

REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION RELATING TO THE RE-ALIGNMENT OF CATCHMENT AREAS OF ACHAHOISH AND TARBERT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been prepared following Consultation on the proposal that the Council:

Re-align the catchment areas for Achahoish and Tarbert Primary Schools, taking effect from August 2016.

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- a) Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the Consultation period;
- b) Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meetings held on 1st and 8th December 2015; and
- c) Education Scotland's report on the proposal.

The Consultation Report was prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the above proposal.

1.1 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 meetings held on 1st and 8th December 2015;
- Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
- Provide the full text of Education Scotland's Inspectorate report and a statement of the Council's response to this report;
- State how the Council reviewed the above proposal following the representations received during the Statutory Consultation period and the report from Education Scotland;
- Provide details of any omission from, or inaccuracy in, the Proposal Paper and state how the Council acted upon it; and
- State how the Council has complied with Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 when reviewing the above proposals.

1.2 **Financial implications of Proposal**

- Purchase a vehicle and employ a driver and escort.
This will cost approximately £15,000 per annum
or,
- Extend the local bus service to Tiretigan
This will cost approximately £23,000 per annum
or,
- Parental/guardian transport may be an option if a parent/ guardian is available and willing to drive.
This will cost between £2280 and £912 per annum depending on where pupil lives.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

On the basis of the feedback received and taking account of the educational benefits of the proposal, it is recommended that the Council:

- (a) Realign the catchment areas for Achahoish and Tarbert Primary Schools.
- (b) Pursue parental/guardian transport arrangements wherever possible for pupils from the rezoned area.

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3.0 INTRODUCTION

This is a Consultation Report prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the above proposal.

3.1 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 meetings held on 1st and 8th December 2015;
- Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
- Provide the full text of Education Scotland's Inspectorate report and a statement of the Council's response to this report;
- State how the Council reviewed the above proposal following the representations received during the Statutory Consultation period and the report from Education Scotland;
- Provide details of any omission from, or inaccuracy in, the Proposal Paper and state how the Council acted upon it; and
- State how the Council has complied with Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 when reviewing the above proposals.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the feedback received and taking account of the educational benefits of the proposal, it is recommended that the Council:

- (a) Realign the catchment areas for Achahoish and Tarbert Primary Schools.
- (b) Pursue parental/guardian transport arrangements wherever possible for pupils from the rezoned area.

5.0 BACKGROUND

- 5.1 In May 2014 Achahoish Primary School (PS) Parent Council made a formal request to the Council to consider rezoning their current catchment area. This request was supported by Tarbert Academy Primary School (PS) Parent Council.
- 5.2 The existing boundary between the current catchment areas of Achahoish PS and Tarbert Academy PS is shown in Appendix 4 of the report on the Consultation. The request by Achahoish PS Parent Council was for the catchment area to be increased. The preferred choice for boundary change is for Achahoish School to Tiretigan Farm, Kilberry, as shown in Appendix 4 of the Report on the Consultation.

6.0 CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The decision by Council to close Kilberry Primary School in June 1979 resulted in the catchment area of Tarbert Academy PS being extended to incorporate the old catchment area of Kilberry PS. This has resulted in the pupils from the Kilberry area being expected to attend Tarbert Academy PS.
- 6.2 Achahoish Parent Council, supported by South Knapdale Community Council, feels that this decision was not correct and is now requesting that Achahoish PS catchment area be extended to include some of the old Kilberry PS catchment area.
- 6.3 From the new proposed boundary the distance to Achahoish PS is 9.6 miles. The distance to Tarbert Academy PS is 13.7 miles. All travel in this area is on a single track road with passing places.

7.0 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 7.1 On 25 June 2015, Argyll and Bute Council considered the Proposal Paper and agreed that a Consultation with all stakeholders be undertaken on the proposal within this document. The proposal document made clear the Consultation would run from 4th November 2015 until 18th December 2015.
- 7.2 The proposal on which the Consultation took place on was the re-alignment of the catchment areas for Achahoish and Tarbert Primary Schools, taking effect from August 2016.
- 7.3 The requirements for consulting on a relevant proposal relating to schools are set out in the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010 and the amendments in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- The Council posted the proposal document on its website and lodged copies in the schools concerned, in Council offices and in all libraries in

Mid Argyll. In addition the Council placed an advert in local newspapers. The Council held public meetings on 1 and 8 December 2015 at Achahoish Primary School and Tarbert Academy respectively.

- Two public meetings were held to discuss the proposal as follows: 1st December 2015 Achahoish Primary School, and 8th December 2015 Tarbert Academy Primary School.
- The Consultation ended on 18th December 2015.
- Education Scotland's involvement consisted of: the proposal document being sent to them, attendance at the meeting in Tarbert Academy Primary School on 8th December and visiting the two primary schools and meeting with a sample of children and community members. They also received a copy of all written representations; a note of the public meetings and meetings with staff and children. They then prepared a report on the educational aspects of this proposal. This is attached in full as Appendix 3 of the Report on the Consultation.

7.4 The following schools are affected by the proposal:

- Tarbert Academy Primary School, and
- Achahoish Primary School

7.5 In accordance with statutory requirements, the following persons were consulted:

- The Parent Councils of the two affected schools;
- The parents/carers of the pupils and children who may attend the two schools;
- Parents/carers of children expected to the two school within two years of the date of publication of this proposal document;
- The teaching and ancillary staff of the two schools;
- All Trades Unions;
- Community Councils in areas affected;
- Relevant users of the two schools;
- Elected Members of Argyll and Bute Council;
- The Constituency MSP and List MSPs covering the Constituencies;
- The Constituency MP;
- Argyll and Bute Community Planners;
- Argyll and Bute Youth Council;
- Police Scotland;
- Area Commander Fire Service;
- Chief Executive of the NHS;
- Argyll and Bute Head of Roads;
- Education Scotland, and
- The Care Inspectorate.

7.6 During the Consultation representations were sought from interested parties, either oral or in written form or by e mail.

7.7 The Consultation Report is the Council's response to the issues raised during the Consultation period on the Proposal Paper.

7.8 The Consultation Report was published on 15th March 2016 before a final decision is taken at the meeting of Argyll and Bute Council on 21st April 2016.

8.0 THE PUBLIC MEETINGS

8.1 A public meeting was held in Achahoish Primary School on 1st December 2015. Five members of the public attended. A full note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1 of the Report on the Consultation which details the questions and issues raised at the meeting.

8.2 A public meeting was held at Tarbert Academy on 8th December 2015. Seven members of the public attended. A full note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 2 of the Report on the Consultation which details the questions and issues raised at the meeting.

8.3 The attendees at the meetings all supported the proposal. There was discussion regarding the financial implications for the Council.

9.0 RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

9.1 The Council received 31 responses during the Consultation period and 30 were in agreement with the proposal, and one was blank.

9.2 The written and oral responses focussed mainly on:

- The common sense of the proposal,
- The strong educational benefits of the proposal, and
- The cost implications stated within the paper and the need for the Council to consider an option where parental mileage is paid giving a cost effective option.

10.0 EDUCATION AUTHORITY RESPONSE TO WRITTEN AND ORAL REPRESENTATIONS

10.1 The full response is available in section 7 and appendix one and two of the Report on the Outcome of the Consultation.

11.0 EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

11.1 In accordance with the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and the amendments contained in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, a report was produced by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal.

11.2 Education Scotland visited:

- Tarbert Academy Primary School, and
- Achahoish Primary School.

To speak with pupils, parents/carers and staff. Education Scotland attended the public meeting in Tarbert Academy on the 8th December 2015. Education Scotland had the opportunity to review in detail the Proposal Paper, the written responses and a summary of the oral responses.

11.3 The Education Scotland report is produced in full (Appendix 4).

11.4 The report broadly supports the proposal and is summarised below:

- Argyll and Bute Council has set out an appropriate rationale for its proposal;
- The Achahoish School curriculum directly relates to the rural context of where the children live;
- Children would reduce their transit time resulting in increased opportunities to learn;
- The Council had ensured school communities were well informed;
- Tarbert Academy Primary School Community was in favour of the proposal believing there would be no direct effect on the Tarbert Community;
- The South Knapdale Community Council, local community and local employers strongly support the proposal;
- The proposal will have no impact on Tarbert Academy Primary School, and
- Argyll and Bute Council should give consideration to paying parental mileage as a more cost effective option for transport arrangements.

11.5 **Argyll and Bute Council's Response to Education Scotland's Report**

The Council welcomes the report from Education Scotland and accepts its findings.

In response to the findings contained within the Education Scotland report, Argyll and Bute Response is as follows:

11.5.1 **Financial implications of Proposal**

- Purchase a vehicle and employ a driver and escort. This will cost approximately £15k per annum, providing a driver and escort can be employed from the Coulaghaitro area. The cost will rise to £22,500 if the driver and escort are resident in either Tarbert or Lochgilphead,

or,

- Extend the local bus service to Tiretigan. Due to timetabling constraints this extension would only be possible in the morning. The afternoon run would require to be undertaken by Council mini bus from Lochgilphead. The cost for this extension would be £23,000.
- Parental/guardian transport may be an option if a parent/ guardian is available and willing to drive.

Cost indication for a pupil travelling **7.5 miles** to school or bus pick up point:
£2280 per annum,
Cost break down: four journeys daily, 190 days annually at 40p per mile.

Cost indication for a pupil travelling **3 miles** to school or bus picks up point:
£912 per annum,
Cost break down: four journeys daily, 190 days annually at 40p per mile.

It should be noted

1. If a parent/guardian is not available one of the alternative options would require to be implemented.
2. This option offered by transport at present may not always be available.

The above would impact on the schools transport budget and would require to be considered during the annual transport planning process.

12.0 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

- 12.1 Until August 2022, siblings of children who live in the proposed rezoned catchment area and attend Tarbert Academy Primary School will have the option of attending Tarbert Academy Primary School without the need for a placing request.
- 12.2 The proposal will not affect the existing arrangements for pupils going to secondary school.

13.0 ALLEGED OMISSIONS OR INACCURACIES

- 13.1 Section (10) (3) of the 2010 Act also places a requirement on the Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission within the Proposal Paper which has either been identified by the Council or raised by consultees. This section of the 2010 Act 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 Consultation exercise there were no areas identified by respondents as being inaccurate or omitted from the Proposal Paper during the Consultation period.

14.0 COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 STATES

After the Education Authority has received Education Scotland's report, the Authority is to review the relevant proposal having regard (in particular) to:

- (i) written representations received by the Authority (from any person) during the Consultation period,*
- (ii) oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting,*
- (iii) Education Scotland's report.*

- 14.1 Following receipt of 31 written responses and consideration of oral representations made at public meetings held during the consultation period, officers reviewed the proposals.
- 14.2 The feedback from the Consultation was considered by several officers. This ensured that the Council met the requirements of section 9(1), 12 and 13(3) (b) of the 2010 Act.
- 14.3 Having reviewed and considered feedback from all responses to the Consultation, it is considered that the proposal is appropriate for the pupils within the extended catchment area of Achahoish Primary Schools and the pupils at Tarbert Academy Primary.

15.0 LEGAL ISSUES

- 15.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 throughout this statutory Consultation.
- 15.2 The Council is mindful of its duties in respect of equality and the Equality Impact Assessment did not identify that any parent, child or young person would be treated less favourably as a result of this proposal.
- 15.3 Under the terms of the Schools (Scotland) (Consultation) Act 2010, it is a legal requirement that the Council should not reach any formal decision without:
 - having reviewed the relevant proposal having regard, in particular, to:
 - a) relevant written representations received from any person during the Consultation period;
 - b) oral representation made to it by any person at the public meetings held on 1st and 8th December 2015;
 - c) the Education Scotland report ;
 - preparing a Consultation Report; and
 - waiting until a period of three weeks starting on the day on which this Consultation Report is published in electronic and printed form has expired.
- 15.4 The Consultation Report was published, both electronically and in written form, if required, on 15th April available until 21st April 2016, this time

exceeds the statutory requirement to publish the report more than three weeks before consideration of the proposal by Argyll and Bute Council.

15.5 **Employee Implications**

Staffing arrangements will continue to be consistent with the Argyll and Bute Council Staffing Standards and other local arrangements.

15.6 **Environmental Issues**

Due to the very small number of children affected by this proposal it is unlikely that there will be any environmental impact.

16.0 **CONCLUSION**

16.1 The Council now has to consider two options, namely

- a) Adopt the proposal; or
- b) Withdraw the proposal.

16.2 In withdrawing the proposal, the Council would have regard to the support from parents/carers, staff, communities and local employers in supporting the realignment of the catchment areas of Achahoish and Tarbert Academy Primary Schools. Education Scotland has identified that the proposal would lead to clear education benefits for children. This includes providing learning in context in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence.

16.3 The following key issues have been highlighted during the Consultation period are as follows

- The Council's proposal has been generally supported by parents/carers, staff and the communities;
- There were no responses that did not support the proposal, and
- The report from Education Scotland acknowledges that the proposal would lead to clear educational benefits to the children of Achahoish Primary School.

17.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

17.1 **Policy:** None

17.2 **Financial:** Purchase a vehicle, employ a driver and escort. Cost 15000 per annum
or,
Extend the local bus service to Tiretigan. Cost £23,000 per annum
or,
Parental/guardian transport. Cost between £912 and £2280 per annum

All above costs are approximate.

- 17.3 **Legal:** The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 throughout this statutory Consultation.
- 17.4 **HR:** None
- 17.5 **Equalities:** None
- 17.6 **Risk:** None
- 17.7 **Customer Service :** None

Cleland Sneddon
Executive Director of Community Services
Councillor Rory Colville
Policy Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning
22nd March 2015

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Report on the Outcome of the Consultation.