



Customer Services: Education

PROPOSAL PAPER

**We are looking for your views on
*a proposal to rezone the catchment
area of St Columba's Primary School***

Closing date for responses: 15TH MAY 2019

A public meeting will be held on:

**18th April 2019 at St Columba's Primary School
At 6.00pm**

This document has been issued by Argyll and Bute Council for consultation under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us to discuss how we can best meet your needs.

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Email: argyllhouse-reception@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Contents

- 1. The proposal and consultation process**
- 2. Implementation date for the proposal**
- 3. Background to the proposal and overview of pupil population trends**
- 4. Educational benefits – assessment of the effects of the proposal**
- 5. Assessing the impact on the local community affected by this proposal**
- 6. Employee implications**
- 7. Financial implications**
- 8. Responding to the proposal**
- 9. Appendices**
 - Appendix 1** Distribution list
 - Appendix 2** Map detail of current boundary and proposed boundary
- 10. Consultation response form**

1. THE PROPOSAL AND CONSULTATION PROCESS

1.1 Proposal

Argyll and Bute Council is seeking views on the following proposal, namely: To rezone the catchment area for St Columba's Primary School so that it is extended to resemble the current mainland catchment area for Oban High School.

1.2 Decision to undertake the consultation

On 14th March 2019, Argyll and Bute Council's Community Services Committee agreed that a consultation with all stakeholders be undertaken on the proposal within this document.

1.3 Consultation on the proposal

Under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, if a local authority proposes to alter the catchment area of a school, it must undertake a statutory consultation with the 'relevant consultees' affected by this proposal. In this instance;

- **St Columba's,**
- **Achaleven,**
- **Barcaldine,**
- **Dalmally,**
- **Dunbeg,**
- **Easdale,**
- **Kilchrenan,**
- **Kilninver,**
- **Lochnell,**
- **Luing,**
- **Park,**
- **Rockfield,**
- **Strath of Appin,**
- **Taynuilt.**

Primary Schools would be the 'affected schools'.

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 **18th March 2019** (with due written notice of the proposal issued to the relevant consultees listed in Appendix 1) and end on **15th May 2019**. Written representations must be received by this date in order to be taken into account.

1.4 **Public meeting**

A public meeting will be held on **18th April 2019** at St Columba's Primary School to discuss the proposal. Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The meeting will provide those in attendance with an opportunity to:

- Hear about the proposal;
- Ask questions about the proposal, and
- Express views about the proposal.

A note will be taken of the views expressed during the public meeting and of any questions asked so that they can be taken into account as part of the consultation process. In addition to the public meeting, written representations will be able to be made during the consultation period.

1.5 **Pupil views**

Pupils will be invited to comment during the consultation process, ensuring that they have an opportunity to contribute their views.

1.6 **Education Scotland (formerly HM Inspectorate of Education, HMIE)**

At the start of the consultation period the Council will provide Education Scotland with this proposal paper. When the consultation period has ended, the Council will collate all of the written and oral representations. Thereafter, this information will be provided to Education Scotland and include;

- A copy of written representations made to the Council on the proposal (or summary of them if agreed with Education Scotland);
- A summary of oral representations made at the public meeting, and
- Other relevant documentation, so far as is practicable.

Education Scotland will prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal taking account of the above, and in so far that Education Scotland considers them relevant, any written representations made directly to them. Education Scotland may also visit the schools affected by the proposal and make any other enquiries as they consider appropriate. Education Scotland require to send their report to the Council no later than 3 weeks (or longer if agreed with the Council) after having received the information from the Council.

1.7 **Consultation report**

After receiving Education Scotland's report, the Council will review the proposal taking account of written representations received during the consultation period, oral representations made during the public meeting and Education Scotland's report. The Council will then prepare and publish a consultation report which will include a recommendation on the proposal and

make it available for inspection. The consultation report will be published three weeks before it is formally considered by the Council.

1.8 Inaccuracies or omissions

Where inaccuracies or omissions are discovered within this proposal paper, the Council will determine whether relevant information has been omitted or, if there has been an inaccuracy. Appropriate action will then be taken by the Council which may include issuing corrections, reissuing a corrected proposal paper or an extension of the consultation period. In any of these events all relevant consultees (and where applicable the notifier(s) of any omissions or inaccuracies) and Education Scotland will be advised of the appropriate action.

2. IMPLEMENTATION DATE FOR THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal, if accepted, would be implemented from **6th October 2019**.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 St. Columba's Primary School is a Roman Catholic Primary School situated in Oban. Together with Rockfield Primary, it forms part of the Oban Primary Campus. St Columba's Primary School is one of four denominational primary schools in Argyll and Bute. St Joseph's Primary School is in Helensburgh and St Mun's Primary School is in Dunoon. St Andrew's Primary school is situated on the Isle of Bute. The current school roll is 119 pupils. 6 pupils currently attend St Columba's Primary School who live outwith the catchment area.

- 3.2 On 7th August 2018 St Columba's Primary School Parent Council made a formal request to the Council to consider rezoning the current catchment area to include the catchment area for the following primary schools;

- 1. Achaleven,**
- 2. Barcaldine,**
- 3. Dalmally,**
- 4. Dunbeg**
- 5. Easdale,**
- 6. Kilchrenan,**
- 7. Kilninver,**
- 8. Lochnell,**
- 9. Luing,**
- 10. Park,**
- 11. Rockfield,**
- 12. Strath of Appin,**
- 13. Taynuilt.**

- 3.3 This would make the catchment area for St Columba's Primary school the same as the mainland catchment area for Oban High School. St Columba's Primary

school is the only denominational school within 80 miles of Oban, and the catchment area currently covers Oban and Dunbeg. This request was supported by the parent councils of the other affected schools.

- 3.4 The Council's policy on responding to re-alignment of catchment areas reflects the legislative process as laid out in the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.
- 3.5 The existing catchment area of St Columba's Primary School is shown in Appendix 2. The request by St Columba's Primary School Parent Council was for the catchment area to be increased.
- 3.6 St Columba's Primary School Parent Council feels that the catchment area for their school is too small, and includes mainly uninhabited areas. At present there are six children of primary school age living in the proposed area, who attend St Columba's Primary School as a result of a placing request. The table below illustrates the catchment area size for the denominational primary schools, and how small St Columba's catchment is comparatively.

School	Size of catchment area in hectares
St Andrew's PS	12,835 (this is the whole island of Bute)
St Columba's PS	17,113
St Mun's PS	24,760
St Joseph's PS	34,632
Oban High School	190, ,870
Proposed rezoned catchment for St Columba's	108,146

- 3.7 The School Roll of the affected schools as per September 2018 is;

School	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Grand Total
Achaleven Primary School	2		2	1	4	2	2	13
Barcaldine Primary School	2		4	1	2			9
Easdale Primary School	3	2	1	3	1	1	3	14
Kilchrenan Primary School	3			1	2	1		7
Kilninver Primary School	3	3	1	3	7	5	4	26
Lochnell Primary School	12	18	16	13	20	22	23	124
Luing Primary School	1		3	2		3	1	10
Dunbeg Primary School	15	17	7	11	14	18	6	88
Park Primary School	31	38	32	47	32	31	39	250
Rockfield Gaelic Primary School	6	4	12	10	11	4	2	49
Rockfield Primary School	47	29	52	39	48	56	50	321
St Columba's Primary School	13	18	19	14	18	12	14	109
Strath of Appin Primary School	1	2	2	4	2	3	3	17
Strath of Appin Primary School Gaelic Unit	3			3		1		7
Taynuilt Primary School	13	11	9	10	11	10	8	72

Children who live within the catchment areas of Park Primary School, Dunbeg Primary School and Rockfield Primary School are already within the catchment area for St Columba's Primary School.

4. EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT – ASSESSMENT OF THE LIKELY EFFECTS OF THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Benefits for present pupils of St Columba's Primary School

Should the catchment area be rezoned there may be benefits for current pupils such as additional opportunities for personal and social development through an increased roll. From a curricular perspective, there would be no particular changes, however an increased school roll may well bring additional opportunities for children to develop socially and emotionally, particularly in developing them as confident individuals.

4.2 Benefits for future pupils of St Columba's Primary School

If the catchment area was rezoned it would mean that pupils from a wider geographical location would be able to attend a denominational school without their parents having to make a specific placing request. These pupils would also benefit from additional opportunities for personal and social development in St Columba's Primary School. From a curricular perspective, there would be no particular changes, however an increased school roll may well bring additional opportunities for children to develop socially and emotionally, particularly in developing them as confident individuals.

Effects on any other users of the school's facilities would be negligible.

4.3 Pupils of other schools in the area

Currently, pupils who live in the proposed rezoning area are able to make a placing request to attend St Columba's Primary School if they wish. However, the cost of transport is met by the family, not the local authority. If the proposal was to be implemented, then parents of children who currently attend other schools in the area may now be able to send their children to St Columba's Primary School for a Catholic education should they wish, without having to make a placing request, or pay for travel.

If the catchment area for St Columba's Primary School was rezoned it would mean that pupils from a wider geographical area would be able to attend a denominational school without their parents having to make a specific placing request.

There would be the following benefits to pupils:

- the increased opportunity for children to experience a faith based curriculum which works in partnership with the Catholic Church to provide spiritual growth and to celebrate faith in Jesus Christ;

- potentially an increased number of pupils adding to the diversity, strength and vibrancy of the school community.

If this proposal was to be implemented there would be a positive effect on children who currently do not attend St Columba's Primary School and who wish to have a denominational education. There could also be a benefit to current and future children who attend the school.

If this proposal was implemented, all pupils who reside in the proposed rezoning area would now be in the catchment area for St Columba's Primary School as well as their local non-denominational school. This would offer additional educational choice to these pupils, which would not be subject to a placing request.

4.4 Implications for pupils if the proposal was not implemented

If this proposal is not implemented the children who currently live in the rezoning area, and who may move into the rezoning area, who wish to attend St Columba's Primary School will continue to have to make placing request should they wish to attend. They would also have to pay the cost of transport. There may also be potential barriers for parents who wish to provide a denominational education for their children and be educated in accordance with their faith.

5. ASSESSING THE IMPACT ON THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AFFECTED BY THESE PROPOSAL

- 5.1 There may be implications for the local communities of the affected primary schools. Potentially, children who attend these schools may opt to attend St Columba's Primary School. This may lead to a reduction in school rolls for pupils in these schools. Currently there are seven schools who have a school roll of less than twenty, and reduction in their roll would have an impact on the ethos of these schools in their own communities.

6. EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Staffing arrangements will continue to be consistent with the Argyll and Bute Council Staffing Standards and other local arrangements.
- 6.2 If many children choose to go to St Columba's Primary School instead of their non-denominational catchment school, this may also have an impact on staffing in both schools. If the school roll of St Columba's Primary School increases it would require more staff, and if the other non-denominational schools suffer a corresponding drop in their school rolls, they may require to review their staffing arrangements.

7. OTHER ISSUES

- 7.1 There will most likely be transport costs for the Council should this rezoning take place. The school transport system to Oban is currently almost at capacity. Any additional transport requests could may well incur additional costs. It is not considered that the proposal would be likely to incur a large cost to transport.
- 7.2 It is not a requirement that all pupils who attend denominational schools must be of that particular religious persuasion. Every school under the management of the Education Authority must be open to pupils of all denominations.
- 7.3 Religion and belief is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, which the Council, as a public authority, must have regard to when making decisions of this nature. If the Council were to rezone the catchment area for St Columba's Primary School so as to increase the availability of denominational primary school education for children in the Oban and Lorn area whose parents so wish to opt for it, this would be in accordance with the spirit of the 2010 Act.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This is a proposal to rezone the catchment area of St Columba's Primary School, as requested by the parent council. It is recommended that a statutory consultation exercise take place in respect of this under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The current catchment area for St Columba's Primary School is smaller than the other mainland denominational primary schools. There are currently six pupils who attend the school who live out with the catchment area, who are not entitled to free school transport. Should the catchment area be rezoned, there would be increased accessibility to denominational education for children in the rezoned catchment area. There may be implications in terms of staffing and transport costs should there be an increase in the school roll of St Columba's due to this rezoning.

9. RESPONDING TO THE PROPOSAL

- 9.1 Interested parties are invited to respond to the proposal by making written or electronic submissions on the proposal using the form attached no later than close of business on **15th May 2019**:-

Argyll and Bute Council
Customer Services: Education
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon, PA23 8AJ
Email: argyllhousereception@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Please note that responses must be submitted to the address stated above.

- 9.2 Those sending in a response, whether by letter or electronically should be aware that their response will be open to public scrutiny and may have to be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it.
- 9.3 If they do not wish their response to be publicly available, they should clearly write on the document: "I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to elected members and council officers of Argyll and Bute Council." Otherwise, it will be assumed that the respondent agrees to their response being made publicly available.

APPENDIX 1

Distribution list and how to access a copy of the proposal document

A copy of this 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 this 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:

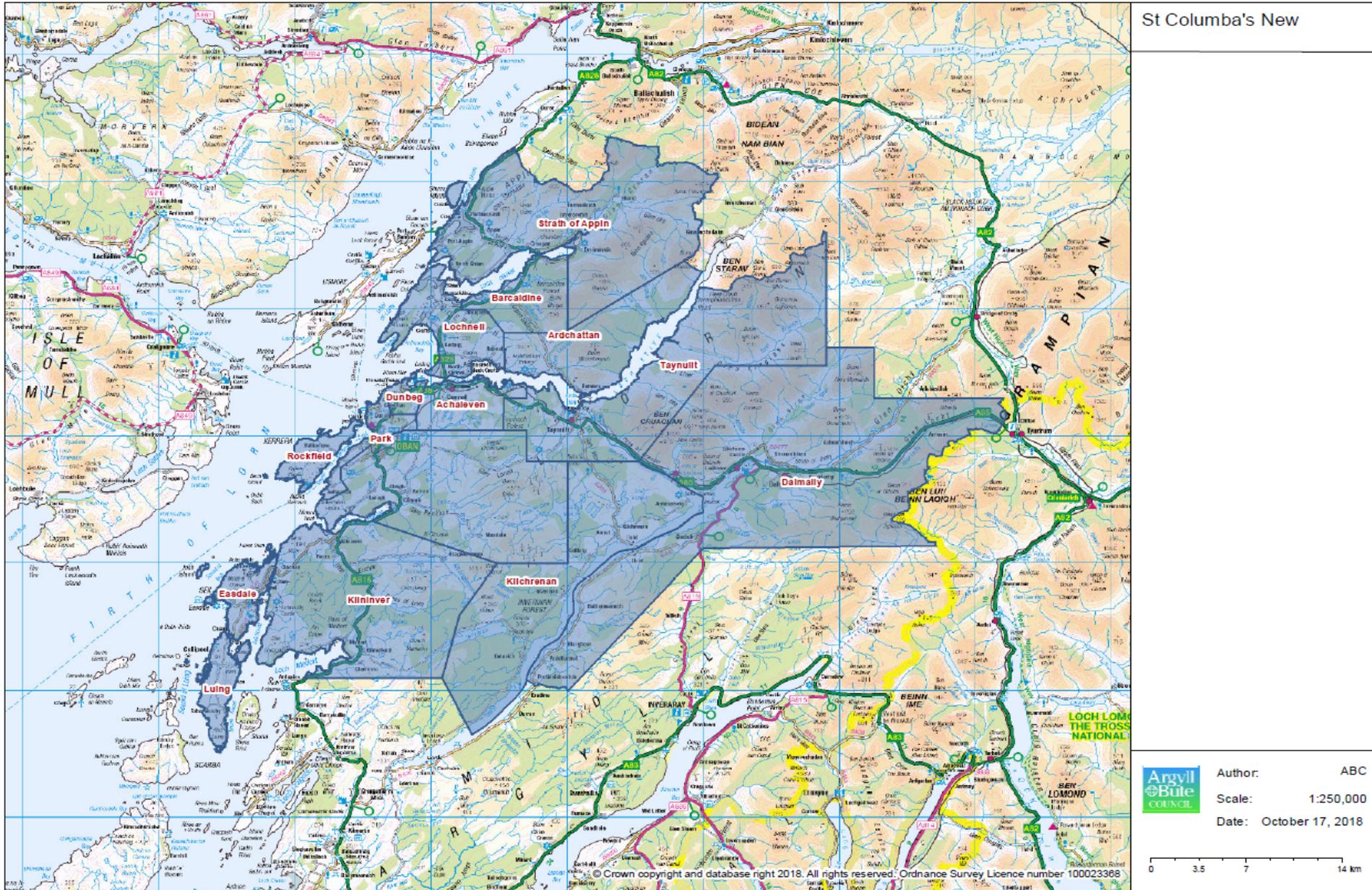
- Notice of the proposal and of publication of this proposal document will be placed within local newspapers;
- The proposal document will also be published on the Argyll and Bute Council website;
- This document can be made available in alternative forms or translated by contacting Argyll House, Dunoon, tel: 01369 708576 or argyllhouse@argyll-bute.gov.uk;
- The proposal paper will also be available at the following locations:
 - a) Council Offices
 - b) All libraries in Oban and Lorn
 - c) All Oban and Lorn area/locality offices
 - d) The schools affected by the proposal

APPENDIX 2

Map detail of current boundary



Map detail of proposed boundary



I am responding in my capacity as a (please indicate by ticking the appropriate box)

Parent/carer of a child at St Columba's Primary School		Trade Union	
Parent/ carer of child at affected primary school (please specify)		Elected representative	
Pupil		Community Council	
St Columba's Primary School Parent Council		Member of the public/community	
Affect Primary School Parent Council		Member of Staff	
Other Group, Please Detail Below		Church	

Handling your response - Please note that:

- We will use the information you provide for the purpose(s) of this consultation, including statistical and analytical purposes;
- We will pass a full copy of your written response to Education Scotland or a summary of it if agreed with them; and
- We are subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and therefore would have to consider any request made under that Act for information relating to written responses/ records of oral representations made to us relating to this consultation.

Electronic publication and additional copies

This consultation, and all other consultation exercises, can be viewed online on the consultation web pages of the Council website at:

www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/consultations

Public internet can be accessed at your local library.

Thank you for taking time to respond.