARE															
CF-1	Total Number of Child Request for Assistance	196	248	238	280	173	275	347	257	306	326	287	176	248	2352	3161
CF-2	Total Number of New Universal Child Assessments	88	85	109	101	59	125	88	96	108	60	81	90	73	1056	1075
CF-3	Total Number of Children on CP Register	38	31	28	29	32	31	32	37	36	31	33	25	27		

(Please note that not all MH community and AHP activity is captured due to data lag and some services are not yet on automated systems)

Remobilisation Performance Assessment:

The information presented shows good progress with regards to the scale of mobilisation of our services in the HSCP with increasing activity across our health and care system. Some points to note:

- Cumulative total outpatient activity across new and return notes a (59%) increase against target
- Total urgent suspicion of cancer referrals received notes a (31%) increase in activity for March (55) against the previous month (42)
- Lorn & Islands Hospital total percentage of attendances at A&E seen within 4 hrs notes a (5%) reduction for March against target (95%)
- Total number of adult referrals note a (22%) increase for March against previous month
- Total number of assessments completed note a (20%) increase for March against previous month
- Cumulative total Endoscopy and Radiology activity notes a (11%) increase against target

- Total mental health patient contacts notes an increase a (16%) increase in March (794) against previous month (685)
- Total number of child requests for assistance notes a (41%) increase for March (248) against the previous month (176)
- Total new child universal assessments notes a (19%) reduction in March (73) against the previous month (90)
- The number of delayed discharges has increased for those awaiting both Homecare (18) and Care Homes (16)

4.2 Waiting Times Performance

The tables below identifies the New Outpatient Waiting List and times by main speciality as at the 23rd March 2022, Comparator data for February in red is used identify changes across specialities and waits.

A&B Group Totals	Extracted 23 rd March 2022				
	New Outpatient Waiting List				
	Length of Wait (weeks)		Total on List	Long Waits (over26)	% Breaches of each Group OPWL
Main Specialty	Over 12	Under 12			
Consultant Outpatient	305(275)	938 (905)	1243 (1180)	53 (49)	24.5% (23.3%)
AHP	226(220)	370 (347)	596 (567)	109 (98)	37.9% (38.8%)
Mental Health	486 (470)	247 (194)	733 (664)	324 (316)	66.3% (70.8%)
Nurse Led Clinics	23 (23)	163 (148)	186 (171)	3 (1)	12.4% (13.5%)
Other/Non MMI	380 (356)	702 (577)	1082 (933)	154 (142)	35.1% (38.2%)
TOTAL OPWL	1420	2420	3840	643	37%
Previous Month	(1344)	(2171)	(3515)	(606)	(38.2%)

Main Specialty	Length of Wait (weeks)		Total on List	Long Waits (over26)	% Breaches of each Group OPWL
	Over 6	Under 6			
Scopes *	196	130	326	32	60.1%
Previous Month	(149)	(108)	(257)	(23)	(58.0%)

Main Specialty	Length of Wait (weeks)		Total on List	Long Waits (over26)	% Breaches of each Group OPWL
	Over 4	Under 4			
MSK **	1068	443	1511	252	70.7%
Previous Month	(1171)	(467)	(1638)	(280)	(71.5%)

Waiting Times Performance Assessment:

- Total new outpatient waiting list notes a reduction of percentage breaches of (1.2%) for February against the previous month
- Scopes note a 23% increase in those on the waiting list for February (326) against the previous month (257)
- Musculoskeletal physiotherapy waits note a reduction across all their waits for February, including a (8%) reduction of total number of waits on the list and a (1.5%) reduction in total percentage breaches.

- Total waits greater than 12 weeks has increased by (6%) against the previous month with an associated increase in those waiting less than 12 weeks of (11%)
- Overall percentage breaches note that Nurse lead clinics note a further reduction (1.1%) for February against the previous month, this also include reduction in Mental Health (4.5%), Allied Health Professionals (0.9%) and Other (3.1%)

4.3 Virtual Outpatient Performance

The table below illustrates monthly cumulative virtual new and return consultant outpatient performance for Lorn & Islands Hospital and Community Hospitals in Argyll and Bute.

Cumulative Virtual Consultant Outpatient Activity				
Reporting Period	Lorn & Islands Hospital New	Lorn & Islands Hospital Return	Community Hospitals New	Community Hospitals Return
January	640	1800	194	827
March	769	2030	230	987
Variance	+129	+230	+36	+160

(Data Source- NHS Highland Remobilisation Plan Data- Cumulative Virtual New and Return Outpatient- March 2022)

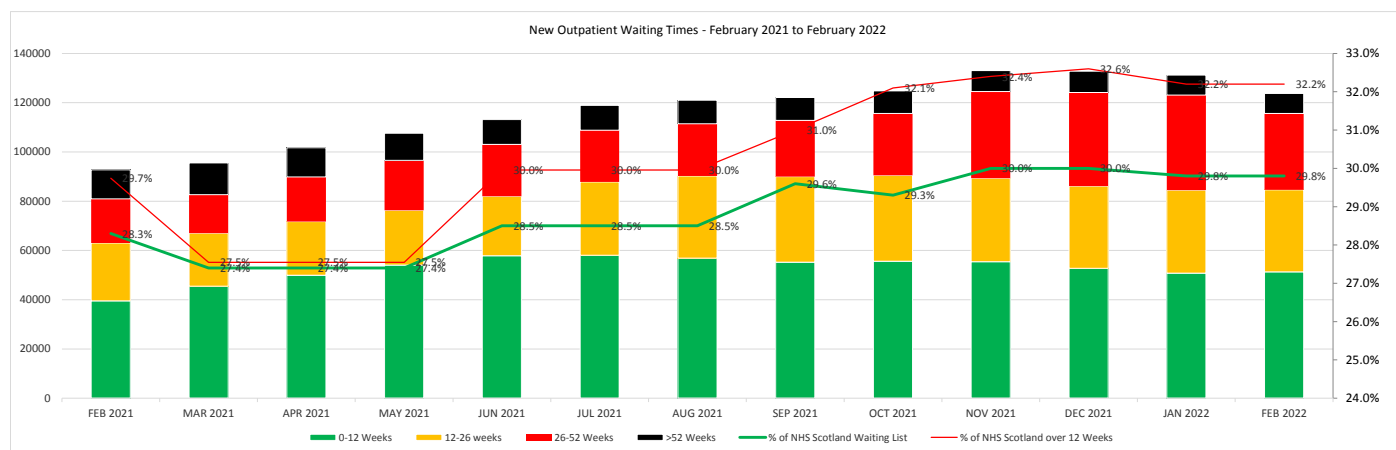
Performance Assessment:

- Cumulative Virtual Consultant Outpatient activity for Lorn & Islands Hospital notes a (15%) increase in virtual appointments for March against the previous month
- Cumulative Virtual Consultant Outpatient activity for Community Hospital notes a (19%) increase in virtual appointments for March against the previous month

4.4 Greater Glasgow & Clyde Outpatient Remobilisation Performance

This report notes the current Greater Glasgow and Clyde Performance with regards to targets identified with their Remobilisation Plan (RMP3) for April 2022.

NHS GG&C Waiting Times (February 2021- February 2022)



(Data Source - NHS GREATER GLASGOW & CLYDE BOARD MEETING/ Performance Assurance information- April 2022)

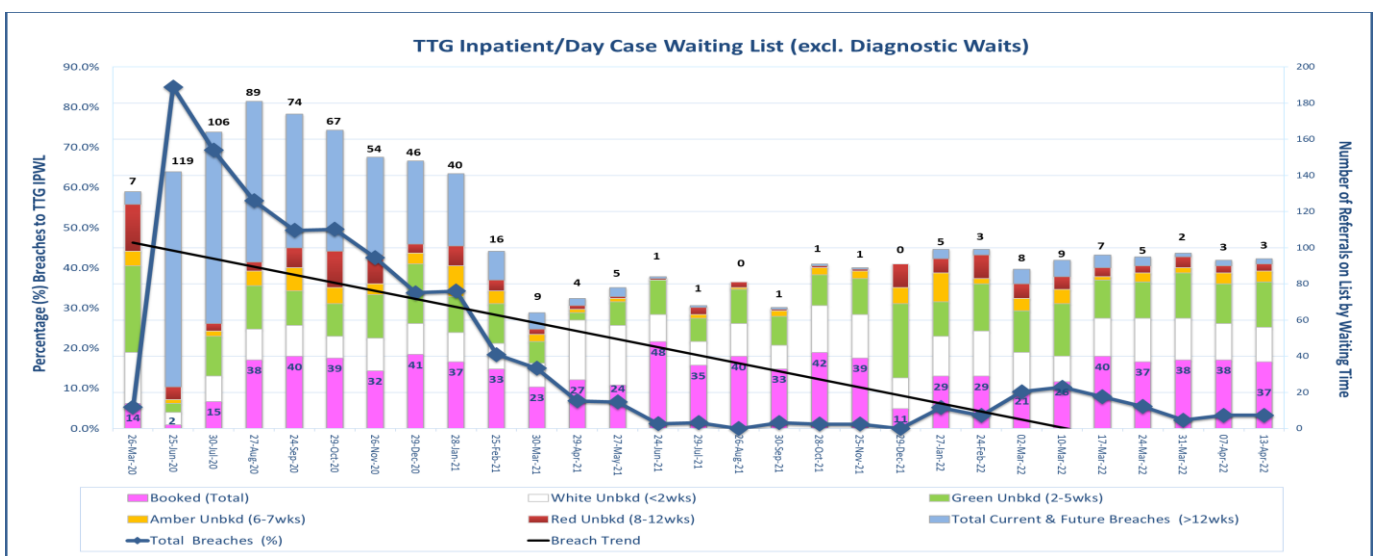
Performance Assessment:

- At the end of February 2022, 123,757 patients were on the new outpatient waiting list, of this total 72,469 were waiting >12 weeks against the RMP4 target of 70,000. The number of patients waiting >12 weeks is 3.5% above the RMP4 target.
- 29.8% of the total patients waiting across NHS Scotland for a first new outpatient appointment were NHSGGC patients at the end of February 2022.

4.5 Treatment Time Guarantee (TTG) - Inpatient/Day Case Waiting List

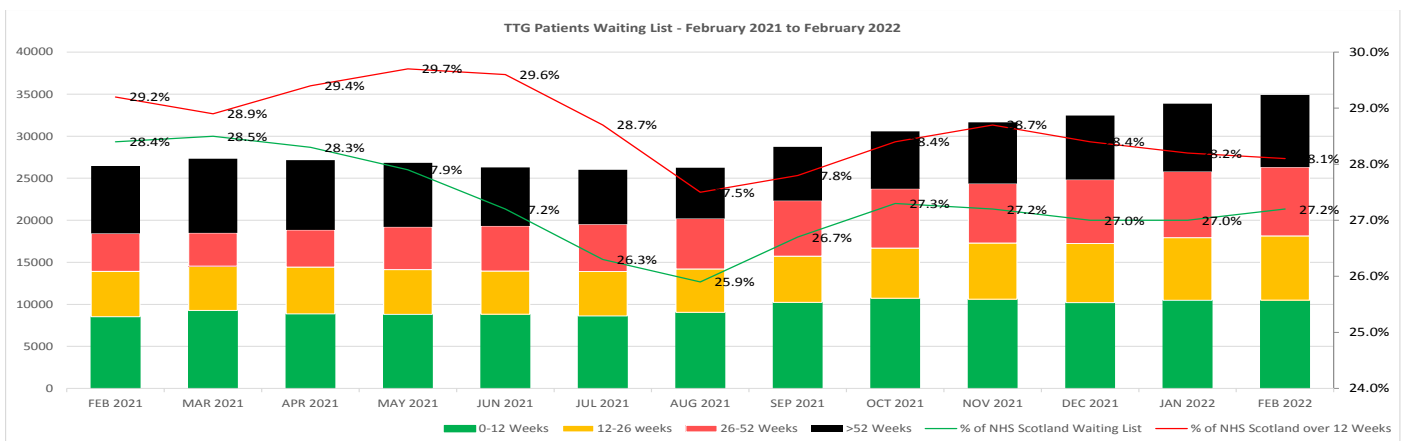
Argyll & Bute Inpatient/Day Case Activity

The graph below identifies current performance with regards to Inpatient /Day Case -12 week breaches and current overall performance as at 17th February 2022 in Argyll and Bute at LIH, Oban



Greater Glasgow & Clyde- Treatment Times Guarantee (TTG) - Waiting Times

The graph below notes current performance with regards to TTG Inpatient and Day Case Activity against trajectory from Feb 2021 to Feb 2022



(Data Source - NHS GREATER GLASGOW & CLYDE BOARD MEETING/ Performance Assurance information- April 2022)

Performance Assessment:

Argyll & Bute

- Total breaches > 12 weeks on the TTG waiting list note 3.3% as at 13th April with 40.2 % noted as booked.
- NHS Scotland Board Level Performance for TTG is identified in **Appendix 1**

Greater Glasgow & Clyde

- At the end of February 2022, there were 34,899 patients on the overall waiting list. Currently 24,401 patients waiting >12 weeks against a target of 19,154. Above target by 27%.
- Currently 28.1% of the >12 weeks national waiting list at the end of February 2022.

4.6 Future Performance Reporting Arrangements

The IJB is asked to note following future performance reporting arrangements:

- The HSCP's Integrated Performance Management Framework (IPMF) will be rolled out across the HSCP with a collaborative and consultative approach adopted across the Senior Leadership Team over 2022/23, in line with timescales agreed by SLT.
- IPMF governance will be applied through the Clinical and Care Governance Committee.
- Current IJB Performance Report will remain extant until the IPMF, its associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and the governance & scrutiny arrangements are fully embedded within SLT.
- As per previous 2 years, using the mechanisms as laid out in the Coronavirus Scotland Act (2020), Schedule 6, Part 3, the Scottish Government have confirmed the 2021/22 Annual Performance Report (APR) will be due for publication by November 2022.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The monitoring and reporting of performance with regards to Argyll & Bute HSCP, Greater Glasgow & Clyde and NHS Highland ensures the HSCP is able to deliver against key strategic priorities.

6. GOVERNANCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Impact

NHS Highland remobilisation plan has received additional funding from the Scottish Government and this includes direct funding to the HSCP of £590,840.

6.2 Staff Governance

There has been a variety of staff governance requirements throughout this pandemic which have been identified and continue to be progressed and developed include health and safety, wellbeing and new working practices within national Covid19 restrictions as part of our mobilisation plans.

6.3 Clinical Governance

Clinical Governance and patient safety remains at the core of prioritised service delivery in response to the pandemic and subsequent remobilisation.

7. PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY

Data used within this report is a snapshot of a month and data period, where possible data trends are identified to give wider strategic context.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

EQIA not required

9. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION PRINCIPLES COMPLIANCE

Data use and sharing within this report is covered within the A&B & NHS Highland Data Sharing Agreement

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risks and mitigations associated with data sources and reporting are managed and identified within the monthly Performance & Improvement Team- Work Plan

11. PUBLIC & USER INVOLVEMENT & ENGAGEMENT

Full access to this report for public is via A&B Council and NHS Highland websites

12. CONCLUSIONS

The Integration Joint Board is asked to consider the work to date with regards to improved performance against Remobilisation and Waiting Times targets. Consideration should also be given to the potential impact of the new Omicron variant with regards to future performance reporting and prioritisation of service delivery.

13. DIRECTIONS

Directions required to Council, NHS Board or both.	Directions to:	tick
	No Directions required	x
	Argyll & Bute Council	
	NHS Highland Health Board	
	Argyll & Bute Council and NHS Highland Health Board	

REPORT AUTHOR AND CONTACT

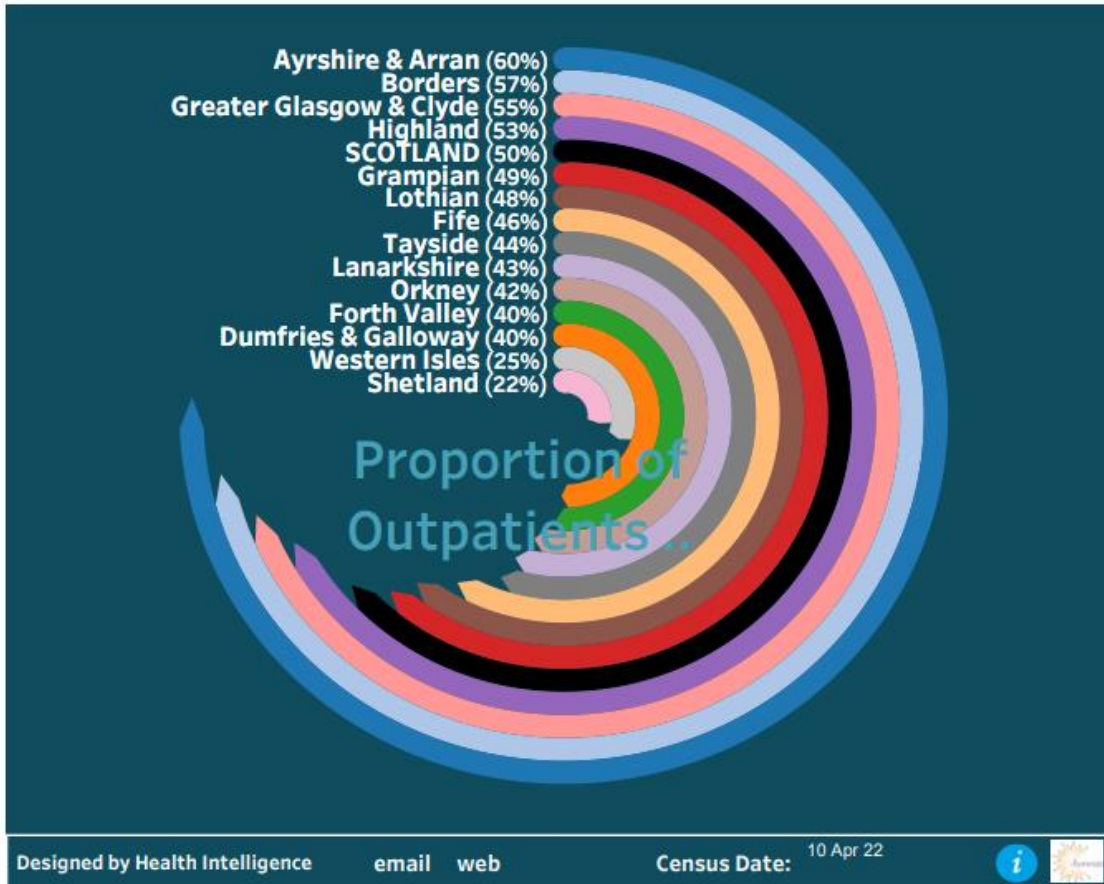
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Appendix 1- Board Level KPI's – 10th April 2022**Board Level KPIs Summary**

	10 April 2022								
	OPWL - waiting over 12 weeks	Core 4 hour ED Perform ance (..	Patients Spending over 8 hours in core ED ..	Patients Spending over 12 hours in co..	Core ED Attendances (week)	Delayed Discharges (total)	TTG - patients waiting over 12 weeks	TTG - patients waiting over 26 weeks	OPWL - waiting over 26 weeks
SCOTLAND	213,293	66.4%	2,483	999	23,905	0	88,960	62,489	119,338
Ayrshire & Arran	24,769	68.0%	282	160	1,749	0	5,970	4,311	16,139
Borders	5,186	59.4%	130	90	557	0	1,547	1,170	3,488
Dumfries & Gallo..	4,298	81.7%	18	2	903	0	1,341	628	1,529
Fife	10,089	60.7%	156	41	1,215	0	1,972	890	4,771
Forth Valley	6,588	53.1%	84	14	1,106	0	1,675	793	2,698
Grampian	18,991	63.2%	169	36	1,642	0	11,840	8,617	10,660
Greater Glasgow ..	70,188	64.3%	558	133	5,836	0	25,754	18,659	40,753
Highland	9,747	78.1%	50	10	1,103	0	4,959	3,688	5,562
Lanarkshire	17,268	58.8%	427	130	3,545	0	9,100	6,541	8,769
Lothian	35,413	64.9%	598	383	4,395	0	16,491	11,493	19,774
Orkney	373	95.5%	0	0	89	0	112	59	175
Shetland	216	98.4%	0	0	139	0	97	58	87
Tayside	9,900	90.3%	11	0	1,529	0	7,262	5,212	4,829
Western Isles	269	95.9%	0	0	97	0	264	111	117
Grampian as % of Scotland		6.81%	3.60%	6.87%		13.40%	13.85%	8.90%	8.93%
Highland as % of Scotland		2.01%	1.00%	4.61%		5.61%	5.93%	4.57%	4.66%
Tayside as % of Scotland		0.44%	0.00%	6.40%		8.22%	8.38%	4.64%	4.05%

Appendix 2- Proportion of Outpatients Waiting Over 12 Weeks by Health Board (10/04/2022)



ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

COMMERCIAL SERVICES

25 AUGUST 2022

**LIVE ARGYLL – MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING – UPDATE
REPORT**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Community Services Committee with an update on the performance and monitoring arrangements between Live Argyll (LA) and the Council as set out in the various agreements between the Council and the Trust.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 1.2 Members note and consider the contents of the report.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

COMMERCIAL SERVICES

25 AUGUST 2022

LIVE ARGYLL – MONITORING AND PERFORMANCE REPORTING - UPDATE REPORT

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Community Services Committee with an update on the performance and monitoring arrangements between Live Argyll (LA) and the Council as set out in the various agreements between the Council and the Trust.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

3.1 Members note and consider the contents of the report.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 The Council approved the implementation of a Leisure and Libraries Trust on 24 November 2016, following a recommendation by the Community Services Committee of 21 November 2016.

4.2 Thereafter, LA was constituted on 29 September 2017 and the Council entered into a Transfer Agreement, Service Agreement, Support Services Agreement and Facility Licence. These set out a number of reporting and monitoring requirements.

SERVICES AGREEMENT

4.3 There is a Services Agreement in place between LA and the Council in respect of the leisure and library services to be delivered by LA on behalf of the Council. LA are operating in terms of their 2021-24 business plan.

BUSINESS PLAN

4.4 The Council in constituting LA was mindful of the code of guidance on funding external bodies and following the public pound. In exercising its business plan and delivering the services LA reports that it continues to adhere to those principles. The overarching business plan based on the financial operating model and services specification was previously agreed by the Council and

covers the period from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2024. The plan refers, as with previous plans references 3 key themes set out below each of which LA advises is

- **Growth:** Leisure and Library type services remain in a recovery phase. LA advise that performance information is in line with expectations and user survey data. Associated income levels were and continue to be adversely impacted. LA were able to offset the impact of reduced income from core services by diversifying into other temporary area of service which had the benefit of alternative income streams and / or offset existing costs.
- **Participation:** LA report that Leisure participation rates are strong in the context of national and sector averages (75%) at approximately 90% of pre-pandemic levels. Library performance information indicate an increasing usage however figures remain below pre-pandemic levels. Digital usage of library type services has seen significant growth with substantial increases in on-line borrowing. LA report that event type activity and associated audience participation rates are significantly reduced. This position is reflective of the wider event market.
- **Quality:** LA continue to place a significant amount of emphasis on the quality of product and service on offer and introduced a range of measures and protocols identified and aimed at ensuring a consistent quality offering across all of their services.

BUSINESS PLANNING: SECTOR PLANS

4.5 LA report that they continue with implementing sector plan proposals and priorities for change. As with the vast majority of services, plans continue to be reviewed and where appropriate updated to ensure priorities support key objectives. It is understood that good progress is being made and the plans are on track to deliver or contribute to their proposed outcomes. The following are examples of current work sector plans:

- Re-purposing facilities to support commercial activity;
- Re-purposing facilities to support Council building rationalisation programmes.
- Where appropriate digitalisation of customer interface protocols
- Securing long term partnership agreement with Sportscotland in respect of Active Schools programme
- Increased focus on LA's contribution to Health and Well-being agenda and social prescribing.

THE SERVICES / PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

SERVICE SPECIFICATION

- 4.6 LA is responsible for delivering leisure, library, halls, community centres, community learning and development services, community lettings, museum, archives, active schools services across Argyll and Bute. The service specification sets out the specific services LA have committed to deliver and that they are required to ensure they adhere to those commitments.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

- 4.7 In order to establish if and to what extent they have complied in the provision of the services, the Services Agreement requires LA to provide operational performance information to the Council with a Performance Report on its operational performance in the second and fourth quarter of each financial year (namely June and December). LA are also required to provide a complete set of relevant accounts to the Council no later than 5 months from the end of each financial year. LA advised draft accounts were submitted May 2022 and audited accounts will be submitted by August 31st 2022.

PERFORMANCE REPORT

- 4.8 Performance information shows positive trends across a number of services and overall LA is deemed to be performing above current sector average rates. Active Schools and Community Learning and Development services are performing well, the latter have receiving in year positive HMIE inspection reports. The 2022 annual report clearly highlights the positive impact of services and LA's commitment to returning and improving upon previous levels of performance.

It should be noted that in some specific circumstances changing customer behaviour and user trends may result in alternative performance measures being introduced and / or proposals for amendments to service specification obligations.

FINANCIAL POSITION

- 4.9 LA, continue to actively manage their financial position. LA have successfully accessed the UK Government Employee Retention Scheme alongside accessing some sector specific support funds. This approach in combination with diversification activity has allowed the company to offset loss of self-generated income. LA have not requested any additional funds, a position which is significantly different across Scottish Local Authorities where there was a £120 million in year shortfall being reported with an number of Councils providing additional funding to offset funding gaps. LA further advise that the in year position (22-23) whilst challenging is anticipated to breakeven. The

financial position will continue to be reviewed by LA and Commercial Services. Proposals and options are being prepared to address an agreed 3% reduction to the 23/24 annual services

SCHEDULED DEVIATIONS

- 4.10 Against a background of national imposed restrictions and recovery from the pandemic it is considered that LA have fulfilled their service delivery obligations. It should be noted that LA were one of very few trusts which as a result of robust planning and collaboration with Council partners, re-opened their full Leisure service provision on the first allowable date. Like many organisations, liveArgyll did encounter some short term disruption as a result of Covid Absence however this did not materially impact overall service delivery.

SUPPORT SERVICES AGREEMENT

- 4.11 There is a Support Services Agreement in place between LA and the Council in respect of central support services delivered by the Council to the Trust. As part of the requirements of the agreement, the operation of the support services are kept under annual review by the Council and LA. LA has advised that from their perspective, arrangements continue to operate satisfactorily with effective working partnerships in place.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

- 4.12 In addition to the monitoring and reporting requirements above LA report that moving forward a significant focus will be placed on the Health and Well-being agenda, specifically ensuring that LA is recognised as a significant contributing partner to wider health outcomes. LA are keen to promote a culture of investment in Leisure, but also encompassing services such as Community Learning and Libraries as key contributors to information and support for physical and mental health and well-being.

A health and wellbeing scoping and engagement exercise is currently taking place in partnership with Macmillan and HSCP. This will inform the development of a multi-agency business case to implement an Argyll wide, co-produced health and wellbeing service. The aspiration is for a clear, consistent and comprehensive fully funded pathway into newly developed and existing services to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of Argyll and Bute residents.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The current arrangements between the Council and LA are working well with no areas of service which are of particular concern. The specific reporting and monitoring requirements are deemed fit for purpose. Given the extra-ordinary operating circumstances of previous 2 years, LA has adapted well and good progress continues to be made.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy - In line with Council policy in relation to Leisure and Libraries Trust
- 6.2 Financial – None
- 6.3 Legal - In line with relevant contractual agreements between Council and Live Argyll
- 6.4 HR - None
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None
- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – None
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty:
- 6.5.3 Islands – None
- 6.6. Risk – as outlined in body or report above
- 6.7 Customer Service – None
- 6.8 Climate Change - None

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services

Gary Mulvaney – Policy Lead for Commercial Services

9 August 2022

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Welcome to our annual report

2021/2022

Welcome from Andrew Nisbet, Chair liveArgyll

On behalf of the board of liveArgyll I am delighted to introduce our fifth annual report. I would like to start by taking a moment to reflect on the circumstances of the last year which, similar to the previous, can be described as extremely challenging. I would like to express my sincere thanks to the management team and staff who have responded exceptionally well to the many challenges, adapting positively to changing and emerging events during what was a period of tremendous uncertainty. It is testament to their professionalism and hard work that liveArgyll is well placed to resume activity from a stable platform.

As a Board we take our responsibility to protect the company's financial position and our ability to provide on-going services extremely seriously. Throughout the period of the pandemic we actively engaged with all funding partners in respect of continuation of support. We also ensured that wherever eligible we accessed all available UK and Scottish Government support. This allowed liveArgyll to retain staff, offer part services, enhance digital offerings and continue to operate in an environment where consumer confidence was low and associated self-generated income levels were vastly reduced.

I'm delighted to be able to record a considerable number of achievements during the year. Firstly, our ability to respond positively and timeously to ever changing circumstances must be recognised as a key success. The collective contribution from liveArgyll as an organisation and the contribution

of our individual staff members to the Argyll and Bute community in response to the pandemic was impressive and my thanks go to the very many people who represented our company whilst doing their bit. In respect of planning for the future and our continuing development, again, I'm pleased to record that we were able to progress with a number of strategic projects and initiatives linked to our stated proposals and priorities for change and which are underpinned by our Growth, Participation and Quality objectives.

These include:

- Continuing to meet our over-arching objective of being less reliant on external funding by agreeing a reduced 2022-23 annual services payment with Argyll and Bute Council;
- Launching our new Leisure Management System and customer booking app;
- Successful partnership working with **sportscotland** to deliver a revised Active Schools programme;
- A very successful on-boarding of the Community Learning service from the Council. liveArgyll are now operating as the lead delivery partner and an early inspection report highlighted very positive results;
- Continuing to be affordable, more specifically being able to hold our prices at 2019-20 levels;
- Implementation and planning of a range of facility development projects aimed at increasing capacity, improving services and offering, as well as adapting to changing customer behaviour.



These successes and the many others across the organisation are in no small part due to the commitment of our employees and volunteers. The support of our partners has been crucial during the financial year and I would like to thank everyone who has assisted our organisation in this challenging period.

Whilst we very much remain in an uncertain world, I am confident that liveArgyll is well placed to meet the many challenges ahead. I look forward to continuing to work on delivering our vision, which has never been so important, "our communities and visitors lead richer and more active lives".



OUR FACILITIES & SERVICES

LEISURE

Aqualibrium
Helensburgh Leisure Centre
Mid Argyll Sports Centre
Riverside Leisure Centre
Rothesay Leisure Centre



HALLS & COMMUNITY CENTRES

Queen's Hall, Dunoon
Victoria Hall, Campbeltown
Victoria Halls, Helensburgh
Ramsay Hall, Isle of Islay
The Corran Halls, Oban
Kintyre Community Centre
Lochgilphead Community Centre
Dunoon Community Centre
Moat Centre, Rothesay



LIBRARIES

Campbeltown
Cardross
Dunoon
Helensburgh
Lochgilphead
Oban
Rosneath
Rothesay
Tarbert
Tiree
Tobermory
Sandbank Office (*including Library Headquarters and Local Studies*)
Islay Mobile Library



ARCHIVES

PITCHES

COMMUNITY LETS

CAMPBELTOWN MUSEUM

SERVICES

Active Schools and Sports Development
Community Learning
Wellbeing

THE ORGANISATION

LiveArgyll was launched on 2nd October 2017 and provides sport, leisure, recreation and cultural opportunities for the communities of Argyll and Bute.

LiveArgyll is a not-for-profit charitable company, limited by guarantee.

(Charity No SC047545)

We have 7 Trustees, all of whom are volunteers and support the strategic direction and governance of the company led by Kevin Anderson, General Manager.

OUR VISION

“Our communities and visitors lead richer and more active lives.”

OUR VALUES

EMPLOYEES CUSTOMER SERVICE

The trust values all employees. Through investment we will maximise their potential, helping them to achieve their career aspirations and deliver high quality customer service that exceeds expectations

We are passionate about delivering the highest level of customer service

SAFETY

Ensuring the health and safety of employees and customers, going above and beyond legal requirements to provide a safe environment for all

INCLUSIVE EXPERTISE

Continuing to adopt an inclusive approach, recognising and respecting the needs of all within our communities

The trust will continuously build and enhance the knowledge and expertise of its workforce and strategic partners to deliver high quality services that respond to our customers' needs

EQUALITY

Maintaining in depth policies and procedures to ensure equality in the workplace and for customers alike

DEVELOPMENT INNOVATION ASPIRATION

A continuous cycle of improving and introducing new products, services or processes

Understanding the need to be innovative across all areas of the business to reach and deliver new benchmarks in service delivery

The trust has a culture of being aspirational and will strive to challenge its status and align itself with continuous improvement and examples of best practice

LEISURE AND LIBRARY TRUSTS MATTER...

Why Charitable Trusts are great!



Charitable Trusts come in all shapes and sizes but they all have two things in common; to do good and make things better, and liveArgyll is no different as a local charity operating within Argyll and Bute.

Every penny made is reinvested back into local facilities and programmes. This cross-subsidy approach distinguishes the model from other public leisure services because profit generating activities subsidise non-profit generating activities such as health and wellbeing, libraries and outreach programmes. With a combined turnover of £2 billion a year, that's a lot of money going back into the local economy. It also enables income from users who can afford to pay to be ring-fenced to subsidise access to activities.

Importantly, Trusts don't have shareholders and they are not private businesses. liveArgyll is run by board members from the local community. liveArgyll work in partnership with the Council, we listen to communities and are fully transparent. Each trust delivers slightly different programmes which reflect the need within the community. It's not just councils our members partner with however. Partnership working is part of our DNA and we work with health and social care partners and other third sector organisations and charities both at local and national level.

How do Charitable Trusts make a difference?

Why do Trusts do what they do? Because all 113 Trusts across the UK share a passion to improve social, mental and physical wellbeing and the difference they make together is remarkable. Improving people's health and wellbeing means reducing the cost of treatment and care later in life. It can help reduce crime and improve educational outcomes as well as increasing personal happiness. That carries a social value of £1.5 billion.

This figure is from the Social Value calculator developed by Sheffield Hallam University in partnership with 4global and Experian. The social value calculator measures 15 outcomes grouped under 4 categories:

- Physical and mental health
- Mental wellbeing
- Individual development
- Social and Community development

This is an impressive figure but it is hard to convey or even imagine the thousands of individual lives changed for the better each year. From people now living healthier lives after embarking on their fitness journey to those living happier lives being part of a creative programme.



LEISURE AND LIBRARY TRUSTS MATTER...

The trust model for public leisure & culture services

Non-profit distributing with no shareholders. All profit generated being reinvested to cross-subsidise programmes, access and facilities.

With a combined turnover of **£2 billion a year** that's a lot of money going back into the local economy.

Quality facilities and services conveniently located, with experienced and professional staff.

There are 500 plus charitable organisations with commitment & passion to improving social, physical and mental wellbeing.

That carries a social value of **£1.5 Billion***

414 million visits every year

Place-based working & leadership providing bespoke opportunities and programmes to meet the needs of the local population.

Community anchors delivering services to meet the needs of the local community.

Agile, responsive and collaborative, aligned to support local and national government priorities, with strong local and national partnerships.

Inclusive, supporting & welcoming environments for people from all pockets of the community.

Commercial astuteness to adapt and diversify, sustainability and resilience through agile decision making reacting to market forces.

Access to charitable and grant funding and social investment.

Transparent, independent and accountable organisations governed by skill based trustee boards made up of local people.

Significantly contributing to their local economy through local employment, training and skills development and offering career pathways.

safeguarding and increasing access to community assets for future generations.

Community leisure & culture trusts are legally formed as:

- Company limited by Guarantee & registered charity
- Society with charitable status
- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)

Trusts are regulated by the Charity Commission, OSOR, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator or the FCA @Financial Conduct Authority

For further information, please visit communityleisureuk.org

liveArgyll

*Based on 2010 data
*Fig. 4.4 from Young Communities using the social value indicator developed by Sheffield Hallam University in partnership with jobsite and Futurelab

A YEAR IN NUMBERS

£741,000

of grant income secured for the benefit of our communities



138,179

visits to extra-curricular club sessions

231

active schools volunteers

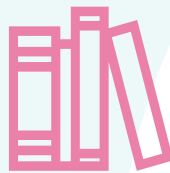


228

individuals were supported to take part in the Argyll Active exercise referral programme

797,000

downloads by our library members enjoying a range of free magazines and newspapers on pressreader



71,900

visits to libraries

236,000

visits to our pools, gyms, fitness classes and pitches



14

bookbug sessions every week across our libraries

1,425

children jumped into the pool as part of our learn to swim programme



340,000

Website visits increased from 135,000 in 20-21 up to 340,000 in 21-22

2021

In 2021 our very own Bibliographic Services and Local Studies Librarian Eleanor McKay was awarded an MBE for services to local studies



Social Media



Instagram
1410 followers



Twitter
612 followers



Facebook
2,601 page likes and **3,231** followers

298

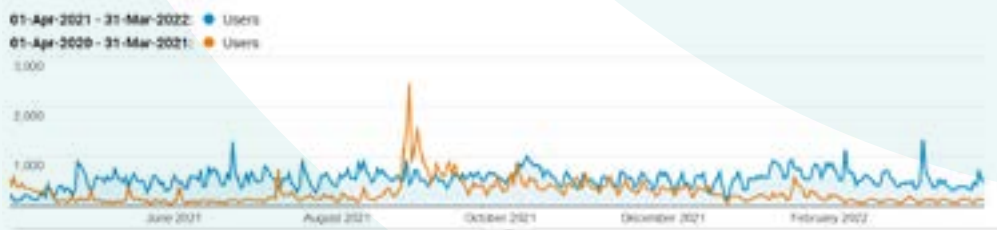
took part in the 12 week challenge



92

completed online Fitness Programmes form

Google Analytics



WHAT OUR CUSTOMERS SAY...

We actively encourage feedback from our customers through our website, in person in our facilities, and through surveys and focus groups. This helps us improve the services we offer. Customers are also encouraged to share their inspirational stories and provide testimonials, which we really appreciate. Here are a selection of comments we have received this year:

"I wish to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation of the superb effort and achievement made by both Graham and Andy for the running and management of this boot camp. Their experience, professionalism and friendly encouragement clearly brought out the very best of each individual in a mixed group of ages and abilities."
(Fitness class customer)

"My son loved the week, really enjoyed the small sided games can't wait until the next one." (Football Programme Customer)

"As Secretary to the Scottish Community Drama Association Western Division I had booked the Queens Hall for a 3 day drama event we hold annually. I just wanted to drop you an e-mail to say how fantastic all the staff were. They could not do enough for us and nothing was a problem. Everyone attending commented on how helpful everyone was and how they made the whole event just so much easier to run. Staff just worked along with us and made things run so smoothly. Everyone we met was amazing, but I have to single out Duncan, Andrea, Caroline and Lauren for their huge amount of assistance, and David Campbell for our initial visits to see if the venue was going to be suitable. We will definitely be using the venue again – if we're allowed back!!" (Events Customer)

"The variety of newspapers and magazines we can access from home as library members is exceptional."
(Library Member)

"Our girls have had a great week at camp. They both enjoyed all the activities and loved the games. I've been really impressed and will definitely book again."
(Active Schools Customer)

"One of our daughters has struggles with anxiety and as a result has had a few struggles in the mornings getting to camp. This morning was particularly bad and ended up with her sister being upset too. I wanted to pass on how fantastic every single Active Schools coach was under the circumstances. They spent a lot of time with us trying to calm her down and persuade her to join in. The patience, encouragement, positivity and understanding they showed both girls was amazing and I wanted to highlight their efforts and pass on my sincere thanks and appreciation." (Active Schools Customer)

"Before being diagnosed with MS I was very fit, attending the gym/classes nearly every day. Since diagnosis I have attempted to go to the gym and attend classes. The instructors are all aware I have MS and advise me to go at my own pace, however I do find myself pushing too hard to keep up with others. This class is specially designed for people with health problems and exercises are tailored to our needs. This makes me feel so much better." (Argyll Active Exercise Referral Participant)

"We would just like to pass on our thanks for the great service at Rothesay pool and the Bar T class we attended. The staff are so friendly and helpful, offering great advice too. Lots of places can be quite anonymous when you're a visitor, but Rothesay Leisure Centre was the opposite. Smiley reception, lovely pool and tough class! Thanks again!" (Swimming Pool Customer)

"Dear lifeguards Michelle, Anne and Alasdair, than you for your excellent first aid care, when I fell down the stairs on Monday, it transpired that I had broken my wrist. It was expertly re-aligned and plastered at the community hospital. Your group cared for me and made me feel as safe and secure as this baby giraffe on the card. Thank you. Kindest Regards with much Thanksgiving" (Swimming Pool Customer)

CASE STUDY 1

Real people, real results

By gentle encouragement but pushing me to new limits, I have gained strength and can fit into my favourite denim shorts (I have had them since high school)

Lockdown was a strange period and my weight increase was a product of Covid 19. I reached my heaviest weight of 14st in January 2016. I never really lost it and my weight fluctuated similar to other people.

In January 2021, I was watching the programme "Good Morning Ireland" and their TV doctor was encouraging viewers to take part in the 100 days of walking challenge, so I did! Walking gave me the confidence to get back into the gym in Helensburgh, where I enjoyed using the Cardiovascular machines and I met Fitness Instructor Iain McLean, or "my tormentor" as he's affectionately known in my house. I gained the confidence to try new things and had already set myself a Plank challenge when my gym pal and colleague Kay suggested we try the 12 week Gym Challenge.

I can honestly say that I felt challenged throughout the 12 weeks, to the point where my muscles were still sore the following day but that spurred me on to keep going. I previously used to weigh myself weekly but now feel once a month is better and so far since January 2021 I have lost 35 pounds! I owe that partly to the encouragement of Iain and his colleague and PT Instructor Louise. Through gentle encouragement whilst pushing me to new limits, I have gained strength and can fit into my favourite denim shorts that I have had since high school.



My breathing is much improved, I have more energy and as an Assistant Club Scout Leader with 1st Rhu it's kind of needed! The 12 week programme helps concentrate your mindset into a routine, which enables you to plan your fitness around your daily schedule. It also challenged me to look at all areas of fitness and focus on other areas I would have perhaps not thought about.

I really enjoyed the 12 week challenge as it allowed me to focus on the areas I needed to and to build on what I had achieved so far. The next challenge I have set myself is taking part in the Great Scottish Run in October for Kidney Kids.

You are looking fabulous, Gill, and we wish you the very best of luck in the Great Scottish Run!



CASE STUDY 2

Real people, real results

I signed up for the 12 week challenge to kickstart my weight loss again and learn how to use the gym properly. I was already doing several classes and trying to diet but my weight loss had plateaued. Linda showed me how to manage my calories and macros, and guided me in an evolving fitness programme of classes, weights, cardio and walking. I am significantly fitter, stronger and lighter, and now I have the knowledge, tools and support to continue to my goal. Thanks Linda!

Louise joined the 12 week Gym Challenge as she was keen to become stronger, lose weight, feel more confident using the resistance equipment in the gym and improve her VO2 max.*

Louise is a keen baker who enjoys savouring her tasty creations but has struggled to maintain a healthy weight for most of her adult life. She was recently diagnosed as Prediabetic, which prompted her to review her lifestyle and diet and inspired her to take part in the 12 week Gym Challenge. She was already attending 2-3 fitness classes per week but was otherwise generally inactive, apart from the occasional walk at a slow pace on flat ground.

Louise attended an initial one to one consultation with Linda to define her SMART goals* and was provided with a personalised programme to follow. The programme incorporated strengthening exercises using the fixed resistance machines via a split training routine, which allowed Louise to divide her workouts to focus on different areas of the body on different days. In addition to the Gym based programme, Louise agreed to attend weekly Spin classes alongside continuing to attend her regular Core and 30/30 classes. Louise was also set a home based challenge of walking 2 miles under 20 minutes which she maintained for the first four weeks of the programme. Furthermore, Linda highlighted the benefits of healthy eating and suggested Louise download the app "my fitness pal" on her Garmin watch, which would allow her to keep a diary of all food



and drinks consumed. Louise was encouraged to eat mindfully, consider the quality of the calories she consumed and how different foods and drinks made her feel. Linda also recommended Louise plan her meals in advance to help support her weight loss goals. Louise was disciplined and stuck to a set amount of calories per day and discovered that recording her food intake and planning meals in advance encouraged a reduction in snacking.



At the second consultation and programme review, Louise was keen to try using new equipment so Linda made sure to include some different exercises to aid compliance and ensure Louise remained challenged and motivated. By this stage, Louise was making good progress, feeling more confident, losing weight and gaining strength.

At the third review, Louise disclosed she was experiencing a plateau in weight loss and strength gains, so to help counter this she was tasked with the challenge of burning 2,500 calories per day by increasing her activity levels further. More cardiovascular exercise was included in her programme and it was recommended she increase the repetitions and sets on the resistance machines, which had the desired effect and assisted with further weight loss.

Linda also explained the benefits of counting macros when recording food intake and helped Louise determine her daily calorie and macronutrients needs and encouraged her to record them in her food diary to promote health seeking behaviours, rather than just focussing on counting calories.

At the final review, Louise was delighted with the progress she had made in taking positive steps towards achieving her goals along with seeing a marked improvement in her VO₂ max. Louise believes receiving different challenges at every review kept her incentivised.

As to be expected, Louise encountered some barriers along the way, such as feeling a little hungry at times or wondering if she should be eating more. To help counteract this, Linda assured her that creating a small daily calorie deficit was an effective way to achieve weight loss and encouraged Louise to monitor her daily food intake to ensure she was eating an adequate amount. Linda suggested Louise considered how her clothes were fitting, which was a good indication of her changing body shape, rather than the number on the scales any time her weight plateaued.

At the end of the 12 week period, Louise was thrilled to discover she was no longer prediabetic and was pleased with the advice and support she received for the duration of the challenge, both physically and emotionally. She rightly feels proud of how far she has come and is confident she can continue on her fitness journey now she has the tools to do so. She has achieved great results and has not only lost weight but gained confidence, increased her strength and endurance and reports an improvement in her mental wellbeing, resulting in her feeling more energised and happy!

Congratulations, Louise, on a terrific achievement. Your determination and hard work have certainly paid off!

^{*}VO₂ max – The maximum or optimum rate at which the heart, lungs and muscles can effectively use oxygen during exercise, used as a way of measuring a person's individual aerobic capacity.

^{**} SMART goals - **S** - Specific (How many times per week, where and when?) **M** - Measurable (Can it be a timed or distanced measured goal?)

A - Achievable (How confident are you that you can achieve this goal?) **R** - Relevant (How important is it to you?) **T** - Timed (When are you going to start? Are you going to set a date to achieve this goal?)

CASE STUDY 3

Supporting individuals and building community



Mike joined the Move More programme in September 2020, and attends the Rothesay gentle movement class on a weekly basis.

Please share how you found the content of the gentle movement classes?

The content is ideally suited to my own needs, recovering from cancer treatment, chemotherapy, and a related broken femur. The careful attention of the class leaders during each session also ensures that the content is customised for the condition of each participant.

How have you found the teaching and support from the gentle movement volunteers?

The volunteers have been great, always very supportive and engaged and caring.

How have you found the support from the Move More development officer?

Excellent in every way: clear communications; fast and complete responses to any questions; very positive and supportive and encouraging; well managed sessions; and a clearly articulated concern that all participants feel safe and comfortable.

What impact do you feel the Move More programme has had on your physical activity levels, your physical and psychological wellbeing and on your social connections?

The programme has helped me feel more flexible and less stressed in my daily activities. I am already generally experienced in the use of technology, but now feel more comfortable using Zoom. The programme has helped me learn to relax and destress, stay present, increase my flexibility, and achieve a better balance between gentle exercise, meditation, and rest. Just participating in a community of others in a similar situation has helped me enormously.

The programme has helped me find greater peace and acceptance with my condition, and to be more kind to myself and take things more easily. Each week I feel something let go and relax as I prepare for the session, and the gentle approach is very beneficial. The leaders and volunteers demonstrate their own experience by providing such a peaceful and gentle group environment.

In this time of increased isolation, the sessions provide a weekly anchor, a wee safe space to chat a little with others in a similar situation, share stories, and empathise with one another. This is something that I had been sorely missing, and had been looking, for when I was invited to attend.

CASE STUDY 4

Clubtastic

In February 2022 liveArgyll libraries launched our first children's club at Rothesay Library. Over a period of 6 weeks we offered children of school ages P3 – P7 the opportunity to come along and enjoy fun and games at the library.

For the first three weeks we ran each session with a different theme but always had alternative games and the extremely popular 'search and find books' for any child who did not engage. This worked incredibly well, to such an extent that it encouraged the children who attended to work together as a team to enjoy each session.

The themes were Lego Club, Crafty Crafters and Fun and Games at the Library. The Lego Club worked well with our library team working together with the children to make their own Lego creations. We invested in Lego themed books to help with this. As this was a trial for Clubtastic we took note of the level of engagement required by our team and also gained ideas for how to use this Lego theme, for example creating challenges for the children such as building an item with 50 blue bricks.

Our Crafty Crafters session worked well. The children really enjoyed working with craft paper and designing and making their own baubles, drawing and colouring. The library team worked together with Active Schools to put together the Fun and Games theme. The session was run by the library team and the children loved the games and activities so much so that the children who attended the first block of sessions immediately asked their grown-ups to sign them up for the next three sessions.

Parental feedback was fantastic with one particular family stating that their child "absolutely loved it! She's been asking when it will be on again."



Our library team were incredibly encouraged by the positive changes they noticed in the participants. Particularly one child who was initially hesitant to come into the library to take part in the club but who, by the last session, was eager and excited to attend. Not even having time for a goodbye to their grown up! Also they reported how well the children connected with each other and the library team, sharing their excitement for challenges.



Clubtastic began when we were experiencing large numbers of Covid cases but families reported that they felt safe dropping their children at the library. They wanted them to get back to regular out of school activities and were pleased that our libraries offered this. With such positive feedback we have now begun introducing Clubtastic to more of our libraries and from autumn 2022 we hope to have our children's club in all our main libraries.

CASE STUDY 5

Inclusion at the heart of what we do

The liveArgyll Active Schools team works with schools, clubs and communities across Argyll and Bute to provide a wide range of extracurricular opportunities in physical activity and sport. Equality, diversity and inclusion are a major focus for the team and with the help of different organisations, partners and individuals, programmes are developed to ensure inclusion is at the heart of what we do.

Our Oban Active Schools Coordinator Gillian Walker has worked with staff at St Columba's Primary School to ensure inclusion in physical activity is a priority for their pupils. Yannick is a pupil in primary six who has spina bifida. His Mum, Sally, is incredibly supportive and is very keen for Yannick to be involved in as much as possible in and out with school.

"Sport has had a transformative impact on his life. He has gained confidence, a sense of self-worth, and the ability to take part in teams. It has transformed his social skills."

Gillian works with St Columba's pupils to offer opportunities to participate in physical activity and sport, and supports a leadership programme within the school.

"As the Active Schools Coordinator, I worked alongside the school to encourage and support Yannick to be involved and to promote the school to be more inclusive in sport. As Yannick is really enthusiastic and passionate about sport we are trying to create more opportunities for him. Yannick has a passion in basketball and swimming, which he excels in so we are doing what we can to ensure he can participate and compete."

With a pro-active approach the school invited the organisation 'Go Kids Go' to run a session on wheelchair skills for Yannick, which also allowed other pupils in his class to use a wheelchair and play alongside their peers.



Collaboration between a range of partners has been a huge factor in providing Yannick with opportunities and has recently led to him being involved in wheelchair basketball sessions organised by basketballscotland.



In March 2022, Yannick travelled to Linwood in Renfrewshire to the annual Parasport Festival hosted by Scottish Disability Sport, the governing body of disability sport in Scotland. The Parasport Festival introduces young people in mainstream schools with physical and sensory disabilities, to a variety of sports including, swimming, tennis, athletics, judo, table tennis, boccia, and football.

Because of his tenacity and ability, Yannick was talent spotted by a number of different sports coaches, but it was basketball that really sparked an interest. Scottish Disability Sport identified a local volunteer coach, Peter Odoom, to assist Yannick in one to one coaching sessions. Yannick has certainly set the bar high and said -

"Sport is fun to do and I want to be in the Paralympics."

Yannick has now attended a number of wheelchair basketball sessions in Glasgow and Perth organised by basketballscotland. basketballscotland is a fully inclusive governing body and has a fantastic wheelchair basketball pathway, from participation to Paralympic level.

The importance of inclusion in the Active Schools programme is paramount, and the variety of partners working together for the benefit of young people is a brilliant example of the collaborative nature of ensuring everyone is included, and highlights the impact sport and physical activity makes.

Yannick has a very bright future ahead!

CASE STUDY 6

Making mindful music

The liveArgyll Community Learning (CL) Team in Kintyre worked in partnership with The Kintyre Link Club, a local mental health club run by members for members, with its main aim being to promote the welfare of those who suffer or have suffered from mental ill health.



The group participated in the Community Learning and Development (CLD) Community Consultation Exercise, in which Health and Wellbeing came out as top in their main priorities within the Core Themes. The CL team then carried out further consultations with the group members who came up with the idea of writing and producing a song about the Link Club to promote it to the wider community.



The Link Music Club Project introduced them to writing and producing music with the aim of improving the participants' general wellbeing, reducing isolation and promoting wellness.

Learner evaluations / Feedback



"Music and song craft is about people; before I had these classes I knew how to write songs but the social contact has made me more skilful, especially working as a team and using collaboration and other people's ideas. Before I was on my own now I can work with others."

"Such a great opportunity to learn something I would never have had before. It was such fun working with others and also having the support of the Link Club, Dawn & Jamie"

"The Link Club Music Project with Jamie and Dawn has been excellent. A lot of fun and great therapy. We would love more music activities. The whole Link Club felt more positive! Thank you!"



DIGITAL MARKETING

Leisure Link Partnership
Access leisure facilities across Scotland with your liveArgyll membership

highlife, Highland Council, M, MORE life, live Argyll, LIVE BORDERS, ActiveLife

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Booking now available

Interested in training to become a pool lifeguard?

RLSS LIFEGUARD COURSE
28TH MARCH - 1ST APRIL

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Make life easy when booking fitness classes and updating your membership details!

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Download the liveArgyll App from your app store.

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Pay to play at registration. No booking required.

SINGLE MEMBERSHIPS
Individual £10.00 per week, including 10m and 15m Clubhouse

ONLY 82p PER DAY*

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Individual £10.00 per week, including 10m and 15m Clubhouse

ONLY £1.20 PER DAY*

SEPTEMBER SPECIAL OFFER
Your health and wellbeing should come first. Join liveArgyll let us help you achieve your personal goals and support you on your fitness journey!

JOIN NOW
MEMBERSHIP FEE

- FREE 12 WEEK PERSONALISED CHALLENGE to help you reach your fitness goals
- Choose from our **1000+ FITNESS CLASSES** and programmes, including: HIIT, 1-Club and 1-Community. Public access Argyll and Bute.
- 10m and 15m Clubhouse access

*Only £1.20 per family membership and the 10m can be enhanced with a 15m pool membership and membership fee.

Easter Clubbastic
Kilbrannan Library

Legs
Wednesday 6th April 2-3pm

Easter Crafts
Wednesday 13th April 2-3pm

Pay with the library on registration.

12 WEEK PERSONALISED CHALLENGE
FEEL STRONGER, HEALTHIER & MORE ENERGISED

Check your goal with a customised plan

ONLY 82p PER DAY*

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- 12 weeks of personalised fitness and nutrition plans
- 12 weeks of personalised fitness and nutrition plans

FITNESS PROGRAMMES

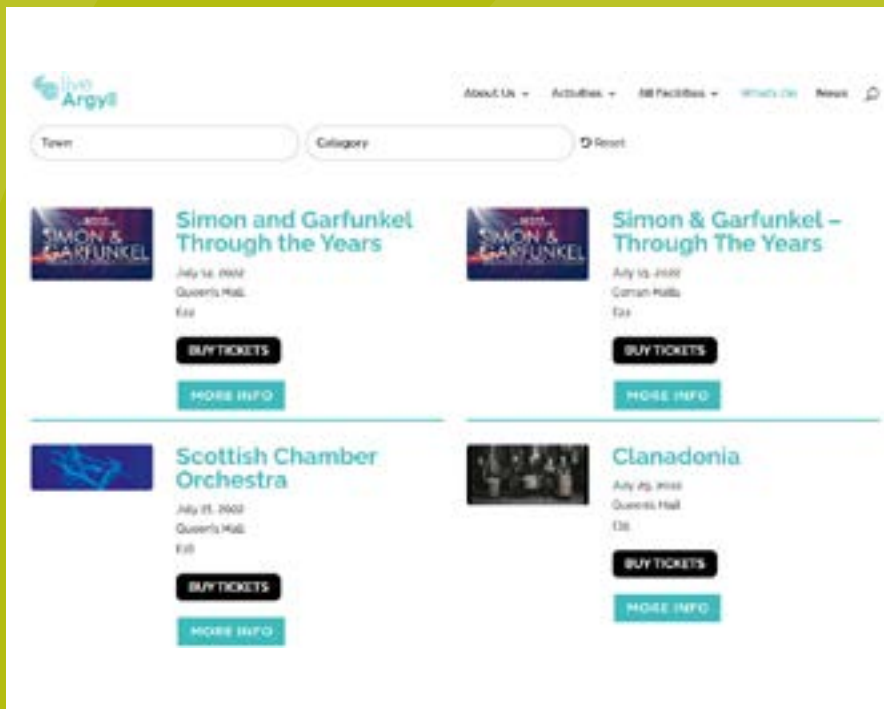
BEGINNER > INTERMEDIATE > ADVANCED

JUNIOR CIRCUITS FOR MEMBERS!

*Junior and family members aged 6-12 can join us for junior circuits.

updated pool timetable

The new What's On webpage allows for filtering by town and/or type of event. Additional buttons have been added to each event so customers can quickly and easily buy tickets from this page, without having to click through the individual event page and from there then through to the relevant ticket page.





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Free to all [LiveArgyll Libraries](#) members. Not yet a member? Join today here: <http://ow.ly/skmy50FjF3T>

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How to access PressReader using your library card

- Download and launch the PressReader app
- Select "Libraries & Groups" option

- Select your local library
- Enter your library card number and pin
- Sign-in

1,591 People reached 23 Engagements Boost Unavailable

2 11 shares

LOOKING AHEAD

Senior management and Board members continuously review both the local and wider national operating environment for all our service areas to ensure that wherever possible the company is well placed to maximise opportunities from emerging trends or data.

Our planning processes incorporate the systematic examination of potential threats, opportunities and likely future developments including, but not restricted to, those that are at the margins of current thinking and planning. This combination of inward and outward review supports the company's growth and participation objectives and allows a pro-active approach to service provision.

Our immediate focus will be a return to pre-pandemic levels of service and income however we are very mindful of the impact of consumer confidence alongside the current cost of living crisis which is a concern for an organisation primarily sourcing income from the disposable income aspect of citizen's finances.

The positive contribution of culture and leisure on people's health and wellbeing is well documented however a lack of public finances may jeopardise the sustainability of these valuable services. Investment in Leisure and Library type activity must be seen as an investment in Health and Wellbeing and as such we intend to place a significant focus on our equality and wellbeing agenda ensuring that liveArgyll is seen and recognised as a significant contributing partner and that the wider social value of our many services is truly recognised.

We have a number of branding, marketing and operating initiatives targeted at these areas. A key aspect of our approach will be to highlight, promote and reinforce the message that our services are open and safe, our product offering remains excellent value for money, together with strong messaging around the very many health and wellbeing benefits associated with our activities. Our low affordable price point will also be a key driver as disposable incomes are squeezed and we hope to be able to sustain our pricing model at the lower end of the market.

Our services are continuously evolving. We will look to continue to maximise all opportunities to improve our reach, to ensure that wherever possible our services are fully accessible. Digitalisation and automation of both back-office and customer facing processes will be a key priority moving forward.

We will look to continue to develop and expand the range of digital offerings within our Library and Archive Service. Our Community Learning and Active Schools services are performing well. Our focus will be on further developing existing and new partnerships, co-working and increasing the number of volunteers who actively contribute to these valuable services.

During 2022 we expect the new Helensburgh Leisure Centre to become operational. This provides liveArgyll with a modern well equipped centre in one of the larger populated areas of Argyll and Bute therefore will undoubtedly provide the opportunity to significantly increase our offering and provides a major tool to support our participation, quality and growth objectives.

Our staff are our best asset. In order to achieve our many aspirations it is important to have a motivated and well-trained workforce who feel confident and comfortable in their workplace. A range of corporate and specific individual training offerings will be put in place which will allow opportunities for self-development and the upskilling of the wider staff group. Similarly we intend to review our working arrangements and associated flexibilities that now form part of modern practice.

liveArgyll is, and always will be, a customer focused organisation. Wherever possible we will endeavour to fully meet our customer needs within our available resources. We aim to be a progressive, inclusive organisation that provides accessible, attractive and affordable services.

Kevin Anderson
General Manager



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Pension Fund £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
Income:						
Donations and legacies	5	350,001	1,569	-	351,571	1,914,078
Charitable activities	4	2,123,703	739,779	-	2,863,481	872,678
Management fee	4	3,937,594	-	-	3,937,594	3,788,545
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-
Total income		6,411,298	741,348	-	7,152,646	6,575,301
Expenditure:						
Charitable activities	6	(6,142,457)	(791,330)	(1,378,000)	(8,311,787)	(5,811,441)
Other trading activities		-	-	-	-	-
Total expenditure		(6,142,457)	(791,330)	(1,378,000)	(8,311,787)	(5,811,441)
Net income / (expenditure)		268,841	(49,981)	(1,378,000)	(1,159,141)	763,860
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-
Other recognised gains / (losses):						
Actuarial gains / (losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	15	-	-	3,217,000	3,217,000	(3,621,000)
Net movement in funds		268,841	(49,981)	1,839,000	2,057,859	(2,857,140)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		1,661,474	174,085	(5,389,000)	(3,553,441)	(696,301)
Total funds carried forward		1,930,314	124,104	(3,550,000)	(1,495,582)	(3,553,441)

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Company Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account) for the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Pension Fund £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
Income:						
Donations and legacies	5	350,001	1,569	-	351,571	1,914,078
Charitable activities	4	2,123,703	739,779	-	2,863,481	872,678
Management fee	4	3,937,594	-	-	3,937,594	3,788,545
Total income		6,411,298	741,348	-	7,152,646	6,575,301
Expenditure:						
Charitable activities	6	(6,142,457)	(791,330)	(1,378,000)	(8,311,787)	(5,811,441)
Total expenditure		(6,142,457)	(791,330)	(1,378,000)	(8,311,787)	(5,811,441)
Net income / (expenditure)		268,841	(49,981)	(1,378,000)	(1,159,141)	763,860
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-
Other recognised gains / (losses):						
Actuarial gains / (losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	15	-	-	3,217,000	3,217,000	(3,621,000)
Net movement in funds		268,841	(49,981)	1,839,000	2,057,859	(2,857,140)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		1,660,395	174,085	(5,389,000)	(3,554,520)	(697,380)
Total funds carried forward		1,929,236	124,104	(3,550,000)	(1,496,660)	(3,554,520)

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Consolidated Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
Current assets					
Stock	12	20,530		8,097	
Debtors	13	104,855		80,489	
Cash and cash equivalents		2,638,176		2,231,061	
Total current assets		2,763,561		2,319,647	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(709,143)		(484,088)	
Net current assets		2,054,418		1,835,559	
Net assets excluding pension liability		2,054,418		1,835,559	
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	15	(3,550,000)		(5,389,000)	
Net liabilities		(1,495,582)		(3,553,441)	
Funds					
Unrestricted funds	16	1,930,314		1,661,474	
Restricted funds	16	124,104		174,085	
Pension reserve	15	(3,550,000)		(5,389,000)	
Total Funds		(1,495,582)		(3,553,441)	

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Company Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Investments	11		1		1
Total fixed assets			1		1
Current assets					
Stock	12	20,530		8,097	
Debtors	13	104,855		80,489	
Cash and cash equivalents		2,637,097		2,229,981	
Total current assets		2,762,482		2,318,567	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(709,143)		(484,088)	
Net current assets			2,053,339		1,834,479
Net assets excluding pension liability			2,053,340		1,834,480
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	15	(3,550,000)		(5,389,000)	
Net liabilities		(1,496,660)		(3,554,520)	
Funds					
Unrestricted funds	16	1,929,236		1,660,395	
Restricted funds	16	124,104		174,085	
Pension reserve	15	(3,550,000)		(5,389,000)	
Total Funds		(1,496,660)		(3,554,520)	

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Operating results (excluding the pension liability adjustment)

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £	Total Funds 2021 £
Income:				
Donations and legacies	350,001	1,569	351,571	1,914,078
Charitable activities	2,123,703	739,779	2,863,481	872,678
Management fee	3,937,594	-	3,937,594	3,788,545
Total income	6,411,298	741,348	7,152,646	6,575,301
Expenditure:				
Charitable activities	(6,142,457)	(791,330)	(6,933,787)	(5,259,441)
Total expenditure	(6,142,457)	(791,330)	(6,933,787)	(5,259,441)
Net income / (expenditure)	268,841	(49,981)	218,859	1,315,860
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Surplus/(deficit) from operations	268,841	(49,981)	218,859	1,315,860

The operating results for liveArgyll for the year ended 31 March 2022, excluding the pension adjustment, report an overall surplus of £218,859.

THANK YOU

Thank you to our partners, funders and stakeholders for their invaluable support throughout the year. As a local charity we couldn't achieve what we do without you!



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CULTURE, HERITAGE & ARTS.
ARGYLL & ISLES



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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Mental Health is a priority of the Scottish Government and all wider wellbeing professionals who work with children and young people as outlined in the Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027. Poor mental health is associated with significantly worse educational and longer-term life outcomes which are exacerbated by social inequalities such as poverty. This was recently reported to be a growing concern for Scotland (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2014, 2020).
- 1.2 In 2018, the Scottish Government announced an investment of over £60 million in additional school counselling services across Scotland with the aim of responding to mild and moderate emotional and mental health needs experienced by young people. This funding aimed to deliver counselling services to children and young people aged 10 and above.
- 1.3 In 2019 an agreement was reached between the Scottish Government and COSLA on the detailed allocation of £60 million over four years to build or expand high quality counselling services for children and young people.
- 1.4 Within Argyll and Bute this temporary funding has been fully utilised to develop a counselling in schools service which has now been in place since January 2021. It has recently been indicated by the Scottish Government that this funding will be baselined into the Council's financial settlement from Scottish Government.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION SERVICE

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 August 2022

COUNSELLING IN SCHOOLS

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The **Counselling in Schools Service** provides an early intervention through therapeutic counselling to children aged 10 and above. This directly supports children and young people with health and wellbeing concerns. Counselling offers young people, a safe and supportive environment to talk over difficult issues in confidence. This involves listening to their views, experiences and feelings without judgement, within the context of a safe and trusting relationship characterised by empathy and respect.

2.2 As a joint development project by NHS Highland and Argyll and Bute's Educational Psychology Service, the **Counselling in Schools Service** makes a considerable contribution towards all of the four core aims of the current Children and Young People's Service Plan 2020-2023:

- **CYPSP Priority 1** - *By ensuring strong, respectful collaborative leadership and communication through the GIRFEC approach we are getting it right for our children and young people*
- **CYPSP Priority 2** - *Our children and young people have access to early help and support.*
- **CYPSP Priority 3** – *We improve the mental health and well-being of our children and young people*
- **CYPSP Priority 4** – *We ensure our children and young people's voice is heard.*

2.3 As an accessible tier 1 service, counselling can support rising mental health needs and provide an early intervention which can reduce the escalation of these needs. Over time it is expected that this will also

reduce the pressures on other services including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) through prevention of escalation as a result of providing support at an earlier stage.

- 2.4 The service sits within Health Services under a Child Health Manager and is led by the Counselling Team Lead. The full team comprises of 9 British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) qualified counsellors, an administrative assistant and support from a Research Assistant and the wider Educational Psychology Service (EPS) team. The School Counsellor posts provide a full time equivalent of 8.5 FTE.
- 2.5 This papers is presented to provide an update on the delivery and impact of the first 18 months of the Counselling in Schools service.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:

- 3.1 The development of the service from the planning stage to direct delivery to children and young people, in line with the *Guidance for Education Authorities Establishing Access to Counselling in Secondary Schools* and support the on-going commitment to deliver this service within all schools.
- 3.2 The need for support across the Health and Social Care Partnership and the Education Service to further embed this service within current processes, ensure a clear continuum of support and improve access for children and young people.
- 3.3 That a successful approach requires joint working between Education establishments and the Counselling in Schools Service as partners in co-facilitation including the use of school spaces for young people to access their counselling sessions.
- 3.4 The need to consider how best to ensure impact from the Counselling in Schools funding which has now been base lined in to the Council's financial settlement.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 *Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)* is the national policy framework aimed at supporting the wellbeing of children and young in Scotland. This framework incorporates the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (*UNCRC*) into practice and promotes a rights-based approach. The Children and Young People (*Scotland*) Act (2014) reinforces the rights of children and young people.

The 8 GIRFEC wellbeing indicators provide a shared language and common understanding of wellbeing for all professionals across the HSCP, which children need to grow and develop: Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included.

- 4.2 Health and wellbeing are also core components of the *Curriculum for Excellence* and *Building the Ambition*, emphasising the need to ensure that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing.
- 4.3 In 2021 a partnership approach was implemented between HSCP and the Educational Psychology Service to develop and support the implementation and evaluation of Argyll and Bute's Counselling in Schools Service.
- 4.4 A paper detailing this innovative approach was published in the national research journal *Educational Psychology in Scotland* by Ledsom, Greig and Hampton, 2021, members of the Educational Psychology team.
- 4.5 Following interview the service was able to fill all posts including the Counselling Service Team Lead and a Research Assistant (based within the EPS) to develop the service plan for implementation and evaluation prior to referrals being accepted.
- 4.6 The service was able to attract a range of candidates for the School Counsellor posts which required eligibility for British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) registration. Staff came from a variety of backgrounds including Education, Social Work, CAMHS and private practice. Current staffing levels include 9 school counsellors (8.5FTE).
- 4.7 Additional funding from the Council COVID recovery funding was directed to employing a further 2 School Counsellors on fixed term contracts which are included in the calculation above.
- 4.8 Establishing the service during the second national COVID-19 lockdown required a flexible approach to delivery with the majority of counselling being delivered by remote means (including Google Meet, Near Me and MS Teams). Whilst provision has now been able to resume face-face, this approach continues to support delivery across our large authority to remote and rural communities, and is the preferred approach to accessing the service for some young people irrespective of their geographic location.
- 4.9 The impact of counselling is assessed using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the Young Persons CORE 10 (YP-CORE 10) which are both assessment tools used to evaluate progress. Further detail on this is provided in section 3.15.

4.10 The service opened for referrals in February 2021 and has received 509 referrals to date with an acceptance rate of over 99%. Reasons for non-acceptance include being too young to access the service or having experienced a recent bereavement.

4.11 Of the referrals received to date:

- The most common reasons for referral include Anxiety (44%), Depression (25%), Relationships (with parents, carers and peers, 23%), Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties (21%), and Self-Harm (16%).
- 60% of young people accessing the service report they are female, 34% report they are male and less than 6% describe themselves in another way.
- 72% of referrals come from a professional (including Education, Health and Social Work). 24% come directly from young people through self-referrals.
- The average age of someone accessing counselling is 14 and the majority of referrals come from S2-S4.
- Other information provided on referral forms: 7.3% Care experienced, 19% receive free school meals, 7.3% Young Carers, 17% with recorded ASN, 41% with another agency involved (including previously).

4.12 Efficacy of counselling (Quantitative)

- Within Counselling two validated outcome measures are used: The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and The Young Persons CORE 10 (YP CORE10).
- For young people who completed counselling there is a measured reduction in scores which represents an improvement.
- Using the SDQ we see an 18% reduction in first and final scores. Using the scoring bands this moves the average young person from the High category to the Slightly Raised category.
- Using the YP CORE we see a 27% decrease in first and final scores and this trend is evident between every session.

4.13 Efficacy of counselling (Qualitative)

- The following statements are gathered from case studies which are collected on a regular basis from Counsellors.
- “Towards the end of counselling, he hoped to make a journey involving several buses, a train and a ferry, which we talked through and planned. He made this journey and felt that he could even repeat it a few weeks later”
- “He said that he felt less anxious and more hopeful about the future”
- “After the first few sessions she managed to attend a full week”
- “Feeling happier, more confident, involved and present in more aspects of her life, both personally and at school”

- “Felt her outlook on her future had improved”
- 4.14 Children and young people can access the service through either a self-referral form or a professional referral form which has been circulated across Education, Health and Social Work.
- 4.15 Children and young people’s views are gathered and used to inform service development. Following a meeting with a group of young people in April 2022 changes have been made to the referral forms and a poster to promote the service has been developed.
- 4.16 A termly newsletter is produced by the service to update schools and stakeholders on developments and continue the promotion of access for young people.
- 4.17 Information is gathered on young people from particular vulnerable groups accessing the service including those with caring responsibility, those accessing free school meals and young people with care experience.
- 4.18 The Counselling in Schools Service reports regularly to Scottish Governments through the *Children and Young People’s Mental Health Report (Combining School Counselling and Children and Young Peoples Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework)* every 6 months. A summary report of all services within Scotland can be found at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/access-to-counsellors-in-secondary-schools-summary-report/>
- 4.19 Now that the funding for this service has been baselined, multiagency discussions are taking place to ensure maximum impact for our children and young people through delivery of Counselling in Schools moving forward, taking in to account the evaluation information to date including the voice of the young people accessing the service.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The establishment of the Counselling in Schools Service has made a significant contribution towards four core aims of the current Children and Young People’s Service Plan 2020-2023 and national priorities around supporting the wellbeing and mental health of our children and young people, in line with Scottish Government requirements.
- 5.2 While the service is relatively new, over time it is hoped through secure funding this will continue to have positive impact on outcomes for children and young people as well as building capacity with staff.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – Policy to support service delivery is currently in place
- 6.2 Financial – funding has now been base-lined
- 6.3 Legal - None
- 6.4 HR – decisions regarding whether counsellors sit within Health or the Council to be taken
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty - None
 - 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty
 - 6.5.3 Islands – service delivery is provided on an equitable basis across all areas of Argyll and Bute
- 6.6 Risk – recruitment and retention of appropriately qualified counsellors in the longer term
- 6.7 Customer Service

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Report produced 18 July 2022

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Information for Parents and Carers

Appendix 2 Information for Children and Young People

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Argyll and Bute Counselling in Schools service – Information for Parents and Carers.

Argyll and Bute has a new counselling service available to all children aged 10-18 years old. We are able to accept referrals from:

- Self-referrals (the child or young person)
- School Link Worker / Social Workers / Youth Workers etc.
- Parents and Carers

Counselling is a therapeutic intervention that helps to support the health, emotional and social needs of children/young people. It is estimated that across the UK one in four children will struggle with their emotional health. In Argyll and Bute we are committed to supporting our children/young to reach their potential and become; Successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective learners.

Our counsellors can offer children/young people a safe and supportive environment to talk over difficult issues in confidence and listen to their views, experiences and feelings without judgement and through building a safe and trusting relationship, characterised by empathy and respect.

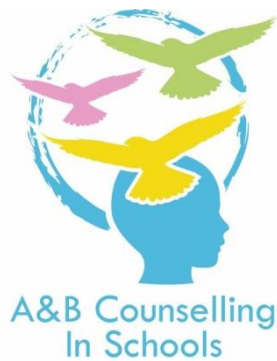
Our counsellors can help the child/young person to focus on their concerns, giving them an opportunity to explore specific problems, make choices, cope with crises, work through feelings of conflict and improve relationships with others. This is a confidential service and the child / young person will be able to speak to their counsellor knowing the content of their sessions will be held in confidence. However should there be any disclosures relating to serious harm to self or others the appropriate steps will be taken and relevant people informed.

If you feel your child or young person may benefit from counselling support please email nhsh.counsellinginschools@nhs.scot for further information or to request a referral form.

Please note: the child / young person must give their consent before a counselling referral is submitted for them.



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Argyll and Bute Counselling in Schools service – Information for Young People.

What is counselling?

Counselling is spending time with a qualified counsellor exploring any problems or worries you may have. This can be done in different ways; often by talking but sometimes the counsellor will invite you to use creative methods –whichever feels right for you!

Life can often feel difficult or overwhelming – counselling is one way to help you explore, understand and overcome any concerns which may be making you feel sad, anxious or unsafe.

Often people can feel anxious about accessing counselling for the first time. Your counsellor understands this and will work at a pace that feels right for you.

This service is free of charge and available to young people aged 10-18.

Other stuff that's good to know about counselling.....

- Counselling appointments will take place in a private designated room each week
- The counsellor will be the same person each week
- Your appointment will last 50 minutes
- Counselling support usually lasts for 8 sessions, sometimes it's less and occasionally more
- You will not be judged or criticised
- No one will tell you what to do
- You will be listened to and supported
-

If you would like counselling support and wish to access the service please send a referral form or an email to nhsh.counsellinginschools@nhs.scot and someone will get in touch with you.

Your information will be held securely and treated confidentially.



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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****EDUCATION****25 AUGUST 2022**

CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The main purpose of this report is to update members of the Community Services Committee with information about interventions being taken within Education Services to ensure that Care Experienced Children and Young People achieve the best possible educational outcomes, as agreed at the Community Services Committee on 10 June 2021.

1.2 The report also details the expenditure against the grant allocated by Scottish Government to Argyll and Bute for session 2021/22 from the Scottish Attainment Challenge Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund.

1.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that Community Services Committee notes:

- a) The work undertaken by Argyll and Bute Education Services as part of the Corporate Parenting Board to improve the educational attainment and life chances of Care Experienced Children and Young People.
- b) That the spending plan for the grant allocated by Scottish Government to Argyll and Bute for session 2021/22 from the Scottish Attainment Challenge Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund has been produced and monitored by the Education Lead (Principal Teacher) for Care Experienced

Children and Young People, in consultation with key partners and specifically the Social Work Lead for Care Experience, the Chief Education Officer and Chief Social Worker.

- c) That the attainment funding for Care Experienced Children and Young People will support the continued input from a centralised post holder (Currently the Principal Teacher for Care Experienced Children and Young People) and roles of the Care Experienced Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers.
- d) That through the coming session the support for care experienced children and young people will continue from a specific post holder, however, the title will be amended to Virtual Head Teacher to bring Argyll and Bute in line with the national trend across other local authorities and to increase the credibility and scope of this post.
- e) That the Chief Education Officer continues to provide updates on the improved outcomes for Care Experienced Children and Young People to the Corporate Parenting Board and Community Services Committee.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

EDUCATION

25 AUGUST 2022

CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Corporate Parenting is the responsibility that councils have for children and young people who are Care experienced under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and are known as Care Experienced Children and Young People.
- 2.2 The establishment of Argyll and Bute Corporate Parenting Board was central to the Council response to improving outcomes for Care experienced children and young people and care leavers. It was also a key element of the Getting it Right for our Care experienced Children's Improvement Plan.
- 2.3 As employees of the local authority, education staff are corporate parents and have a clearly defined role to play alongside the other 23 corporate parents defined in Schedule 4 of the Act. However staff working in education need to be aware of the unique role that they play in ensuring that care experienced children and young people experience a positive learning environment, strong, nurturing relationships, encouragement and protection against poor outcomes in adulthood. Managers need to ensure support and ongoing professional learning opportunities for education staff to allow them to fulfil this crucial role. This is clearly stated in the Framework on Supporting Care Experienced Children in Education settings in Argyll and Bute that was produced during 2016, presented to the Corporate Parenting Board on 1st July 2016 and launched in schools during

session 2016/17 – January 2017 (Appendix 1). The Framework was created following work by a multi-agency working group and after partnership working with The Centre For Excellence for Children’s Care and Protection (CELCIS). It draws heavily on the national best practice guidance: https://www.celcis.org/files/3615/0721/5871/Looked_After_and_Learning.pdf

2.4 During session 2021/22 there have been significant developments in supporting the educational experiences and outcomes for our children and young people in Argyll and Bute.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Community Services Committee notes:

- a) The work undertaken by Argyll and Bute Education Services as part of the Corporate Parenting Board to improve the educational attainment and life chances of Care Experienced Children and Young People.
- b) That the spending plan for the grant allocated by Scottish Government to Argyll and Bute for session 2021/22 from the Scottish Attainment Challenge Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund has been produced and monitored by the Education Lead (Principal Teacher) for Care Experienced Children and Young People, in consultation with key partners and specifically the Social Work Lead for Care Experience, the Chief Education Officer and Chief Social Worker.
- c) That the attainment funding for Care Experienced Children and Young People will support the continued input from a centralised post holder (currently the Principal Teacher for Care Experienced Children and Young People) and roles of the Care Experienced Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers.
- d) That through the coming session the support for care experienced children and young people will continue from a specific post holder, however, the title will be amended to Virtual Head Teacher to bring Argyll and Bute in line with the national

trend across other local authorities and to increase the credibility and scope of this post.

- e) That the Chief Education Officer continues to provide updates on the improved outcomes for Care Experienced Children and Young People to the Corporate Parenting Board and Community Services Committee.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 In 2018, as part of the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education and Attainment Scotland Fund (a targeted initiative focused on supporting young people affected by poverty and deprivation across Scotland), specific funding was directed towards supporting Care Experienced Children and Young People. The term 'care experienced' is now a widely used term within the sector to describe any person who has experience of being in care, regardless of their placement length or type, or their age; this term is used (as opposed to the statutory term 'Looked After Children') to ensure that our practice is inclusive and provides for all groups of young people who experience care.
- 4.2 In Spring 2022 we have 283 Care Experienced pupils in our education settings (2-18). 148 are "Currently Looked After". Of those, 108 are looked after by Argyll and Bute and 38 children have been placed in Argyll and Bute from other Authorities. The additional 135 Care Experienced children and young people in our settings have a status of "Previously Looked After". These figures refer to pupils in Early Years, Primary and Secondary settings. Argyll and Bute also looks after 19 children who are placed in other authorities through residential, kinship or foster placements.
- 4.3 Argyll and Bute Council was awarded a grant of up to £129,600, payable over the current academic year 2021/2022.

Below is a breakdown of the projected spend from the beginning of the session:

ITEM	AMOUNT
Staffing	119,246
Support Activities/Resources	4,608
Travel and Subsistence	3,546
Cool2Talk Contribution	2,000
Staff Training	200
Total projected expenditure	129,600
MONIES AVAILABLE	129, 600

There is currently a balance within earmarked reserves resulting from an underspend of the 2020/21 academic year's grant funding. Several factors contributed to this underspend but primarily the restrictions imposed due to Covid. It had been anticipated that the funding would be used to augment the Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers in 2021/22 but a delay in the recruitment of the new Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers and a limit to the number of pupils that the Liaison Officers can support each day has meant that this was not possible.

The PT for Care Experienced Children and Young People has advised the Scottish Government of this underspend and requested that the monies be carried forward to the next academic session. It is proposed that the Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers continue to work with some of our Care Experienced Children and Young People over the summer break, to ensure visibility and maintain relationships over the long holiday period, especially to support those at key transition stages.

- 4.4 Data on attendance, exclusions and attainment has been provided throughout the last session to the Corporate Parenting Board and to the Community Services Committee. Both qualitative and quantitative data has shown that there has been a drop in attendance figures. There have been significant improvements in relation to education provision for our Care Experienced Children and Young People, increased scrutiny and tracking of progress, reduced exclusions, increased use of flexible approaches to learning and increased understanding of the impact of trauma amongst staff. Capacity has also been increased to support

this cohort through the continued role of the Care Experience Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officer Post. 5 additional temporary Health and Wellbeing Officers were recruited in November 2021. At present (June 2022), 35 children and young people (aged between 5 and 18) are being supported by these workers, either in school or in the community.

ATTENDANCE AND EXCLUSIONS

The attendance of our Care Experienced Pupils on 31st May was 87.5%. Primary attendance is 90.3% and Secondary is 85.01%. The targets as specified in the Corporate Parenting Board Plan were 94.5% for Primary and 89.5% for Secondary. The PT has been monitoring this attendance and supporting schools, where necessary. The attendance figures across all cohorts have fallen. COVID has had a significant impact on attendance, not only through illness and the isolation that was necessary but also through anxiety related to the Pandemic.

The PT is a member of the multi-agency Maximising Attendance working group and is working with one of our Secondary Schools in the concurrent Addressing Non-Attendance Project. It is expected that the learning through this will inform practice and the PT's ability to support similar attendance concerns in other schools.

We have met our target to have <5 exclusions this year. The exclusion guidance for care experienced children has been revised and there has been a particular focus on sharing and embedding these protocols and inform and decisions being made regarding Care Experienced CYP who may be displaying dysregulated behaviour.

DESTINATIONS

Data from the February 2022 showed that initial destinations for our Care Experienced School Leavers in session 2020/2021 were as follows:



52% went on to Further Education, 4% went on to Higher Education, 9% are Economically Inactive, meaning that they are unable to work at the moment and 35% of young people went into employment.

This is a positive picture and exceeds our Year 1 target in the Corporate Parenting Plan, which was to increase the number of young people moving on to a positive destination to 85%. We note that when working with such small numbers, a change in circumstance for one or two young people can negatively impact the percentage figures. The PT for Care Experienced Children and Young People has tracked the leavers and can identify the reasons for the 9% who are economically inactive. The PT works with school colleagues and partners from SDS to ensure that this small number of young people are aware of their options for further education and employment and that they have the appropriate contact information in order to be able to progress this when they are ready.

4.5 Strong inter-agency links exist between Social Work, Health and Education.

Many working groups and panels have been established with representatives from various agencies. The PT is a member of a number of these on a number of them:

- Maximising Attendance Group
- Addressing Non-Attendance Strategy group
- Joint Resource Group
- Kinship Panel
- Trauma Strategy Group

The PT has been invited be part of the recruitment panel for new Social Workers on a number of occasions, highlighting the partnership working across agencies. This allows the newly recruited Social Workers to experience this link and paves the way for open communication when they are in post.

The PT has attended a team meeting of the Family Placement Team to share information about the role of the Care Experience Team and to find out more about the team. This has led to increased communication between the two teams and several referrals for Health and Wellbeing Liaison Support have come through the Family Placement Team.

The PT and one of the Social Work area teams are planning to jointly host a multi-agency “get together”, inviting colleagues across Education, Social Work, Health and other agencies involved with children and families across the locality to share information about their services and help put faces to names, after two years of mainly online meetings. This foster positive relations and allow people to reach out to colleagues for advice or support.

The PT works closely with the Participation and Engagement Officer to provide and promote opportunities to encourage children’s participation and the development of their wellbeing. When recruiting new Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers, the Participation and Engagement Officer was part of the recruitment process, bringing questions from the children to ask at interview. The children’s questions were very insightful and demonstrated what was important to them. They covered topics such as confidentiality and bringing the relational work to a close.

- 4.6 There is evidence that creative steps are being taken in our schools to improve engagement and also promote home-school links. The creation of a “learning hub”, a less formal learning space in a secondary school has encouraged many

reluctant senior phase pupils to attend school. Another secondary school is using an “intensive support” class to provide a nurturing classroom where pupils are supported to achieve National Qualifications in Literacy and Numeracy. The Nurturing approach used in a number of our schools is helping to support Care Experienced pupils.

- 4.7 There has been an increase in the capacity of the Care Experience Team, therefore an increase in the numbers of children working with Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers. In June 2022, the 9 available Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers are supporting 35 children and young people.

Two of the Officers were available to work with a number of young people over the summer break 2021 to maintain continuity or to establish a link over a transition period. This work supported not only the children but also their families. Similar work will continue over the 2022 summer break.

- 4.8 The impact and benefit of having a dedicated post-holder who has a close focus on the educational attainment and experience of Care Experienced Children and Young People is evidenced in all of the reporting and evaluation provided to the Corporate Parenting Board and Community Services Committee since the post was created in January 2019. There is an early indication from national evaluation work around the use of the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund that this impact is replicated across Scotland where such a post has been created. The Care Experience team have strong links with the CELCIS (Centre for Excellence in Children’s Care and Protection) network of Virtual Head Teachers and Care Experience Teams. The purpose of the Network is to:

- Share practice
- Improve education
- Influence nationally
- Measure impact

Benefits of membership of this Network are: peer support, making links with Scottish Government colleagues, having connections with identified contacts for information sharing, being able to respond to and shape national policy areas, raising awareness of issues of equity for children and young people with care experience, and developing the credibility of the role. An evaluation of the work

of the Network can be found here:

https://www.celcis.org/application/files/9516/3540/8809/VSHT_Summary_Evaluation_September_2021_FINAL.pdf

There is funding within the allocated grant to continue with having a dedicated post-holder to maintain a close focus on Care Experienced Children and Young People. In order to bring provision in line with that of other local authorities, this role will be taken forward as a Virtual Head Teacher in order to develop credibility and scope for increased impact.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 Significant improvements have been made in relation to scrutiny, audit and outcomes for Care Experienced Children and Young People during previous sessions. These have been sustained into session 2020/21. This work will continue to address raising attainment and closing the gap for Care Experienced Children and Young People in session 2022/23.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy – None

6.2 Financial – Appropriate allocation of the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund Grant

6.3 Legal – The statutory duties of the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 and all previous relevant acts will be met.

6.4 HR – None

6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: Providing equity and inclusion to meet the needs of all young people.

6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – All legislative requirements will be met

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – N/A

6.5.3 Islands – No differentiated impact.

- 6.6. Risk – Ongoing scrutiny and audit will provide better outcomes for Care Experience Children and Young People. Sustainability and future-planning will mitigate future risk.
- 6.7 Customer Service – Improvements in service to meet individual needs are being sought

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This paper provides the Committee with an update on the refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) which is supported by funding through the Attainment Scotland Fund, the aims of which are to address the challenges of the poverty-related attainment gap.
- 1.2 The Attainment Scotland Fund is made up of a number of funding streams totalling £1billion. This targeted funding includes the Strategic Equity Fund (SEF) and Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) which Argyll and Bute receive and will be the focus of this paper.
- 1.3 The paper will include an overview of the 2022-23 Scottish Government Pupil Equity Funding allocations for Argyll and Bute schools eligible to receive PEF funding (Appendix 1), the draft authority 'core' stretch aims (Appendix 2) and an overview of the planned SEF spend.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION

25 AUGUST 2022

SCOTTISH ATTAINMENT CHALLENGE

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge, launched in March 2022, does not introduce a new policy but rather builds on the existing policy that has been in place since 2015. The main aim of the policy is to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and accelerate progress in closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- 2.2 The policy's mission is to *'use education to improve outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty, with a focus on tackling the poverty related attainment gap'*.
- 2.3 A new requirement by the Scottish Government as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge is that all local authorities set out 'stretch aims' as detailed in their guidance [Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress](#). This includes 5 'core' aims and an additional 'plus' aim. This paper will detail the process the Education Service has taken in developing these stretch aims and the current draft stretch aims.
- 2.4 £1 billion of funding has been committed by the Scottish Government over the current parliamentary term to support the realisation of this policy. This is delivered through a number of funding streams including; Strategic Equity Funding, Pupil Equity Funding and Care Experienced Children and Young People funding.
- 2.5 This paper provides the Committee with updated information on the continued intention of the Scottish Government, as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, to disperse £1,366,800 in Pupil Equity Funding and £142,162 in Strategic Equity Funding for the 2022-23 session.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:

- a) The update on 2022 Scottish Government Pupil Equity and Strategic Equity Funding.
- b) The provision of strategic guidance at Scottish Government and Authority levels to support the implementation of the Pupil Equity Funding and Strategic Equity Funding.
- c) The draft stretch aims developed as required by the Scottish Attainment Challenge.
- d) That further updates on the Scottish Attainment Challenge will be presented to a future meeting of the Community Services Committee.

4.0 DETAIL

4.1 The first five years of the Scottish Attainment Challenge saw progress in closing the poverty-related attainment gap across Scotland. With the disruption to learning as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic we have seen an impact on attainment of children, with those affected by poverty impacted at disproportionately higher levels.

4.2 The Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress (the Framework) aims to:

- Mitigate the impact of poverty on children's outcomes by tackling the poverty-related attainment gap;
- Set high expectations through annual, locally identified stretch aims to ensure progress in recovering from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Build on the investment in the Scottish Attainment Challenge to make a greater difference, more quickly for children and young people;
- Build consistency on processes used across the country to build a more accurate national picture;
- Drive improved outcomes for children and young people impacted by poverty;
- Ensure elements of local planning and decision making while driving strategic direction.

4.3 The mission of the Framework is to contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people recognising the importance of attainment, achievement and health and wellbeing. The 'core plus' model of stretch aims reflects this.

- 4.4 All Local Authorities are expected to set stretch aims for the following five measures and report on these annually to Scottish Government. Draft aims currently in development are contained in Appendix 2.
- a) achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (literacy combined and numeracy combined);
 - b) the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more pass at SCQF level 5 based on the “Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations” publication;
 - c) the proportion of school leavers attaining 1 or more pass at SCQF level 6 based on the “Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations” publication;
 - d) the proportion of 16-19 olds participating in education, employment or training based on the Annual Participation Measure produced by Skills Development Scotland; and
 - e) a locally identified aim for health and wellbeing, to be measured using local datasets.
- 4.5 In setting the authority ‘core’ stretch aims close, collaborative work has been undertaken with the authority’s link Education Scotland Attainment Advisor and officers across the central education team. This included examining national and local data across the identified core aims to develop a realistic and ambitious target for 2022-2023. A focus group of school leaders, including representation from professional associations, were consulted regarding these draft aims and further refinements were made. A further virtual consultation was offered to all Head Teachers and feedback was gathered to improve the draft core aims. Those Head Teachers unable to attend were able to access the presentation and feedback via a survey link.
- 4.6 An additional ‘plus’ aim is included in the model with authorities choosing an aim specific to their own context and datasets. The aim needs to detail:
- What is the change for learners?
 - How much change?
 - Who is target group?
 - By when?
 - How will be tracked and measured?
- 4.7 Officers are currently working collaboratively with the authority’s link Education Scotland Attainment Advisor and the Educational Psychology team to identify a measure within the strong work already taking place across a number of schools in regards to the programme ‘Our Children Their Nurturing Education’.
- 4.8 Alongside the authority stretch aims, developed to closely interrogate the reduction of the poverty-related attainment gap, schools who are eligible will continue to receive Pupil Equity Funding for the remainder of this parliamentary session. Reportable school level allocations are reported in **Appendix 1**.

- 4.9 Schools are allocated PEF funding directly and this is to be used to provide targeted support for children and young people (and their families if appropriate) affected by poverty. School leaders plan for the use of Pupil Equity Funding through the existing School Improvement Planning processes which includes a template for reporting on expenditure, outcomes and measures for PEF funding.
- 4.10 National Operational Guidance is provided by the Scottish Government to support school leaders in the use of PEF. This national guidance is further supported by the Argyll and Bute PEF information framework which further details processes, procedures and good practice in effective and targeted use of PEF.
- 4.11 Head Teachers report annual through their Standards and Quality Reports the impact of the use of PEF within their school.
- 4.12 A significant change in the refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge is that the elements of Schools Programme schools and Challenge Authorities has been replaced with Strategic Equity Funding. Previously additional funding was allocated to authorities with high levels of deprivation through the Challenge Authority funding, Argyll and Bute did not receive any Challenge Authority funding. Some schools with high levels of deprivation received additional funding through the Schools Programme funding, Argyll and Bute had one School, Rosneath Primary, which received this funding. The Strategic Equity Fund now replaces both of these previous funds and sees all 32 local authorities receiving a proportion of funding. Argyll and Bute will receive £142,162 for session 2022-2023 through SEF funding.
- 4.13 Planning for the spend of SEF funding for the first year's allocation includes continued funding for the Lead Teacher Recovery and Renewal – Literacy and Numeracy, an allocation of funding for those schools that do not receive PEF funding and can demonstrate a poverty related attainment gap and support for the transition of our Schools Programme school with the removal of the Schools Programme funding previously received.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The refreshed Scottish Attainment Challenge and associated funding streams focuses on and accelerates targeted improvement activity to reduce the poverty related attainment gap. It is also intended to support and complement the broader range of initiatives and programmes to ensure that all of Scotland's children and young people reach their full potential.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – Attainment Scotland Funding through the Scottish Attainment Challenge supports the central purpose of the Scottish Government and the delivery of national outcomes. Supporting delivery on the Long Term Outcomes 3 and 4.

- 6.2 Financial – Potential financial implications given the limited nature of funding in ensuring the avoidance of ongoing liabilities or redundancy costs which are unfunded.
- 6.3 Legal – The Council requires to meet their statutory duties as prescribed in the ‘Standards in Scotland’s etc., Act 2000’
- 6.4 HR – Potential HR implications given the time limited nature of the funding in ensuring the avoidance of ongoing HR liabilities or redundancy costs which are unfunded.
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:
 - 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – The Scottish Attainment Challenge is aimed at reducing inequalities.
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty -
 - 6.5.3 Islands - none
- 6.6 Climate Change - none
- 6.7 Risk – Potential reputational risk to the Council by failing to deliver the statutory requirements of the revisions arising within the Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc., Act 2000.
- 6.8 Customer Service – none

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly – Policy Lead for Education

30th June 2022

For further information contact:

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Pupil Equity Fund allocations 2022-23

Appendix 2 – Argyll and Bute Draft Stretch Aims 2022-23

Pupil Equity Funding - School Level Funding 2022-23 to 2025-26

This spreadsheet contains details of the allocation of Pupil Equity Funding to schools for the 2022-23 to 2025-26 financial years

Contents

[School Level Allocations](#)

[Local Authority Summary](#)

Notes:

1. Pupil Equity Funding Allocations will be fixed for four years, from 2022-23 up until 2025-26.
2. For schools where revealing the allocation level may be disclosive to individuals, their results have been redacted and replaced with a *. Headteachers from these schools can contact their local authority for details of their allocation level.
3. Schools allocations based on the number of pupils from P1 to S3 who are eligible and registered for free school meals, using the latest available data, are shown in column E.
4. Total allocations including any top-ups are shown in column G.
5. UPDATE: Total school level allocations use the same calculation methodology as 2021-22 (10% smoothing will also be applied, so that no school level allocation is lower than 90% of the 2021-22 initial allocation (before smoothing and 2.1% adjustment was applied).
6. You can select data on each worksheet by school stage or Local Authority by clicking on the drop down filter in the title (row 1).
7. Please note that figures for a small number of schools are currently under review and may be subject to change.

Pupil Equity Funding - School Level Funding 2022-23

Local Authority	Seed Code	School	Stage	Allocation based on estimated FSM pupils			2022-23 Total Allocation including	
				2022 - 2023	Top-up		Top-up	
Argyll & Bute	8100128	Achahoish Primary School	Primary	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-
Argyll & Bute	8100926	Ardrishaig Primary School	Primary	£ 11,025	£ -	£ -	£ -	11,025
Argyll & Bute	8100829	Arinagour Primary School	Primary	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-
Argyll & Bute	8300925	Arrochar Primary School	Primary	£ 6,125	£ -	£ -	£ -	6,125
Argyll & Bute	8101221	Barcaldine Primary School	Primary	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-
Argyll & Bute	8130922	Bowmore Primary School	Primary	£ 9,800	£ -	£ -	£ -	9,800
Argyll & Bute	8131120	Bowmore Primary School Gaelic Unit	Primary	*	£ -	£ -	*	
Argyll & Bute	1004662	Bunessan Primary Gaelic Unit	Primary	*	£ -	£ -	*	
Argyll & Bute	8101523	Bunessan Primary School	Primary	£ -	* -	* -	* -	
Argyll & Bute	8301425	Cardross Primary School	Primary	£ 8,575	£ 65	£ -	£ -	8,640
Argyll & Bute	8101825	Carradale Primary School	Primary	£ -	* -	* -	* -	
Argyll & Bute	8111227	Castlehill Primary School	Primary	£ 28,175	£ -	£ -	£ -	28,175
Argyll & Bute	8101922	Clachan Primary School	Primary	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-
Argyll & Bute	8302723	Colgrain Primary School	Primary	£ 39,200	£ -	£ -	£ -	39,200
Argyll & Bute	8102023	Craignish Primary School	Primary	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-
Argyll & Bute	8111324	Dalintober Primary School	Primary	£ 62,475	£ -	£ -	£ -	62,475
Argyll & Bute	8102325	Dalmally Primary School	Primary	*	£ -	£ -	*	
Argyll & Bute	8102422	Dervaig Primary School	Primary	£ -	* -	* -	* -	
Argyll & Bute	8102627	Drumlemble Primary School	Primary	*	£ -	£ -	* -	
Argyll & Bute	8102724	Dunbeg Primary School	Primary	£ 14,700	£ -	£ -	£ -	14,700
Argyll & Bute	8102821	Dunoon Primary School	Primary	£ 51,450	£ 390	£ -	£ -	51,840
Argyll & Bute	8103127	Easdale Primary School	Primary	*	£ -	£ -	* -	
Argyll & Bute	8103224	Furnace Primary School	Primary	*	£ -	£ -	* -	
Argyll & Bute	8302529	Garelochhead Primary School	Primary	£ 12,250	£ -	£ -	£ -	12,250
Argyll & Bute	8103321	Gigha Primary School	Primary	*	£ -	£ -	* -	
Argyll & Bute	8103429	Glassary Primary School	Primary	*	£ -	£ -	* -	
Argyll & Bute	8103526	Glenbarr Primary School	Primary	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	-
Argyll & Bute	8302820	Hermitage Primary School	Primary	£ 36,750	£ -	£ -	£ -	36,750
Argyll & Bute	8103925	Innellan Primary School	Primary	£ 7,350	£ 210	£ -	£ -	7,560

Local Authority	Seed Code	School	Stage	Allocation based on estimated FSM pupils		2022-23 Total Allocation including	
				2022 - 2023	Top-up	Top-up	
Argyll & Bute	8104026	Inveraray Primary School	Primary	*	*	*	
Argyll & Bute	8104123	Iona Primary School	Primary	£	-	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8302928	John Logie Baird Primary School	Primary	£	26,950	£	4,370
Argyll & Bute	8104220	Keills Primary School	Primary	*	£	-	*
Argyll & Bute	8104522	Kilchattan Primary School	Primary	£	-	*	*
Argyll & Bute	8104921	Kilchrenan Primary School	Primary	*	£	-	*
Argyll & Bute	8303223	Kilcreggan Primary School	Primary	£	13,475	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8105022	Kilmartin Primary School	Primary	*	*	*	
Argyll & Bute	8105324	Kilmodan Primary School	Primary	£	-	*	*
Argyll & Bute	8105626	Kilninver Primary School	Primary	*	£	-	*
Argyll & Bute	8105723	Kirn Primary School	Primary	£	67,375	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8105928	Lismore Primary School	Primary	£	-	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8106029	Lochdonhead Primary School	Primary	£	-	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8111030	Lochgilphead Primary School	Primary	£	41,650	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8106428	Lochgoilhead Primary School	Primary	*	*	*	
Argyll & Bute	8106126	Lochnell Primary School	Primary	£	14,700	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8303320	Luss Primary School	Primary	*	£	-	*
Argyll & Bute	8130124	North Bute Primary School	Primary	£	9,800	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8106924	Park Primary School	Primary	£	22,050	£	1,710
Argyll & Bute	8107726	Port Charlotte Primary School	Primary	*	*	*	
Argyll & Bute	8107823	Port Ellen Primary School	Primary	£	8,575	£	2,225
Argyll & Bute	8303924	Rhu Primary School	Primary	£	13,475	£	1,645
Argyll & Bute	8108129	Rhunahaorine Primary School	Primary	£	8,575	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8109923	Rockfield Gaelic Primary School	Primary	£	6,125	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8107025	Rockfield Primary School	Primary	£	53,900	£	6,580
Argyll & Bute	8304025	Rosneath Primary School	Primary	£	35,525	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8130434	Rothsay Primary School	Primary	£	78,400	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8108226	Salen Primary School	Primary	*	*	*	
Argyll & Bute	8110026	Salen Primary School Gaelic Unit	Primary	*	*	*	
Argyll & Bute	8108323	Sandbank Primary School	Primary	£	14,700	£	2,580

Local Authority	Seed Code	School	Stage	Allocation based on estimated FSM pupils			2022-23 Total Allocation including		
				2022 - 2023	Top-up		Top-up		
Argyll & Bute	8110123	Sandbank Primary School Gaelic Unit	Primary	£	9,800	£	-	£	9,800
Argyll & Bute	8108528	Small Isles Primary School	Primary	£	-	£	-	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8130329	St Andrew's Primary School - Argyll	Primary	£	23,275	£	-	£	23,275
Argyll & Bute	8107122	St Columba's Primary School - Argyll	Primary	£	26,950	£	-	£	26,950
Argyll & Bute	8303029	St Joseph's Primary School - Helensburgh	Primary	£	35,525	£	1,195	£	36,720
Argyll & Bute	8102929	St Mun's Primary School	Primary	£	33,075	£	-	£	33,075
Argyll & Bute	8108927	Strachur Primary School	Primary	*		£	-	*	
Argyll & Bute	8109028	Strath of Appin Primary School	Primary	*		*		*	
Argyll & Bute	8100020	Strath of Appin Primary School Gaelic Unit	Primary	£	-	£	-	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8109222	Strone Primary School	Primary	*		£	-	*	
Argyll & Bute	8110530	Tarbert Primary School	Primary	£	12,250	£	-	£	12,250
Argyll & Bute	8109427	Taynuilt Primary School	Primary	£	6,125	£	355	£	6,480
Argyll & Bute	8109524	Tayvallich Primary School	Primary	*		£	-	*	
Argyll & Bute	8109621	Tighnabruaich Primary School	Primary	£	14,700	£	-	£	14,700
Argyll & Bute	8110131	Tiree Primary School	Primary	*		*		*	
Argyll & Bute	8111421	Tiree Primary School Gaelic Unit	Primary	*		£	-	*	
Argyll & Bute	8110638	Tobermory Primary School	Primary	£	6,125	£	355	£	6,480
Argyll & Bute	8109729	Toward Primary School	Primary	*		*		*	
Argyll & Bute	8109826	Ulva Primary School	Primary	£	-	£	-	£	-
Argyll & Bute	8110034	Campbeltown Grammar School	Secondary	£	39,200	£	-	£	39,200
Argyll & Bute	8110239	Dunoon Grammar School	Secondary	£	91,875	£	-	£	91,875
Argyll & Bute	8304734	Hermitage Academy	Secondary	£	53,900	£	-	£	53,900
Argyll & Bute	8109931	Islay High School	Secondary	£	9,800	£	-	£	9,800
Argyll & Bute	8111030	Lochgilphead High School	Secondary	£	24,500	£	340	£	24,840
Argyll & Bute	8110336	Oban High School	Secondary	£	100,450	£	-	£	100,450
Argyll & Bute	8130434	Rothsay Academy	Secondary	£	34,300	£	-	£	34,300
Argyll & Bute	8110530	Tarbert Academy	Secondary	*		*		*	
Argyll & Bute	8110131	Tiree High School	Secondary	*		*		*	
Argyll & Bute	8110638	Tobermory High School	Secondary	*		*		*	
Argyll & Bute	8305943	Parklands School	Special	£	7,350	£	1,290	£	8,640

Pupil Equity Funding - School Level Funding 2022-23

LA	Allocation 2022-23		Total Allocation 2022-23 including	
	before Top-up	Top-up	Top-up	Top-up
Aberdeen City	£ 3,211,950	£ 51,965	£ 3,263,915	
Aberdeenshire	£ 3,170,300	£ 68,150	£ 3,238,450	
Angus	£ 2,287,075	£ 22,710	£ 2,309,785	
Argyll & Bute	£ 1,316,875	£ 49,925	£ 1,366,800	
City of Edinburgh	£ 7,744,450	£ 122,675	£ 7,867,125	
Clackmannanshire	£ 1,647,625	£ 15,340	£ 1,662,965	
Dumfries & Galloway	£ 3,245,025	£ 29,090	£ 3,274,115	
Dundee City	£ 5,031,075	£ 76,160	£ 5,107,235	
East Ayrshire	£ 3,792,600	£ 16,520	£ 3,809,120	
East Dunbartonshire	£ 1,658,650	£ 68,100	£ 1,726,750	
East Lothian	£ 1,765,225	£ 9,800	£ 1,775,025	
East Renfrewshire	£ 1,477,350	£ 11,165	£ 1,488,515	
Falkirk	£ 3,910,200	£ 52,115	£ 3,962,315	
Fife	£ 10,318,175	£ 137,845	£ 10,456,020	
Glasgow City	£ 23,113,300	£ 95,195	£ 23,208,495	
Highland	£ 4,173,575	£ 98,565	£ 4,272,140	
Inverclyde	£ 2,576,175	£ 9,115	£ 2,585,290	
Midlothian	£ 2,410,800	£ 13,105	£ 2,423,905	
Moray	£ 1,449,175	£ 35,110	£ 1,484,285	
Na h-Eileanan Siar	£ 331,975	£ 8,400	£ 340,375	
North Ayrshire	£ 4,079,250	£ 92,930	£ 4,172,180	
North Lanarkshire	£ 9,575,825	£ 106,255	£ 9,682,080	
Orkney Islands	£ 237,650	£ 7,255	£ 244,905	
Perth & Kinross	£ 1,832,600	£ 41,330	£ 1,873,930	
Renfrewshire	£ 4,707,675	£ 61,660	£ 4,769,335	
Scottish Borders	£ 1,892,625	£ 31,070	£ 1,923,695	
Shetland Islands	£ 247,450	£ 7,125	£ 254,575	
South Ayrshire	£ 2,606,800	£ 8,825	£ 2,615,625	
South Lanarkshire	£ 8,894,725	£ 54,435	£ 8,949,160	
Stirling	£ 1,428,350	£ 24,625	£ 1,452,975	
West Dunbartonshire	£ 3,360,175	£ 20,660	£ 3,380,835	
West Lothian	£ 5,412,050	£ 26,280	£ 5,438,330	
Sum of Local Authorities	£ 128,906,750	£ 1,473,500	£ 130,380,250	
Grant-Maintained	£ 105,350	£ 5,160	£ 110,510	
Grand Total	£ 129,012,100	£ 1,478,660	£ 130,490,760	

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Appendix 2 – DRAFT Authority ‘Core’ Stretch Aims**Literacy (P1,4,7 Combined) Stretch Aim DRAFT**

	Overall	Overall No. Pupils	SIMD Q1	Q1 No. Pupils	SIMD Q5	Q5 No. Pupils	GAP (Q1-Q5)	No. Pupils to close gap
Current Level (ACEL June 2021)	59%		48%		81%		33pp	
Provisional 2022 ACEL data	62.2%		54.8%		79.2%		24.4pp	
Stretch Aims 2022/23	68.4%	+142	60%		81.5%		15pp	55 x Q1 pupils
Improvement (percentage point)	9.4pp		12pp		.5pp		11.5pp	

Numeracy (P1, 4, 7 Combined) Stretch Aim DRAFT

	Overall	Overall No. Pupils	SIMD Q1	Q1 No. Pupils	SIMD Q5	Q5 No. Pupils	GAP (Q1-Q5)	No. Pupils to close gap
Current Level (ACEL June 2021)	69%		58%		87%		29pp	
Provisional 2022 ACEL data	72%		69.1%		83.5%		14.4%	
Stretch Aims 2022/23	75%	+53	74%		87.5%		13.5pp	29 x Q1 pupils
Improvement (percentage point)	6pp		16pp		.5pp		15.5pp	

School Leavers with 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 5 DRAFT

	Overall	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	GAP (Q1-Q5)
Current Level (2021)	90%	85%	97%	12pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	91%	87%	98%	11pp
Improvement (percentage point)	1pp	2pp	1pp	1pp

School Leavers with 1 or more pass at SCQF Level 6 DRAFT

	Overall	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	GAP (Q1-Q5)
Current Level (ACEL June 2021)	7%	63%	90%	27pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	71%	63%	90%	27pp
Improvement (percentage point)	1pp	0pp*	0pp*	0pp*

* Although stretch aims do not indicate an improvement, data from 2021 due to an alternative certification model shows improvement from pre-Covid data and a reduction in the poverty-related attainment gap. Securing this improvement is what the aim illustrates.

Participation Measure - 16-19 year olds in Education, Training and Employment DRAFT

	Overall	SIMD Q1	SIMD Q5	GAP (Q1-Q5)
Current Level (ACEL June 2021)	93.5%	90.6%	93%	2.4pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	94%	92%	94%	2pp
Improvement (percentage point)	.5pp	1.4pp	1pp	.4pp

Attendance Primary - Free School Meal registered and Non Free School Meal Registered DRAFT

	Overall	FSM registered	Non FSM registered	GAP (FSM/non FSM)
Current Level (June 2021)	95.54%	92.55%	96.06%	3.51pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	96%	93%	96.06%	3.06pp
Improvement (percentage point)	.46pp	.45pp	0pp	.45pp

Attendance Secondary - Free School Meal registered and Non Free School Meal Registered **DRAFT**

	Overall	FSM registered	Non FSM registered	GAP (FSM/non FSM)
Current Level (June 2021)	92.1%	86.83%	92.83%	6pp
Stretch Aims 2022/23	93%	87.4%	93%	5.6pp
Improvement (percentage point)	.9pp	.57pp	.17pp	.4pp

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2022

OUR CHILDREN, THEIR NURTURING EDUCATION

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. Nationally mental health is a priority for all practitioners working with children and young people as outlined in the *Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027*. Improving the mental health and wellbeing of our children and young people is a key priority within the Children and Young People's Service Plan 2020-2033.
- 1.2. ***Our children, their nurturing education*** (OCTNE) is the authority wide education strategy that brings together nurture, adverse childhood experiences and trauma-informed practice. This will make a significant contribution to the development of a trauma responsive education workforce. The strategy ensures that children and young people will have access to wellbeing programmes and supports to enhance prevention and early intervention while providing more specialist support where required. These are core aims of the Children and Young People's Service Plan 2020 – 2023, with reporting through the Trauma Strategy Group and governance sitting with *Argyll and Bute's Children*.
- 1.3. The implementation of the strategy is being led by the Educational Psychology Service, including the Principal Teacher for Nurture and two Nurture Teachers who have been seconded to these roles.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL
EDUCATION

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

25 AUGUST 2022

OUR CHILDREN, THEIR NURTURING EDUCATION

2.0 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC) places children and young people's wellbeing at the centre of all assessment and planning. These principles are now enshrined in legislation in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act (2014) which reinforces the rights of children and young people. Many of the key components of GIRFEC can be found within a nurturing approach, including the focus on wellbeing, an understanding of resilience and a need to implement thorough assessment to support children and young people's wellbeing needs.
- 2.2 Health and wellbeing are also key components of the **Curriculum for Excellence** and **Building the Ambition** which emphasise the need to ensure that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.
- 2.3 Education Scotland in their publication **Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach** states:
- 'The National Improvement Framework sets out clear priorities to deliver excellence and equity, including: closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people and improving children and young people's health and wellbeing. A nurturing approach places both of these priorities at the heart of a school and early learning and child care settings improvement agenda and is a key focus for many Local Authorities to support the closing of the poverty related attainment gap.'*
- 2.4 The recent review of the implementation of the Education (Scotland) (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004 highlights that *'the National Improvement Framework must be revised to ensure parity for additional support for learning. This framework must be rooted in improvement methodology and assist in*

reinforcing a culture of improvement rather than compliance. Improvement methodology is rooted within the OCTNE accreditation process.

- 2.5 NSPCC research identified that it is the quality of relationships that support children to overcome adversities. This requires time and resource. There is a clear indication that nurturing approaches should be central to developments in schools at this time, with a focus on identifying the impact of the interventions. Wellbeing is rightly at the heart of the Argyll and Bute Education Service recovery plan, with OCTNE as a central component. Experiences of trauma and their impact contribute to significant barriers to learning. If children and young people are to be supported to reach their potential through education and beyond there requires to be a sustained commitment to meeting their wellbeing needs.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:

- 3.1 The progress of the strategy against initial objectives and support the ongoing commitment that all educational establishments will become communities with nurture and relationships at their centre to support the mental health and wellbeing of all children, young people, families and staff.
- 3.2 The ongoing commitment to fully embed OCTNE in educational establishments across the authority over a journey of at least 5 years.
- 3.3 That a successful approach will be one in which systems and procedures are in place and capacity is developed in local areas that is not dependent on the Educational Psychology Service, including our Nurture Teachers in the longer term. This will likely be beyond 5 years.
- 3.4 That the need to consider funding streams which will allow for ongoing support through OCTNE, in particular the Principal Teacher for Nurture and Nurture Teachers over the next 3 – 5 years.

4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 Between September 2018 and December 2019 the Educational Psychology Service led an authority wide nurture and relationships strategy group, composed of head teachers/depute head teachers and education support officers across Argyll & Bute. Using the Education Scotland self-evaluation and planning framework of looking outwards, looking inwards and looking forwards, we undertook an audit of nurture practice across the authority, including barriers, considered best practice from other local authorities, and used this evidence to develop a nurture and relationships strategy proposal for the Education Management Team.

- 4.2 In support of planning for recovery from COVID-19 an updated proposal was prepared for the Education Management Team in June 2020, and agreement for recruitment of a Principal Teacher (PT) for Nurture followed. The PT Nurture was recruited in October 2020 but was unable to be released from school until February 2021.
- 4.3 The OCTNE framework and accreditation model were developed, and the first cohort of schools enrolled in OCTNE in March 2021. A second cohort enrolled in November 2021 and a third cohort, focusing on Early Years establishments is in the initial planning and engagement stage.
- 4.4 There are now 29 (33%) schools engaging with OCTNE, with 23 already having achieved bronze accreditation (nurture committed), 1 silver accreditation (nurture aware) and 2 gold accreditation (nurture informed).
- 4.5 Initially the aim of the strategy was to support schools to become communities with nurture and relationships at their centre, as part of their recovery from COVID-19 (trauma informed). With the addition of two Nurture Teachers (September 2021), the strategy has expanded and is able to offer increased support to education establishments. This expansion is supporting schools to establish targeted nurture interventions for groups of pupils (trauma skilled) and supporting the team around our most distressed young people who are at risk of educational placement breakdown (trauma enhanced). The role of the Nurture Teacher is focused on providing intensive but time-limited support through coaching, consultation and building capacity in staff and schools to make this targeted provision sustainable.
- 4.6 Funding for the Principal Teacher for Nurture is in place until February 2023. The additional Nurture Teachers are funded from the Council Covid Recovery monies, and were initially seconded until September 2022. Funding has recently been identified that allow them to be in place until June 2023 to continue this valuable work.
- 4.7 Nine schools are being supported by the Nurture Teachers (NTs) to set up, or further develop, their targeted nurture provision for vulnerable pupils. Four schools are also receiving input from NTs to support five pupils who are, or were, at risk of educational placement breakdown.
- 4.8 A series of 6 podcasts have been developed to support the understanding of all 6 nurture principles. These can be included within Teachers GTCS log and contribute to their on-going Continuing Professional Development. These are available to all staff (including education, health and social work) within Argyll and Bute on Spotify and Anchor to ensure easy access. Feedback has been very positive with listeners across both Scotland and UK engaging and sharing this resource.
- 4.9 To date, a number of significant successes have been noted:

- Improvement methodology and small tests of change are being conducted at the individual school level, with the support from the Nurture Teachers.
- The accreditation and moderation model is supporting a high standard and consistency across Argyll and Bute, from early years through to secondary schools.
- The 3 day leadership training that was delivered by Educational Psychologists and the Nurture Teachers was highly evaluated with the following comments made by participants;
 - ‘One of the best training courses I have attended!!’*
 - ‘Gold star for everyone on the team. The course was paced really well and you had my full attention throughout!!’*
 - ‘Loved the interactive jam boards and will look forward to getting the follow up resources. Look forward to November conference and hope we can all be there in person.’*
- Higher quality targeted interventions are increasingly being implemented with fidelity, across Argyll and Bute, and expertise in nurture interventions is no longer restricted to the Helensburgh area.
- The capacity and skill of our workforce in schools is gradually increasing, and in some situations this has reduced the need for more specialist support from other agencies and central education teams in setting up targeted nurture supports.
- The work of OCTNE in developing nurturing cultures across our school communities was highlighted in Education Scotland’s National Health and Wellbeing Review (published March 2022).
- Focus groups with pupils and parents across two secondary schools have been undertaken and are currently being analysed. The information will be used to ensure that pupil and parental voice are included in the ongoing developments of OCTNE.
- A very successful conference was held in November 2021, bringing together representatives from schools involved in OCTNE, to hear from national experts in nurture and trauma in education.

4.10 As part of the Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress, published by the Scottish Government in March 2022, all Local Authorities are to develop annual stretch aims to ensure significant progress is made in recovering from the impact of Covid-19 and align to the mission of the Scottish Attainment Challenge. The required stretch aims are to be set to improve outcomes for all while closing the poverty-related attainment gap, in line with the model outlined by Scottish Government. The additional stretch aim is currently under development and will focus on this authority wide work on nurture in schools. The Central Team is working closely with the link Education Scotland Attainment Advisor, the PT Nurture and Educational Psychology Service to identify the key measure and define the stretch aim.

4.11 The recently launched Scottish Government consultation on *Included, Engaged and Involved Part 3: A relationship and rights based approach to physical*

intervention in Scottish schools, advocates well embedded nurturing approaches as central to reducing the need for seclusion or restraint of children and young people experiencing high levels of distress.

- 4.12 While significant progress has been made towards the initial objectives, and the addition of Nurture Teachers has allowed enhanced support to be available to schools and pupils, we are still at the early stages of a long and very worthwhile journey. For all of Argyll and Bute's educational establishments to become communities with nurture and relationships at their centre, and for this learning to be embedded, a period of at least 5 years will be required. For OCTNE to be a successful approach, where systems and procedures are in place and capacity is developed in local areas that is not dependent on the Educational Psychology Service, including our Nurture Teachers, this may realistically be longer.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Significant progress has been made against the initial objectives, and with the expansion of the strategy following the additional Nurture Teacher posts, progress has exceeded initial objects. This work will continue to contribute to the core aims of the Education Service Plan and the next Children's Services Plan beyond 2023, as we continue to embed our progress.
- 5.2 This is not a quick fix, but an ongoing journey of improvement and culture change, the importance of which has been amplified by the experiences of the global pandemic.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy – OCTNE is currently aligned to local and national policy
- 6.2 Financial – Nurture teacher commitment moving forward
- 6.3 Legal - None
- 6.4 HR - None
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty
- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – Care experienced children and young people benefit significantly from nurture, relationship based approaches
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - None
- 6.5.3 Islands - None
- 6.6 Risk – inability to sustain this strategy in a way that ensures changes to practice at embedded and sustained
- 6.7 Customer Service - None

Douglas Hendry - Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly - Policy Lead for Education

For further information contact:

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Report produced 18 July 2022

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****EDUCATION****25 AUGUST 2022**

EXTERNAL EDUCATION ESTABLISHMENT INSPECTION REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Elected members have requested that they are provided with details of all external education establishment Inspection Reports.
- 1.2 With a view to providing further information than that contained within the Annual Education Plan and Update Report, details of all inspections carried out on a quarterly basis will be presented to Community Services Committee as a standing item.
- 1.3 This report provides details of all external education establishment inspection reports received across Argyll and Bute Education Service during the period January 2022 to June 2022.
- 1.4 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) took the decision to pause all inspection activity on 13th March 2020.
- 1.5 Between late September 2021 and December 2021 HMIE undertook a programme of national thematic inspections focused on themes relevant to COVID-19 and recovery.

Local Authorities agreed with HMIE which schools would participate in the national thematic inspections. At the time of the last Committee the reports for these inspections were not available. Links to these reports are provided in section 3.0.

- 1.6 The programme of ELC and school inspections was scheduled to resume from January 2022. However updates received from HMIE in December 2021 and February 2022 respectively, noted that, in recognition of the ongoing challenges settings and schools were facing in dealing with COVID-19, routine school inspections would **not resume** as originally outlined.
In December 2021, HMIE intimated that they would carry out recovery visits during the remainder of the academic year. This purpose of these visits and HMIE's approach to them is outlined in section 4.0 of this report.

- 1.7 In late May 2022 HMIE intimated that they would resume inspections in academic year 2022-23. Arrangements for these are outlined in section 5.0 of this report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Community Services Committee notes:

- a) The contents of this report;
- b) This quarterly report will be presented on an ongoing basis to Community Services Committee detailing all establishment inspections conducted and published by Education Scotland within that period, and
- c) That Ward members will receive copies of school inspection reports for schools within their area as published by Education Scotland.

3.0 DETAIL – Thematic Inspections

- 3.1 The first three national thematic inspections were undertaken by HMIE by December 2021 and focused on the following:

- Approaches to supporting children’s and young people’s wellbeing [Health and wellbeing: a thematic review \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/publications/health-and-wellbeing-a-thematic-review/)
- Outdoor learning [Successful approaches to learning outdoors \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/publications/successful-approaches-to-learning-outdoors/)
- Local approaches to recovery [Local approaches to recovery: a thematic review \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/publications/local-approaches-to-recovery-a-thematic-review/)

Links to each report are provided.

- 3.2 In the ‘Health and Wellbeing: a thematic review’ report the work of Argyll and Bute’s Educational Psychology Service in developing and implementing the ‘Our Children, Their Nurturing Education’ strategy is recognised and features as a case study.
- 3.3 In the ‘Successful approaches to learning outdoors’ report both Inveraray Primary School and Oban High School are featured as case studies.

4.0 DETAIL – Recovery Visits

- 4.1 The purpose of recovery visits as set by HMIE, was to support the education system during the pandemic through:
- Hearing from establishments about their current priorities for recovery or improvement;
 - Learning what was working well, the challenges faced and solutions found and;

- Identifying and sharing examples of effective practice

HMIE also continued to have a focus on safeguarding and child protection in each visit.

4.2 HMIE acknowledged the pressure establishments continued to face at that time. Taking account of this they asked establishments to self-nominate to participate in a recovery visit. Eight Argyll and Bute schools and settings volunteered following discussion with the relevant Education Officer:

- Rothesay Joint Campus
- Tobermory High School
- Cardross Primary School
- Luss Primary School
- Port Ellen Primary School
- St Columba's Primary School
- Strone Primary School
- Willowview ELC

4.3 The visits were of a hybrid nature with both online meetings and face to face engagements. Visits were arranged over two days within a given week, all took place from May 2022 to June 2022. Each visit was supported by a member of the Central Team.

4.4 HMIE did not report on specific quality indicators or assign summative grades as part of the visits. Following the visit, HMIE provided the setting/school with a note of the visit. The note of visit is aimed to support the setting/school and will not be published.

4.5 Schools in Argyll and Bute schools continue to be supported with school improvement by the following members of the Education Central Team:

- Link Education Managers
- Education Officer with responsibility for supporting school improvement
- Education Officer with responsibility for supporting learning, teaching and assessment
- Lead Teacher for Recovery and Renewal

5.0 DETAIL – Inspections in academic year 2022-23

5.1 HMIE will resume their routine programme of inspections from August 2022. Inspections will start week beginning 5th September 2022.

- 5.2 As the programme of inspections resumes, HMIE will continue to be responsive to the pressures and challenges that the education system is facing while continuing to give priority to the needs and experiences of children and young people.
- 5.3 As required for the National Improvement Framework, HMIE will report on and provide grades for the following Quality Indicators (QIs) as part of the full model of inspections i.e. inspections which take place over a full school week:

QI 1.3 – leadership of change
QI 2.3 – learning, teaching and assessment
QI 3.1 – ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion; and
QI 3.2 – raising attainment and achievement

Short model inspections, which are shorter visits to schools, typically over two and a half days, will focus on two QIs:

QI 2.3 – learning, teaching and assessment; and
QI 3.2 – raising attainment and achievement

HMIE will also continue to have a focus on safeguarding in every inspection.

- 5.4 In inspections of early learning and childcare settings, HMIE will continue to use the equivalent QIs from *How good is our early learning and childcare?*
- 5.5 HMIE will use predetermined criteria to select the annual sample of full model inspections. This criteria takes account of the context and characteristics of schools, including the type of school, deprivation and balance across local authorities. For short model inspections, they place an increased focus on the length of time since the last inspection as well as context and characteristics.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 In summary, 3 reports are available for the Thematic Inspections which took place during the period of September 2021 to December 2021.
- 6.2 A further report on inspection outcomes, when the programme of ELC and school inspections resumes, will be presented to the next Community Services Committee.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Policy – The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 places a duty on Education Authorities to provide children and young people with school education and (in terms of raising standards) requires Authorities to endeavor to secure improvement in the quality of that school education.

- 7.2 Financial – None
- 7.3 Legal – None
- 7.4 HR – None
- 7.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: – None
 - 7.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – None
 - 7.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – None
 - 7.5.3 Islands – None
- 7.6. Risk – Reputational risk to the Education Service following a weak report.
- 7.7 Customer Service – The outcome of establishment inspections of the Education Service of Argyll and Bute Council may significantly enhance or 4 detract from the Council’s reputation and attractiveness as an area to work and live in.

Douglas Hendry
Executive Director with responsibility for Education

Councillor Yvonne Mcneilly
Policy Lead for Education

Wendy Brownlie
Head of Education: Learning and Teaching

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July 2022

Appendix 1 – Overview of Inspection Outcomes

Appendix 1 - Overview of Inspection Outcomes

School	Type of Visit	Outcome of Visit
Gigha Primary School	In-person engagement	HMIEE will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection.
Lochnell Primary School	In-person engagement	HMIEE will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection.
Glassary Primary School	In-person engagement	HMIEE will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection.
Achahoish Primary School	In-person engagement	HMIEE will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection.
St Andrews Primary School	In-person engagement	HMIEE has requested that Argyll and Bute Council provide further information about the school's progress within one year of the published report.
Campbeltown Grammar School	In-person engagement	HMIEE has requested that Argyll and Bute Council provide an interim report on the school's progress in six months from the published report, followed by a thorough analysis of the school's performance in one year.
Hermitage Academy	In-person engagement	HMIEE will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection.
Tiree High School	Virtual visit	HMIEE will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection.
Dunoon Primary School	Virtual visit	HMIEE will make no more visits to the school in connection with the original inspection.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE****COMMERCIAL SERVICES****25 AUGUST 2022**

PERIOD PRODUCTS: LAUNCH EVENT PLAN

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Building on the existing voluntary provision of period products in education and community settings funded by the Scottish Government since 2018/19, the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021, will ensure that everyone in Scotland who menstruates can have reasonably convenient access to period products, free of charge, as and when they are required.
- 1.2 The Council is holding launch events to introduce the public to the brand, its products and have key speakers discussing the topic of periods. This approach will also begin the process of destigmatising the provision and enabling wider discussions as required by the statutory guidance. The event details are as follows:

Helensburgh Civic Centre, Wednesday 24th August 2022, 6pm.

And;

Lochgilphead High School Thursday 25th August 2022, 6pm

Speakers:

Ashley Storrie (BBC Radio Scotland Host and Comedian);
Georgie, (Hey Girls (Award Winning period product social enterprise and suppliers));
Ashley McLean (The Poverty Alliance);
Kerry and Christine (The Grab Trust);
Amy Bruce (Argyll & Bute Council Period Product Project Lead).

- 1.3 The night will be free to attend and will include a period product goodie bag and welcome drink.
- 1.4 In addition to this, there is likely to be a ministerial visit sometime around mid-August, when the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 comes into effect. Details have yet to be finalised.
- 1.5 Members are asked to:
- a. Note the launch events that are taking place during this week
 - b. Note the promotion of the events
 - c. Note the potential for a ministerial visit and political profile of launch event
-

PERIOD PRODUCTS: LAUNCH EVENT PLAN

2.0 HEADLINES

- 2.1 The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 becomes law in August 2022, and all local authorities must have a robust service in place by this time.
- 2.2 This paper outlines how the Council is launching this service into a recognisable and accessible scheme for all who need to use the service.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Community Services Committee is asked to note:
- a. the launch events that are taking place during this week
 - b. the promotion of the events
 - c. the potential for a ministerial visit and political profile of launch event

4.0 DETAIL**4.1 Background**

- 4.1.1 Building on the existing provision of period products that have been provided in education and community settings funded by the Scottish Government since 2018/19, the Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021, will ensure that everyone in Scotland who menstruates can have reasonably convenient access to period products, free of charge, as and when they are required.
- 4.1.2 Following the results of the consultation, the public decided on the brand *My Tribe*.
- 4.1.3 The brand is designed to create an inclusive way of ensuring that products are readily identifiable and available across Argyll and Bute.
- 4.1.4 The Launch events are being held to promote the service across the local authority and introduce the brand.

4.3 Approach to the Launch Events

- 4.3.1 The consultation identified the preferred brand to be *My Tribe*. When asked, 76% of participants thought it important that the period product initiative available in Argyll and Bute is easily recognisable. (12% didn't, 12% weren't sure).

- 4.3.2 A branding plan has been created that includes branded items that can be used to promote the service within the local authority to ensure people are aware of where and how they can access products.
- 4.3.3 It is important that this new brand and the initiative is well advertised and maximum awareness created around the initiative so launch events will help to create interest around this within the local area and in the local press. It will also help with breaking down barriers around access, and enable people to talk about periods in an inclusive way, which is part of the overall aims of free provision.
- 4.3.4 The launch events were designed to be fun, inclusive evenings for all, creating a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere. The events have been free to attend, but ticketed so that numbers for the event are known.
- 4.3.5 To make the event attractive, officers invited some guest speakers to take part, with the intention of drawing an audience:

Ashley Storrie (BBC Radio Scotland Host and Comedian);
Georgie, (Hey Girls (Award Winning period product social enterprise and suppliers));
Ashley McLean (The Poverty Alliance);
Kerry and Christine (The Grab Trust);
Amy Bruce (Argyll & Bute Council Period Product Project Lead).

- 4.3.6 This has been designed as an opportunity for people to feel empowered and to share their stories around periods and the various ways this can impact lives, as well as creating an opportunity to introduce the brand and to showcase how officers plan to deliver this new statutory responsibility.

4.4 Ministerial Visit

- 4.4.1 Officers had invited a Scottish Government Minister to attend the launch events, and this invitation has been acknowledged. While the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government, Shona Robison MSP was unable to attend the launch event, her office has been in touch to indicate that she would like to visit Argyll and Bute, to better understand the approach being taken to roll out the provision of period products, as well as the brand identity.
- 4.4.2 Details of the visit are yet to be finalised, but it is expected that this visit will have taken place on or around 18th August, and if it goes ahead as planned then, it will be the week when the new Period Products (Scotland) Act takes effect in law. As such, it is likely that this visit may attract media attention. Given the ministerial visit and political profile of launch event and project overall there is a wider remit than just Commercial Services. There are notable linkages with Education and learning opportunities will come via our schools. Furthermore, there is a health and wellbeing angle that greater promotion and accessibility of period products will provide. Cllr McNeilly, Cllr Hampsey as well as Cllr Mulvaney have been briefed as joint leads for this launch event and project.
- 4.4.3 Given the portfolio that the Cabinet Secretary holds, the visit to Argyll and Bute

will encompass the remit of food insecurity, and it is likely that the Cabinet Secretary will have visited a foodbank, and had an opportunity to hear about the Argyll and Bute Flexible Food Fund and overall cash first approach.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The launch event has been an important function to allow promotion of the new brand to increase awareness as well as a positive way of breaking down barriers around talking about period products.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Policy - None

6.2 Financial - This policy is funded by the Scottish Government, and the costs of these events are minimal.

6.3 Legal – None

6.4 HR - None

6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:

6.5.1 Equalities - An EQUISA has previously been undertaken

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - An EQUISA has previously been undertaken

6.5.3 Islands - An EQUISA has previously been undertaken

6.6 Climate Change - None – the GRAB trust will be talking about reusable

6.6 Risk - There is no specific risk register for this work, as it is in keeping with statutory requirements. However, this will remain under review.

6.7 Customer Service - A significant proportion of this work is being developed to improve information and understanding of the provision and to end the stigma that currently surrounds periods, and the launch event is a critical part of this approach.

Douglas Hendry – Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services

Councillor Yvonne McNeilly – Policy Lead for Education

Councillor Amanda Hampsey – Policy Lead for Care Services

1st August 2022

For further information contact:

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My Tribe

**JOIN US IN THE LAUNCH OF
MY TRIBE, THE FREE PERIOD
PRODUCT INITIATIVE ACROSS
ARGYLL AND BUTE!**



Ashley Storrie
Comedian & BBC
Radio Scotland Host



Georgie
Hey Girls
Award winning social enterprise



Ashley McLean
The Poverty Alliance



Christine & Kerry
The Grab Trust



Amy Bruce
Project Lead -
Period Products
Argyll & Bute Council

FREE PERIOD PRODUCT LAUNCH EVENT Argyll & Bute



Helensburgh Civic Centre - Wed 24th Aug '22
Lochgilphead High School - Thurs 25th Aug '22
6pm-8.30pm

Scan Code to book free tickets!
Tickets available from 24th July 2022

Entry strictly with tickets only

If you are unable to use the QR Code above, please contact
✉ periodproducts@argyll-bute.gov.uk



ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES

25 AUGUST 2022

GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN PROGRESS REPORT

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update the Community Services Committee on progress in delivering the actions in the approved Argyll and Bute Council Gaelic Language Plan.

1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

Notes the progress being made in delivering the Council's Gaelic Language Plan.

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES

25 AUGUST 2022

Gaelic Language Plan Progress Report

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Community Services Committee on progress in delivering the actions in the approved Argyll and Bute Council Gaelic Language Plan.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Services Committee:

3.1 Notes the progress being made in delivering the Council's Gaelic Language Plan

4.0 DETAIL

4.1. Argyll and Bute Council has a duty under the Statutory Notice by Bòrd na Gàidhlig to produce a Gaelic Language Plan. The Council approved its Gaelic Language Plan in 2018.

4.2 The Gaelic Language Plan is aligned with the National Gaelic Plan and focuses on the same themes. These are:

- Promoting a Positive Image of Gaelic
- Increasing the Learning of Gaelic
- Increasing the Use of Gaelic

4.3 The Council's Plan contains a number of actions with success measures that have been developed and agreed as our approach to delivering on the Plan. Attached to this report in Appendix 1 is a progress report showing each of the actions that have been agreed and their status.

4.4 Each of the actions has an identified lead officer. Regular meetings are programmed with the Policy Lead to provide updates on progress against the agreed actions. These meetings have representation from services that are involved in delivering different aspects of the Gaelic Language Plan.

4.5 As the plan progresses, the actions will be completed or reviewed to ensure that they remain appropriate.

- 4.6 Progress with the plan continues to be good with the majority of actions on track or complete. This is to be welcomed, particularly during the challenges of the last two years of the Covid Pandemic, given the ambitious nature of the plan.
- 4.7 Bòrd na Gaidhlig have been in correspondence with the Council regarding reference in the plan to the Gaelic School in Oban. BnG recommended an amendment to the Plan to stating that the Council should include a commitment to putting a 3-18 Gaelic School in place. Several meetings have taken place with Bòrd na Gaidhlig officials regarding this issue, culminating in a paper to Council on 30th June this year.
- 4.8 Members will recall that in December 2018 the Committee considered options and their relative impacts for a Gaelic School. The preferred option B proposed to change the management arrangements at Rockfield School, to create a Deputy Head with specific management responsibilities for the Gaelic Medium Unit. The Committee agreed that Option B is the recommended option based on an evaluation of impact, deliverability, affordability and risk and further agreed that in the event there was a material change in circumstances Officers would give further consideration to the other options that have been identified in the report. The Committee decided not to build a stand-alone Primary School in Oban and Lorn. On that basis, the Plan was amended to say that unless there was a material change, the Council would not commit to a new Gaelic School.
- 4.9 The Council paper reiterated the position of the Council on this matter of Education policy and Council budget, making it clear that they consider this proposed amendment to be outwith the legal remit of Bòrd na Gaidhlig and entirely the decision of the Council.
- 4.10 As per the established process for a disagreement on Plan content, the matter has now been referred to Scottish Ministers and we await their response. This will be communicated to members in due course.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Good progress is being made by the Council on delivery of the Gaelic Language Plan. The dispute with Bòrd na Gaidhlig is now being considered by Scottish Ministers.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- | | | |
|-----|------------------------|---|
| 6.1 | Policy | This proposal is compliant with the Council's policies and procedures. |
| 6.2 | Financial | There are no financial implications from this report. |
| 6.3 | Legal | The Council has a duty under a statutory notice to produce a Gaelic Language Plan |
| 6.4 | HR | None |
| 6.5 | Fairer Scotland | None |

	Duty	
6.6	Climate Change	None
6.7	Risk	None
6.8	Customer Service	None

Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services – Kirsty Flanagan

Head of Customer Support Services – Jane Fowler

Policy lead – Councillor Robin Currie

For further information contact: Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services

Date: August 2022

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Gaelic Language Progress Action Plan

Appendix 1 – Gaelic Language Action Plan: Community Services Committee, 25th August 2022

Progress – On track, Complete, Delayed and rescheduled, Off Track

1. Promoting a positive image of Gaelic						
	We will:	Target	Success Measure	Timescale	Lead	Progress September 2022
1.1	Offer free Council venues for local provincial mods	All local Mods will have free access to Council Venues and a connection will be made with Bòrd na Gàidhlig / Creative Scotland's Arts and Culture Officer.	Venues provided	Throughout life of the Plan	General Manager, Live Argyll	In place and ongoing.
1.2	Promote opportunities for Gaelic staff to work collaboratively across the Council to ensure a shared standard of achievement	One collaborative session using V-Scene (video conferencing) for all Gaelic Medium teaching staff planned for each term – 3 to 4 per academic year	18/19 - 2 sessions 19/20 - 3 sessions 20/21 - 4 sessions 21/22 - 4 sessions	By 2022	Head of Education – teaching and Learning	On Track A number of schools have engaged in moderation opportunities provided during the 21/22 session. An authority wide digital moderation platform is being used now by most schools including GME practitioners to support the shared standard of achievement. Additional staffing within the Mull cluster enabled a secondary staff member to support feeder primaries to

						establish shared standards and progression.
1.3	Ensure Council vacancies which are Gaelic essential or desirable will be advertised bilingually	100% of Gaelic teacher vacancies are advertised in Gaelic	100% of Gaelic teacher vacancies	Throughout the Life of the Plan	Head of Education – teaching and Learning Recruiting managers and Head Teachers	On track Recent GME posts have been advertised bilingually.
1.4	Host a successful Royal National Mod	1 Mod event in Argyll	1 event	By 2024	Head of Development and Economic Growth	Delayed and rescheduled. Council, as part of the budget setting process agreed to providing funding that would ensure that the Royal National Mod was held in Oban in 2023 – This has been pushed back to 2024 due to Covid and the fact that the MOD in 2020 had to be cancelled.
1.5	Include Gaelic in the CHArts (Culture Heritage and the Arts) initiative	Include the role of Gaelic culture in the final CHArts documents	Gaelic included	By 2020	Head of Development and Economic Growth	Completed - CHARTS continue to build on their role within Gaelic Culture. Funded by Bord na Gaidhlig, they have appointed a p/t Gaelic Culture Heritage and Arts Officer to input into delivery of CHARTS projects, develop a Gaelic plan and to promote Gaelic arts and heritage. The Illumination Festival in Hermitage Park took place as part of World Gaelic Week, 21-27th March 2022,

						and included the Gaelic Illumination artist's work alongside Gaelic work from schools that was also part of the Gaelic Gathering. CHARTS supported the Gaelic Gathering by running the online platforms and supports the use of Gaelic translators. In addition, CHARTS, in partnership with LIVE ARGYLL, developed the Tides Digital Music Festival which showcased local musicians to a worldwide audience. Further information on the wide range of projects can be found on the CHARTS website CHARTS. A Culture, Heritage & Arts network for Argyll & the Isles (chartsargyllandisles.org)
1.6	Work with others to actively promote participation in the Royal National Mod	Joint promotional materials and activities prepared and circulated	Numbers participating are positive	To coincide with Mod	Head of Development and Economic Growth	We will work with Royal National Mod committee/local Mod committee and partners in the run up to the Mod in 2024.
1.7	Work with others to promote attendance at the Royal National Mod in Argyll	Joint promotional materials and activities prepared and circulated	Attendance numbers are positive	To coincide with Mod	Head of Development and Economic Growth	On track

1.8	Secure a higher profile and visibility for Gaelic and bilingualism in commercial, retail, food and drink and in tourism sectors.	Guidance prepared and promoted.	Establish Gaelic as a norm in the consideration of promoting a business sector or economic initiative.	By 2022	Head of Development and Economic Growth	On track
1.9	Include the Gaelic language in the promotion of Argyll and Bute as a tourism destination.	Guidance developed and promoted	Tourism promotion materials using Gaelic are increased.	By 2022	Head of Development and Economic Growth / Argyll and Islands Tourism Cooperative	On track - see Visit Scotland site- Using Scottish Gaelic - Business Toolkit VisitScotland.org
1.10	Maximise the economic impact of Gaelic at events/festivals held in Argyll and Bute	Minimum 2 events per annum i.e. Bowfest, Oban Live, Islay Whisky festival, Tiree Music festival.	The economic benefits of the Gaelic culture and bilingualism will enjoy a higher profile	By 2022	Head of Development and Economic Growth	Strategic Events and Festivals (SEF) funded via the Council SEF Fund Round 4 2022/23 that support Gaelic culture were approved by full council and include: Inveraray Highland Games, Jura Music Festival, Gathering of Cowal Clans, Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival, Mull of Kintyre Music and Arts Festival and Cowal Highland Gathering. In addition to these a further round was offered to address challenges of fragility and to acknowledge the period of recovery required for this sector. Grants offered in this round to support Gaelic culture include: Tiree Music

						Festival, Argyllshire Gathering and Tarbert Music Festival.
1.11	Assist in the development of the economic impact of the Royal National Mod	Delivery of 1 economic impact study in association with the Mod.	Study complete	Q4 2018/19	Head of Development and Economic Growth	Action completed: Report produced.
1.12	Promote Argyll and Bute as a place to undertake Film and TV work that involves Gaelic language and culture	Create a Gaelic section on our dedicated film and tv web site.	Gaelic section created	Q1 2018/19	Head of Development and Economic Growth	Completed: Gaelic section created on website.
1.13	Consider support for Royal National Mod in Argyll in the future.	Carry out a review of events funding in 2018/19 and consider Mod support as an aspect of this.	Review complete	2018/19	Head of Development and Economic Growth	Completed: Council agreed in Feb 2019 to provide financial support to Mod to secure Oban as a venue in 2023 , this has subsequently been changed to 2024 due to disruption to the Mod programme caused as a result of the Covid pandemic.

1.14	Investigate the development of a bilingual Council logo	Investigate design options.	Logo options considered by Members	By 2022	Head of CSS	On track A proposal has been developed and will be presented to the August Gaelic Policy Lead Meeting.
1.15	Work in partnership with Highlands and Islands Enterprise as in the development of Ar Stòras Gàidhlig	Partnership working embedded	Partner meetings take place	Throughout the life of the plan	Head of Development and Economic Growth	To date no meetings have been held.
We will continue to:						
1.16	Involve Bòrd na Gàidhlig in Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership	Community Planning Manager			Ongoing	
1.17	Increase Gaelic content on 'The Hub' and website	Customer Service Centre			Ongoing	
1.18	Promote good news stories in and relating to Gaelic	CSS			Ongoing	
1.19	Ensure mail and email received in Gaelic will be responded to in Gaelic	All Services			Ongoing	
1.20	Ensure complaints received in Gaelic are responded to in Gaelic within timescale and GP12 from the	All Services			Ongoing	

	201318 plan – Gaelic on plasma screens					
1.21	Ensure the bilingual welcome for Council Reception staff is standard		Customer Service Centre			ongoing
1.22	Open Committee meetings with a Gaelic greeting		Governance & Law			Continues to be actioned on an ongoing basis.
1.23	Include Gaelic media organisations in the distribution of all council press releases		CSS			In place and now is business as Usual.
1.24	Increase the general community's knowledge and understanding of the benefits and aims of Gaelic/the Gaelic Plan in Argyll and Bute through the Gaelic Forum Facebook Page, other social media and Gaelic Medium units.		CSS/Education			On track The Gaelic Forum facebook group continues to be well used and to attract new members.
2.	Increasing the Learning of Gaelic					
	We will:	Target	Success Measure	Timescale	Lead	Progress in September 2022
2.1	Work in partnership with schools providing Gaelic Education and Comann nam Pàrant groups to deliver	Every Gaelic Medium ELC and Primary School will host at least one opportunity for prospective parents / members of the community to visit and learn about	6 events per annum throughout the duration of the plan	Throughout the life of the plan	Head of Education EYLLL and Teaching and Learning	On track Promotional video on the benefits of GME published to social media on 08/09/21 and was shared again in July 2022.

	awareness raising opportunities for communities on the benefits of bilingualism.	GME per academic session by August 2019				
2.2	Support the development of volunteer-led opportunities to enable both Gaelic speakers and learners to use their Gaelic skills	With the relevant funding in place. Deliver 1 opportunity per session in an area where Gaelic Medium is provided	1 per annum throughout the duration of the plan	2018 - 2022	Head of Education – Teaching and Learning	On track Promotional video on the benefits of GME published to social media on 08/09/21 and was shared again in July 2022.
2.3	Deliver regular Gaelic Bookbug sessions in all areas with Gaelic Medium Education (GME)	Monthly Bookbug sessions delivered to areas providing GME	18/19 – 3 areas 19/20 – 4 areas 20/21 – 5 areas 21/22 – 6 areas	By August 2019	Head of Education – teaching and Learning	On Track Use of virtual platform to deliver Bookbug sessions has allowed for wider uptake. As well as face-to-face sessions at Bunessan and Strath of Appin GME units.
2.4	Ensure appropriate transition from	Every GM provision within the Education Authority	2x projects per provision:	By 2022	Head of Education – Teaching and Learning	On Track Use of virtual platform to deliver Bookbug sessions has allowed for

	Early Learning and Childcare to primary and from primary to secondary within Gaelic Medium (GM) provision	will plan and implement a transition project specifically designed for GM pupils with specific focus on communication	18/19 – 5 Schools 19/20 – 6 Schools 20/21 – 7 Schools 21/22 – 8 Schools			wider uptake. As well as face-to-face sessions at Bunessan and Strath of Appin GME units. Whole authority transition (ELC to P1) included Gaelic which was available on a dedicated transition Facebook page for families to access. Islay primary schools transition from P7 to S1 included Gaelic and digital tools to showcase talking skills at Second Level.
2.5	For those schools who have not chosen Gaelic as Language 2, encourage uptake at Language 3	A range of primary schools across the authority will introduce Gaelic to their P5 – P7 children in some capacity at Language 3 by 2020.	18/19 – 2 schools 19/20 – 4 schools 20/21 – 6 schools 21/22 – 8 schools	June 2020	Head of Education – Teaching and Learning	Complete. All schools in OLI are implementing Gaelic as L3. The 1+2 Languages Coordinator is working to embed Gaelic as L3 across other areas of Argyll and Bute. The target has been exceeded. Development of Gaelic interdisciplinary resource packages by PT Languages 1+2 for all schools to access in session 2022-23 to support Gaelic at L3 across establishments.
2.6	Promote Gaelic Medium Education, including how it is funded, registration etc to people who are not	Explore development of promotional materials, particularly online and social media, through the Northern Alliance Regional	Materials created and circulated	By 2022	Head of Education	On track Gaelic medium section of the school registration site updated. Argyll and Bute partnership with Western Isles and Highland Councils on a Multi-Media project with the

	involved in Gaelic.	Improvement Collaborative (NARIC)				outcome of improving promotional materials for Gaelic Education.
2.7	Increase the number of families, with young people in GME, accessing out of school activities for learning and using Gaelic - through partnership working and support from funding bodies	Target: All GMPE provision throughout the Education Authority will have an extra-curricular club delivered through the medium of Gaelic by August 2019	Events throughout whole authority: 18/19 – 4 19/20 – 6	August 2019	Head of Education – Teaching and Learning	On track Two schools involved with Gaelic extra-curricular activities through e-Sgoil. A number of extra-curricular activities offered by Furan Administrator.
2.8	Work in partnership with Ionad Chaluim Chille Ìle (ICCI) to provide distance learning opportunities for existing school staff, interested individuals	2018 – 2022	18/19 – 12 people 19/20 – 10 people 20/21 – 8 people 21/22 – 6 people	August 2022	Head of Education – Teaching and Learning	On Track Provision available through current ICCI course. 1 staff member completed training session 21/22.

	and parents in order to build a future workforce to meet the needs of the Gaelic sector – dependent upon funding from BnG and A&B Council					
2.9	Provide access to partnership specialist school support staff	Target: Students taught through the medium of Gaelic who appear to experience barriers to their learning will receive a staged intervention programme within an appropriate timescale – accessing specialist staff through the medium of English if necessary	Audit of meeting children’s needs who are educated through Gaelic, in various locations systematically: 18/19 – 1 19/20 – 2 20/21 – 1 21/22 - 1	By August 2020	Head of Education – Teaching and Learning	On track Partnership with Western Isles being progressed on the early identification of additional support needs.
2.10	Increase the number of employees who participate in Gaelic	Increase by 10%	30 employees	March 2022	Head of CSS	Covid 19 had an impact on employee capacity to attend Gaelic classes. 2019-2020: 16 attendees 2020-2021: 14 attendees

	language lessons and workshops					<p>2021-2022: Started with 14 and went down to 5 attendees.</p> <p>Whilst Covid 19 may have had an impact on attendees at training, this year's high drop off rate and lack of interest in the advanced class indicates a more fundamental issue with this action. We have offered places to partners, but with little/no interest. The increasing demands on employee time to deliver critical services is affecting capacity and interest in learning. There are also an increasing number of Gaelic learning resources available from external sources – online and on BBC Alba, which reduces the need for Council sponsored classes. No application has been submitted this year for GLAIF funding and so we will have a zero against performance for 22/23. We will review the position and potential options prior to the GLAIF application round next year.</p>
2.11	Investigate the option for a Gaelic School in Argyll.	Investigate the options of a Gaelic School in Argyll	Investigation complete	2019/20	Head of Education - Teaching and Learning	Complete.
2.12	Encourage young people to go into	Develop promotional and awareness raising	Increased number of young people	Throughout the life of the Plan	Head of Education – teaching and	On track

	Gaelic teaching and career changes.	materials through Growing our Own and DYW	from A&B enter Gaelic teaching		Learning /Head of IHR	
2.13	Extend Gaelic courses for the workforce to other public bodies, e.g. all in the Community Planning Partnership.	Partners contacted and offered the opportunity to participate	Increased numbers of learners from partner organisations	Throughout the life of the plan	Head of CSS	Gaelic classes have been offered out to community planning partners, but there was no take up.
We will continue to:						
2.14	Encourage communities to access Bòrd na Gàidhlig funding to enable the delivery of community-based Gaelic language learning classes Target: Language lesson delivery in all areas with GMPE by 2022 - dependent upon funding from BnaG / other funding bodies		Head of Education – Lifelong Learning			On track. Funding opportunities advertised regularly by the Gaelic Development Officer through newsletters. Information also shared with schools.
2.15	Provide CPD opportunities for all Gaelic Education staff Target: Two opportunities per year to meet together for training / working parties / planning for staff in all ELC, primary and secondary		Head of Education – Teaching and Learning			On track Termly business meetings, opportunities for moderation, progression framework working party ongoing. CPD on GME POLAAR developed by Argyll & Bute and Education Scotland presented at Scottish Learning Festival.

	sectors by 2020 – dependent on supply cover		
2.16	<p>Continue to support opportunities for teaching staff to access GLPS training in order to deliver Gaelic lessons to pupils in English Medium classes.</p> <p>Target: 10 more teachers trained in GLPS by 2022 – dependent upon funding from Scottish Government to GLPS Consortium</p>	Head of Education – Teaching and Learning	On track GLPS training now through online platform. 5 teachers currently enrolled.
2.17	<p>Promote Gaelic learning opportunities through the wider learning community and in collaboration with Bòrd na Gàidhlig</p> <p>Target: All press releases / good news stories / Gaelic learning opportunities will be shared with the Council's Communications Team and Bòrd na Gàidhlig's PR Officer from 2017 – 2022</p>	Head of Education – Lifelong Learning	On track
2.18	<p>Promote the benefits of bilingualism and Gaelic Education in partnership with Comann nam Pàrant/Bòrd na Gàidhlig and local communities</p> <p>Target: Respond to parental requests for GMPE as per the Assessment Protocol produced by Bòrd na Gàidhlig in response to the</p>	Head of Education – Teaching and Learning	On track The Authority continue to respond as per 2016 legislation and is proactive and solution focussed in its work with parents requesting GMPE.

	Education (Scotland) Act 2016 – Gaelic Provisions.		
2.19	<p>Continue to support those teachers in English Medium who wish to transfer to the Gaelic Medium sector by undertaking the Gaelic Immersion for Teachers course (GIFT) or equivalent</p> <p>Target: 3 more teachers trained through GIFT (or equivalent) by 2022 – dependent upon 80% funding from BnaG with a 20% contribution from A&B Council</p>	Head of Education - Teaching and Learning	<p>Off track</p> <p>The provision replacing GIFT has been widely shared and publicised across all schools in the authority, and prospective applicants have been advised appropriately re strict BnG criteria for entry. No uptake at present. Further discussion with BnG ongoing re potential pathways into Gaelic teaching.</p>
2.20	<p>Support schools in meeting the needs of all children through the promotion of the 'Guidance on Gaelic Medium Education in Argyll and Bute' document.</p> <p>Target: All GMPE provisions will have a rigorous system of assessment, tracking and monitoring – detailed in a Curriculum Rationale by August 2020</p>	Head of Education - Teaching and Learning	<p>Complete</p> <p>Gaelic attainment in Literacy and Numeracy now fully incorporated into authority Progress and Achievement tracking and monitoring module. CfE levels entered three times per session, with associated analysis and interventions.</p>
2.21	Deliver Gaelic language learning classes in the workplace	Head of Customer & Support Services	Complete.

3. Increasing the use of Gaelic						
	We will:	Target	Success Measure	Timescale	Lead	Progress September 2022
3.1	Increase the range of activities/groups accessing Gaelic Centre in Oban to include inter-generational working	One session per month where Gaelic speaking community members interact with GM primary pupils to develop skills in Gaelic, knitting, sewing, reading etc.	8 sessions per annum throughout the duration of the plan	By August 2018	Head of Education - Teaching and Learning	On track Furan Administrator offers online Cofaidh is Cabadaich opportunities as well as the outdoor Cofaidh is Cabadaich air an Lèanag.
3.2	Expand the Parental Advocacy (Advisory) Scheme in partnership with Comann nam Pàrant to include a Comann nam Pàrant Parental Officer for every area where Gaelic Medium is provided.	Every area have a parental officer where GME is provided.		18/19 – 3 areas 19/20 – 4 areas 20/21 – 5 areas 21/22 – 6 areas	By August 2019	Delayed rescheduled CnP is strengthening in authority, but scheme revised with BnG funding allocations and recruitment. Education Officer with responsibility for Gaelic to liaise.

3.3	Increase the number of curricular areas delivered through Gaelic in secondary school curriculum through partnership working with e-Sgoil	All five secondary schools providing GME will liaise with e-Sgoil, as and when required, to deliver Gaelic and another curricular area to GM students – where each school’s staffing budget allows	Duration of plan – 3 schools accessing e-Sgoil with 1 school accessing a different curricular area as well as Gaelic	By 2022	Head of Education -	Off track Staffing commitments have curtailed increase in number of curricular areas delivered in Gaelic. Further links with e-Sgoil to support this to be explored.
3.4	Monitor the effective use of national and local Gaelic Guidance by schools	All primary and secondary schools / ELC settings providing GME will have a Curriculum Rationale for Gaelic by August 2020	2 opportunities for the Education Authority to liaise with schools providing GME throughout the year	2018 - 2022	Head of Education	Complete All GME establishments have appropriate rationale documents.
3.5	Support schools who have chosen to study Gaelic as Language 2 (GLPS)	All primary schools with Gaelic as L2 will plan and implement a transition project specifically designed for Gaelic Learners	18/19 – 1 cluster 19/20 – 2 clusters 20/21 – 3 clusters	By June 2020	Head of Education	On track Additional staffing in Mull cluster to support and deliver Gaelic L2 and transition.

	ensuring appropriate transition from primary to secondary		21/22 – 4 clusters			
3.6	Increase the number of young people with Gaelic engaging with the wider Gaelic community in a variety of settings – through partnership working and outreach work with schools	All settings with Gaelic Education will take part in an event with Gaelic speaking members of their local community at least once per academic year by August 2020	Gaelic Speaking Event: 18/19 – 8 19/20 – 9 20/21 – 11	August 2020	Head of Education	On track A number of partnerships including Feisean nan Gaidheal, Gaelic Youth Forum, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Spors Gaidhlig and FilmG have supported this.
3.7	Raise Gaelic awareness by having words/phrases on the website on a regular basis, including the Argyll and Islay dialects	Programme of phrases developed and uploaded to Hub/Web	Phrases in place	Through out the life of the plan	Head of CSS	Off track This action has not been progressed due to other priorities taking precedence for the team.
We will continue to:						

3.8	Replace all internal and external signage bilingually when required	Commercial Services	Ongoing
3.9	Utilise our translation and interpretation external service	Customer & Support Services	Ongoing
3.10	Ensure the Gaelic gathering meets biannually	EDST/IHR/Education	Ongoing - Was held virtually in 2022.

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Community Services Committee Work Plan 2022 - 2023

This is an outline plan to facilitate forward planning of reports to the Community Service Committee.

Date	Paper Designation	Lead Service/ Officer	Regularity of occurrence/ consideration	Comment
25 August 2022				
	The Election of Teacher Representatives to the Community Services Committee	Education		
	Education Change Programme – School Leadership Structure	Education		
	Argyll and Bute – Education Strategic Plan 2022-24 and Recovery, Renewal and Progress Report 2021-22	Education	Annually in August	
	Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Skipness Primary School	Education		
	Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Minard Primary School	Education		
	Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Luing Primary School	Education		
	Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Achaleven Primary School	Education		
	Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 – Southend Primary School	Education		
	School Holiday Dates – 2023-2026	Education		
	Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) Update – Potential Bid for New Mull Campus	Commercial Services Education		
	SQA School Examination Results 2022	Education		
	Key Performance Indicators FQ4 2021/22 – Education Service	Education	Quarterly	
	Service Annual Performance Reviews 2021/22 – Education Service	Education	Annually in August	

Community Services Committee Work Plan 2022 - 2023

	Argyll & Bute Local Policing Plan (2020 – 2023) – Quarterly Report (Qtr 4 2021/22 & Qtr 1 2022/23)	Police Scotland	Quarterly	
	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Argyll & Bute Performance Report Q4 1 January – 31 March 2022 & Q1 – 1 April – 30 June 2022	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Quarterly	
	Argyll & Bute HSCP – Performance Report May 2022	Argyll & Bute HSCP	Quarterly	
	Live Argyll Monitoring and Performance Reporting – Update Report	Commercial Services	Annually in August	
	Live Argyll Annual Report 2021/22	Live Argyll	Annually in August	
	Counselling in Schools	Education		
	Care Experienced Children and Young People	Education		
	Scottish Attainment Challenge	Education		
	Our Children, Their Nurturing Education	Education		
	External Education Establishment Inspection Report	Education	Quarterly	
	Period Products Launch Event	Commercial Services		
	Gaelic Language Plan Progress Report	Customer Support Services	Annually	
15 December 2022				
	Argyll & Bute Local Policing Plan (2020 – 2023) – Quarterly Report (Qtr 2 2022/23)	Police Scotland	Quarterly	
	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Argyll & Bute Performance Report Q2 – 1 April – 30 June 2022	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Quarterly	
	Argyll & Bute HSCP – Performance Report	Argyll & Bute HSCP	Quarterly	

Community Services Committee Work Plan 2022 - 2023

	Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership – Annual Report	Argyll & Bute HSCP	Annually	
	ASN Review Update	Education		
	Exclusion Policy	Education		
	External Education Establishment Inspection Report	Education	Quarterly	
9 March 2023				
	Argyll & Bute Local Policing Plan (2020 – 2023) – Quarterly Report (Qtr 3 2022/23)	Police Scotland	Quarterly	
	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Argyll & Bute Performance Report Q3 – 1 April – 30 June 2022	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Quarterly	
	Argyll & Bute HSCP – Performance Report	Argyll & Bute HSCP	Quarterly	
	Updated National Improvement Framework/Scottish Attainment/Participation	Education		
	Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Kilchrenan Primary School			
	External Education Establishment Inspection Report	Education	Quarterly	
8 June 2023				
	Argyll & Bute Local Policing Plan (2020 – 2023) – Quarterly Report (Qtr 4 2022/23)	Police Scotland	Quarterly	
	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Argyll & Bute Performance Report Q4 – 1 April – 30 June 2022	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Quarterly	
	Argyll & Bute HSCP – Performance Report	Argyll & Bute HSCP	Quarterly	

Community Services Committee Work Plan 2022 - 2023

	External Education Establishment Inspection Report	Education	Quarterly	
Future Reports – dates to be determined				
	The Expansion of Funded Early Years Learning and Childcare in Scotland – Argyll and Bute Early Learning and Childcare Updated Delivery Plan	Education		
	Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 - St Joseph's School Catchment Boundary	Education		
	2021/22 Annual Review of the Children and Young Peoples Services Plan 2020-23 – Year 2 Review	Argyll & Bute HSCP		
	Report on Argyll and Bute Council Response to the Scottish Government Legislation on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child	Education		
	Argyll & Bute Health and Social Care Partnership – Annual Report	Argyll & Bute HSCP	Annually in December	
	Argyll and Bute Annual Education Plan	Education	Annually in August	
	Draft Education Service Plan	Education	Annually in December	
	Live Argyll Annual Report	Live Argyll	Annually in August	
	Education Service Annual Performance Review	Education	Annually in August	

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

EDUCATION
COMMERCIAL SERVICES

25 AUGUST 2022

**LEARNING ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (LEIP) UPDATE
POTENTIAL BID FOR NEW MULL CAMPUS**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) is the Scottish Government's flagship programme for investment in education and is now into Phase 3. It is the successor to the 'Schools for the Future' programme which our Council has delivered new builds or substantial refurbishments across our education estate at Oban, Kirn, Dunoon, Campbeltown, Lochgilphead etc. Our Council has not applied for previous phases of LEIP and there has been encouragement for a Scotland wide engagement with the programme. There is currently no assurance there would be a subsequent phase of LEIP or prioritised funding for education in future years of this parliament until 2026.
- 1.2 The Scottish Government has recently clarified the timescales and application process for LEIP Phase 3 and this report aims to update Community Services Committee where our team are with the development of a potential bid for this nationally competitive fund. It also seeks to update on engagement recently taken place with our communities that will assist our bid and inform the next steps of the application process should we progress to the next stage following backing from the Scottish Government.
- 1.3 The Council's Learning Estate Strategy (adopted November 2021) has identified the priorities in terms of education new build are focussed on delivery of new campus opportunities on our islands of Mull and Islay based on the assessed fabric condition and learning suitability. Of these two locations, Mull is our preferred bid for LEIP funding and top priority based on a number of suitability criteria, most notably the current suitability of our current estate in Tobermory. Given that LEIP will only fund up to 50% of construction costs with remainder having to be resourced by Council or other sources it would be unaffordable to progress with 2 bids at this current time. Furthermore, given the nationally competitive nature and likelihood of oversubscription to this fund we are also looking to consolidate with a single unified bid for Mull – rather than twin tracking multiple applications.
- 1.4 Given the financial – which will be measured in several tens of millions of pounds - and political commitment it is essential there is a clear mandate by Council to progress with a bid of this scale and significance. To this extent, a report with outcomes from the community engagement process will be presented to full Council on 29th September 2022 and will seek a direction to make a submission to LEIP, or not.

**LEARNING ESTATE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME (LEIP) UPDATE
POTENTIAL BID FOR NEW MULL CAMPUS**

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Community Services Committee note and consider:

- 2.1.1 The Scottish Government has recently confirmed the timescales for the next round of the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) i.e. inviting submissions by 31st October.
- 2.1.2 That an Outline Business Case is being prepared for a potential submission to the LEIP process for a new Campus on Mull in line with the adopted Learning Estate Strategy;
- 2.1.3 That pre-engagement activity has been ongoing with Mull community about the potential LEIP bid over recent weeks and there have been a number of workshops and meetings in August 2022. Further statutory consultation will take place if a bid is made and successfully progresses to the next stage;
- 2.1.4 The financial position and affordability of a LEIP bid is set out in attached **Appendix B**. This appendix is publically exempt due to the commercially sensitive nature of financial forecast information contained.
- 2.1.5 That a paper outlining our approach to LEIP, including feedback from the pre-engagement with the Community, will be presented to Council on 29th September. If a bid is progressed a submission will be required by 31st October 2022.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Scottish Government launched the Learning Estate Investment Programme (LEIP) in 2019 and aims to deliver over £2bn of education estate jointly funded by them and Local Government. There have been 2 phases of LEIP already and 37 projects across the country are now underway at various stages with some nearing completion of construction. The 3rd phase was launched following the Local Government elections in May this year. Argyll and Bute Council are in the minority as we have not applied for any LEIP funding thus far and it is notable that only 1 Island project (Barra) has been successful in obtaining funding from across the country. There is a keenness for a wide and equitable sharing of this government fund and Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) have encouraged Argyll and Bute's (and

others) participation in round 3 of LEIP. We anticipate it will be a very competitive process with oversubscription of applications due to this being last round of government funding on offer plus financial challenges of all Councils. To this extent, there can be no guarantee that if a bid from Argyll and Bute is submitted it would be successful.

- 3.2 The funding model for LEIP differs from the 'Schools for the Future Programme'. In summary, successful local authority applicants will benefit from the Scottish Government providing revenue funding for the new builds through an annual payment over 25 years on the basis that certain criteria are met. These criteria include 'condition of the building' (to be maintained as Grade A or B for lifetime), 'energy efficiency', 'digitally enabled' and 'supportive of economic development'. Recently added criteria also apply to things like embodied carbon, EV charging infrastructure, outdoor learning and infection control. The Scottish Government is likely to meet around 50% of the build costs over the 25 year lifetime. Costs for elements such as purchase of land, residential / hostel accommodation, operational or running / revenue costs and design development fees are also excluded from the LEIP funding that is provided so Council would need to meet these in full.

4.0 Timescales for Phase 3 – Political, Financial & Community Commitment

- 4.1 In December 2021 the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills outlined to Parliament that LEIP Phase 3 would seek projects within 12 months. The following are the most up to date timescales for the programme:-

- 1st July 2022 – LEIP Board wrote to CEO to invite submissions;
- 11th August 2022 – Pre-engagement Community Meetings Mull;
- 29th September 2022 – Argyll and Bute Full Council to consider;
- 31st October September – Local Authority Submissions;
- December 2022 – LEIP Board announcement of successful bids;
- December 2027 – New facilities to be opened

A more detailed routemap can be seen at **Appendix A**.

- 4.2 The Scottish Government have set out a number of detailed requirements for submissions and are encouraging Councils in their applications to cover:

- a) Local investment priority(s) and their context within the 'Place'
- b) The proposed Vision, Strategic Outcomes and Objectives for the project(s)
- c) Alignment with Learning Estate Strategy 2019 Guiding Principles
- d) Ensuring political and financial commitments are in place for the investment priority(s)
- e) Demonstrating implementation of the terms and conditions of the programme on Phase 1&2 projects (where applicable).

- 4.3 The project team developing the bid are well progressed with the proposition for LEIP 3 in the context of the above.

5.0 Strategic Outline Case - Mull

- 5.1 In accordance with the Council's adopted Learning Estate Strategy the Council has prioritised cases for strategic change on Islay and Mull. This is based on current

suitability and condition aspects of the current infrastructure / estate but also noting the majority of mainland towns have had new campus developed within the last 15 years and seeking to address our islands on an equitable basis. Previous Scottish Government funding has been accessed to deliver new schools at Hermitage Academy, Dunoon Grammar, Oban High, Oban Primary Campus, Campbeltown Grammar, Rothesay Joint Campus, Lochgilphead Joint Campus, Dunoon Primary (significant refurbishment) and Kilmory Primary at a cost of around £180m.

- 5.2 Consistent with all local authorities our Schools are assessed in terms of suitability (from an educational perspective) and condition (from a building fabric perspective). The current assessments highlight:-

SCHOOL	CONDITION CRITERIA	SUITABILITY CRITERIA
ALL Islay	B	B
ALL Mull (excluding Tobermory)	B	B
Tobermory Campus	B	C

Definition of Condition

B = 'Satisfactory'

Condition **C** = 'Poor'

- 5.3 Given current Tobermory Campus is assessed to be 'C - poor' in terms of suitability there is a requirement to improve the situation and that is therefore our top priority. The lower grading of Tobermory is largely driven by accessibility, restrictive drop off space, lack of social spaces and restricted specialised classes. Given that LEIP will only fund up to 50% of construction costs of eligible spaces with the remainder having to be resourced by Council or other sources it would be unaffordable to progress with 2 bids at this current time. Given the nationally competitive nature and likelihood of oversubscription to this fund we are also looking to consolidate with a single unified bid for Mull – rather than twin tracking multiple applications.
- 5.4 Analysis of the council expenditure on Mull also highlights a trend of increasing reactive or maintenance spend and a sizable sum of investment on degrading fabric at the high school over the past 5 years. Items like water ingress in roofs + electrical upgrading is common source of expenditure. The condition of the building can be improved from further investment, however the suitability is much more challenging to be upgraded without wholesale remodelling. Such year on year construction can be detrimental on both pupils and learners over long period of time or require decanting of operations for periods. Other environmental (climate change) standards or digital enhancements will also remain below the minimum standard compared to a new build LEIP school.
- 5.5 The services of Hub North (who assisted in development of some of our previous school projects) and the Northern Alliance (an Education focussed support network) have led to the development of a 'Business Case' for Mull. The Strategic Case, is in essence, the first step of the recognised Five Case Model of the Scottish Capital Investment Manual and Treasury Green Book guidance for capital projects. This is comparable to other major projects delivered by the Council and compatible with the development of a LEIP bid.

- 5.6 As this is a strategic or initial business case no specific sites or models have been tested. The bid, if progressed, would be an application for funding to benefit the entire island of Mull. More detailed site selection and analysis of costs will require to be completed if we are selected by the Scottish Government to proceed to the next stage of the process.

6.0 Financial Case & Affordability

- 6.1 As we know from experience the construction of new public infrastructure – particularly the education estate and on islands – comes with significant financial commitment. As a benchmark the new Oban High and Campbeltown Grammar cost in excess of £36m and £26m, respectively. At this stage high level numbers and financial forecasts are being worked on to allow for budget planning and decision making. It will be necessary to identify suitable ‘island weighting’ and construction sector inflation to budgets given the nature of building on Mull. Budgetary figures will be refined and crystallised if successful in progressing to the next stages of process and during site selection process.
- 6.2 Information relating to finance is contained within **Appendix B** for elected Member consideration. Some of the financial information is sensitive due to commercial and competitive nature of the bid at this stage and is therefore publicly restricted.

7.0 Engagement

- 7.1 For such a significant transformational investment to succeed it is essential to understand and engage with our communities. There is no statutory or Government requirement to consult with our communities prior to a LEIP Submission being made in October. However, submitting evidence that we have commenced some form of awareness raising and engagement with our communities is likely to strengthen our submission in this competitive process. If successful in our application a formal and statutory period of community consultation would follow as outlined at **Appendix A**.
- 7.2 The team have commenced a pre-engagement exercise with appropriate stakeholders on Mull and a number of workshops have been held on 11th August. The engagement and message has been at a high level with the purpose of the pre-engagement being primarily to allow stakeholders to influence the format and timings of the formal consultation process. Some of the messaging has been about the background to LEIP Process, headlines from the business case, photos / videos of schools Council has developed in past, next steps and timescales.
- 7.3 The Stakeholders have included:
- Ward Councillors
 - HT & School Staff
 - Parent Councils
 - Pupils
 - Community Councils
 - Wider Public
- 7.4 A summary of the feedback obtained thus far is contained at **Appendix C**.

8.0 Summary and Next Steps

- 8.1 Note that a paper outlining approach to LEIP will be reported to the Full Council on 29th September which will also include feedback from pre-engagement with community.
- 8.2 This report is seeking to update and obtain political direction on the proposal to make LEIP submission for a new Mull Campus in October. This decision needs to be considered in the context of the educational priorities, learning benefits, regeneration, condition / suitability of the current building, community and overall affordability.

9.0 Implications

- 9.1 Policy – The Council's Learning Estate Strategy 2021 sets out that the ambition is to provide a property school estate that is of category A or B in terms of suitability and condition plus a number of other modern standards. Seeking to access LEIP funding to deliver new build estate on our priority location, Mull, supports that ambition.
- 9.2 Financial - Accessing LEIP is a significant financial commitment to the Council as the entire design development, associated cost like land acquisition (if required) and construction costs will be required to be met in full by the Council. The SG would then provide up to 50% of eligible capital costs back over 25 year annual payment if criteria is met. There is risk in this model should criteria not be met and also in terms of risk of construction in current climate so specific financial and affordability advice from Section 95 Officer has been afforded.
- 9.3 Legal – Accessing LEIP is a significant contractual and legal commitment to the Council which will be duly considered if move to next stage.
- 9.4 HR – None at this stage. Considered at future stages if progress.
- 9.5 Fairer Scotland Duty
- 9.5.1 Equalities – None at this stage. Considered at future stages if progress.
- 9.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – The level of investment in a new Campus will be substantial and Scottish Government have set requirements to deliver socio economic benefits if progressed.
- 9.5.3 Islands – Positive implications given top priority in this competitive process has been identified as Mull.
- 9.6 Climate Change – Scottish Government have set requirements to key climate change criteria and benefits if progressed
- 9.7 Risk – Risks exists both in terms of financial and reputational. If progress to next project stages a risk register will be developed.
- 9.8 Customer Service – Pre-engagement has commenced and will be ongoing throughout process as progress.

Douglas Hendry – Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services and Education.

Yvonne McNeilly – Policy Lead for Education

For further information contact:

Ross McLaughlin, Head of Commercial Services

Ross.mclaughlin@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Appendices

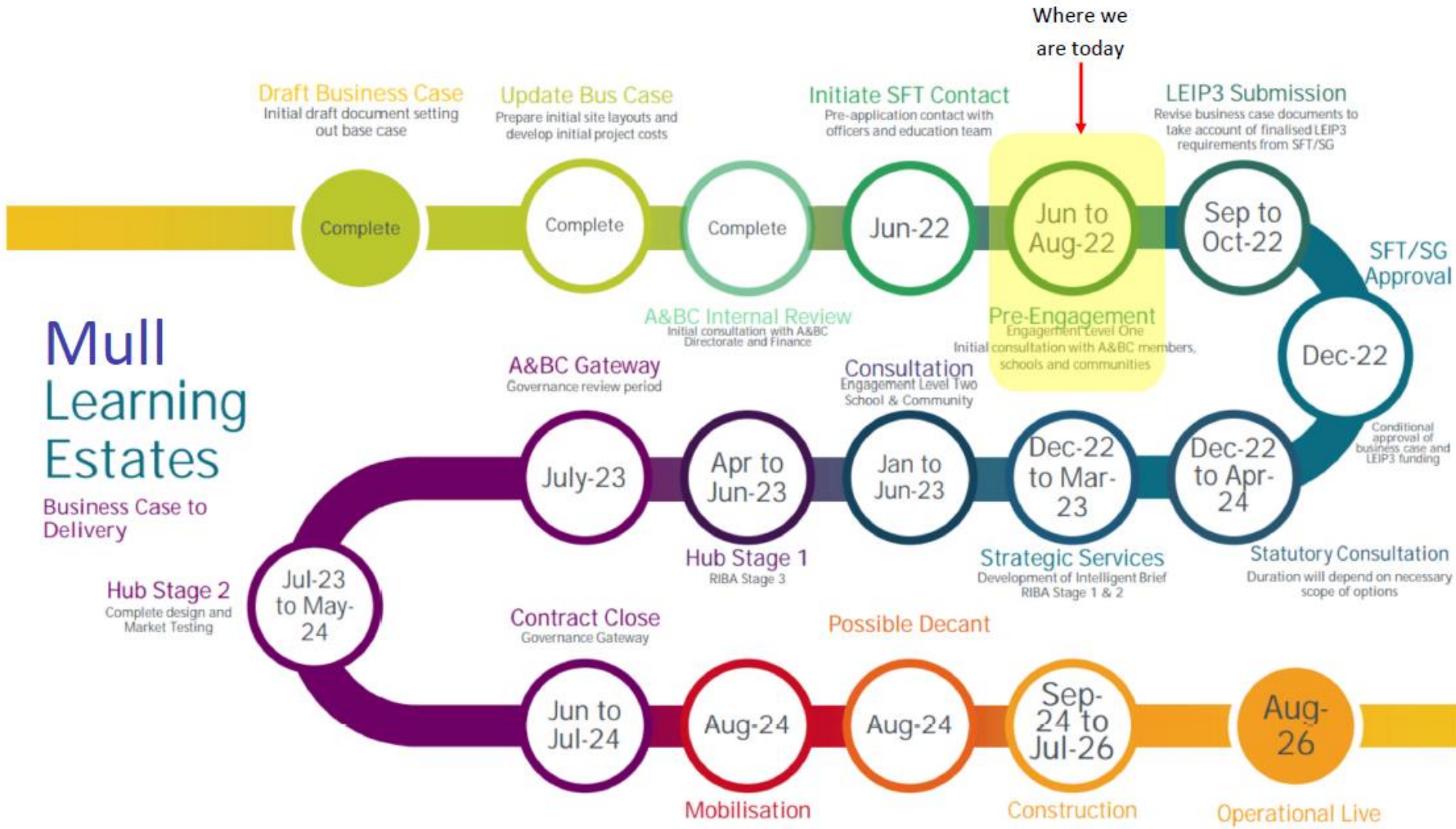
Appendix A - Routemap

Appendix B - Financial & Budget Position (PUBLICALLY RESTRICTED)

Appendix C - Pre-Engagement Feedback

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Appendix A - Routemap



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NOT FOR PUBLICATION by virtue of paragraph(s) 8
of Schedule 7A of the Local Government(Scotland) Act 1973

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Appendix C – Pre-Engagement Feedback

A series of pre-engagement sessions were held in Tobermory High School on Thursday 11 August which were well received.

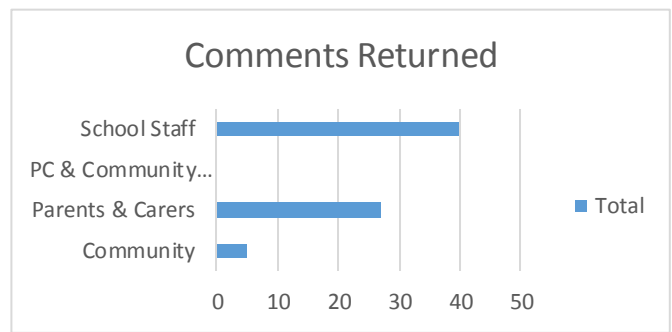
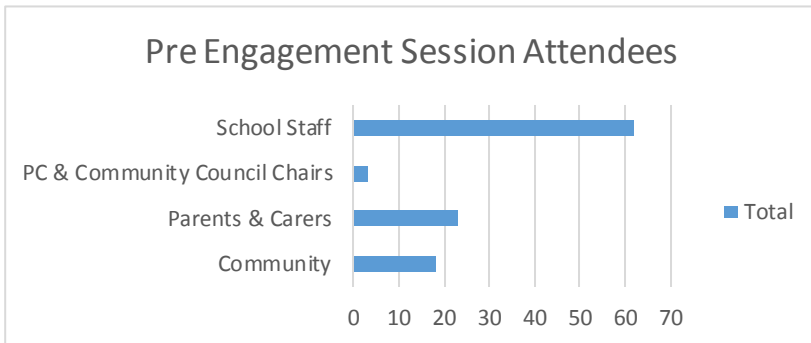
There were sessions for school staff; parent / community Councils; Parents and public. Each of the sessions had a presentation from Wendy Brownlie and Ross McLaughlin providing information around why Mull was considered the councils priority, and the LEIP funding and Learning Estate Strategy.

There were information boards which provided examples of completed projects within Argyll and Bute and nationally to demonstrate the sort of learning environment that can be achieved.

There was an opportunity for attendees to speak to the team made up of education and commercial services officers supported by colleagues from the Northern Alliance, with all attendees being encouraged to leave feedback and comments.

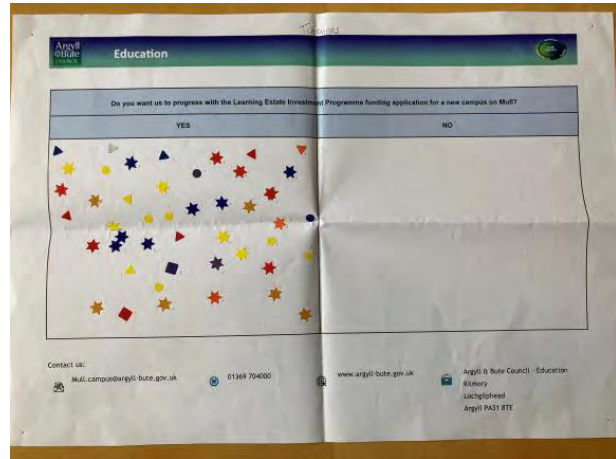
Pupil engagement sessions are being held during the week of 15 August 2022 and further feedback on the comments and views expressed by pupils can be made available following the completion of all sessions.

Summary of the attendees and responses

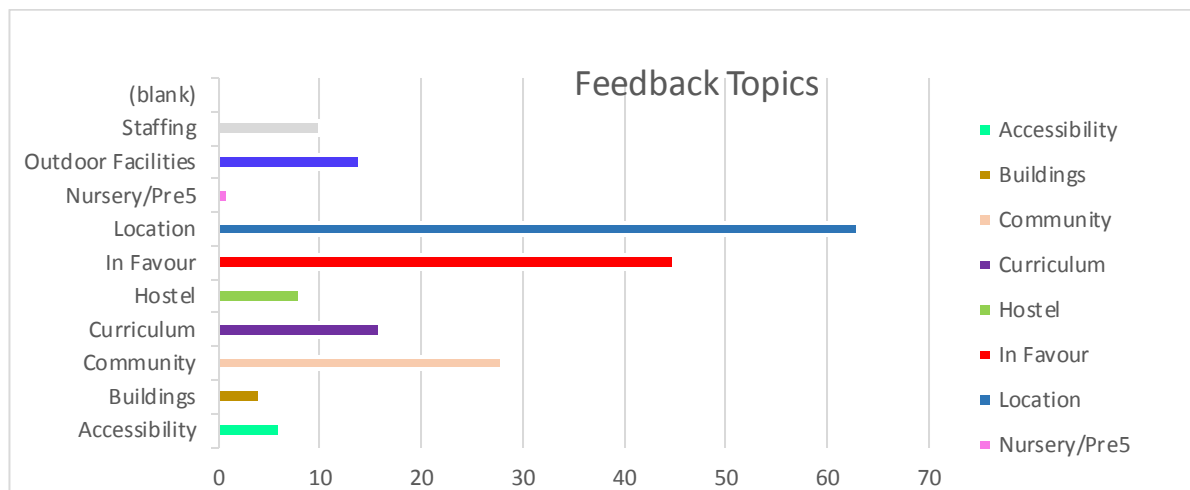


Overwhelming yes to the Exit Poll question

“Do you want us to progress with the Learning Estate Investment Programme funding application for a new campus on Mull?”



Following the pre-engagement sessions, all of the information provided on the day is now available on the council’s website at www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/consultations/mull-campus with a dedicated email address for anyone to provide a comment / view. Through communications on the council’s social media and through the schools and community councils there has been several reminders and encouragements to leave a comment before 9th September. Please see below a summary of the topics that have been raised to date:



Unanimous support for a new campus has been expressed thus far but feedback on location was overwhelmingly of most interest to participants. To be clear, the bid will be for a campus on Mull, with location and site specific’s to be considered and engaged on if we do progress to next stages in 2023 onwards. There are varying degrees of interest for hosting the new site in or around Tobermory (the existing town for the campus) but also in a more central island location. There are quite a range and complex positions on both. Whilst this is not a matter to be considered now or before LEIP bid is submitted in October it is essential that Members are aware there is a divergence of views within the Community on where the campus should be located and there is potential for disappointment or conflicting views that require to be considered alongside management of expectation.