

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010 – ASHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. 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 Ashfield 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 Ashfield Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 31st October 2019.
 - ii. The pupils of Ashfield Primary School's catchment area continue to receive their education at Tayvallich Primary School on a permanent basis with effect from 31st October 2019.
 - iii. The delineated catchment area of Tayvallich Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Ashfield Primary School from 31st October 2019.

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2. 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 the rural school factors.
- 2.6 The Council will then make a decision on whether or not to implement the proposal.

3. 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 Ashfield Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 31st October 2019;

- ii. The pupils of Ashfield Primary School's catchment area continue to receive their education at Tayvallich Primary on a permanent basis with effect from 31st October 2019; and
- iii. The delineated catchment area of Tayvallich Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Ashfield Primary School from 31st October 2019.

4. 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 Ashfield 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. The Education Scotland Report supports the proposal in that it has clear educational benefits which are currently being experienced by children. Parents, children and staff are agreed about the educational benefits of the proposal. Current travel arrangements have not had an adverse effect on learners. Whilst Education Scotland accept that the permanent closure of the school could have an adverse effect on the local community, it recognises that the potential use of the school building as a community facility could have a positive impact on the sustainability of the village. Argyll and Bute Council is open to engaging with the local community, Knapdale Community Council and the Village Hall Committee on its plans to develop a sustainable community facility via a possible community asset transfer.
- 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 Council's website (www.argyll-bute.gov.uk) from 15th August 2019. This provided a full three week period prior to a final Committee decision on Thursday 5th September 2019, in compliance with Section 9 (3) and Section 11 of the 2010 Act as amended.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Consultation Report for Ashfield 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 the rural school factors, it is recommended that the decision is made to implement the proposal that education provision at Ashfield Primary School be

permanently discontinued; the pupils of Ashfield Primary School's catchment area continue to receive their education at Tayvallich Primary School on a permanent basis; and the delineated catchment area of Tayvallich Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Ashfield Primary School with effect from 31st October 2019.

6. 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 Ashfield 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 – None at present
 - 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - None at present
 - 6.5.3 Islands – None at present
- 6.6 Risk – None at present
- 6.7 Customer Service – None at present

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