

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

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides 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.
- 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 next meeting of the Committee for approval by members which would subsequently trigger the formal consultation process under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*.

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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 5th September 2019, the Community Services Committee agreed that officers would undertake a preliminary consultation process in respect of Skipness Primary School. As Skipness 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 proposal that will come back to the next 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 Skipness Primary School.
- 4.2 The Options Appraisal for Skipness Primary School is attached as **Appendix 1**.

- 4.3 Four alternative options have been assessed whilst considering the future of Skipness 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 Skipness Primary School is being reviewed, and all reasonable alternatives to closure of the school as a response to those underlying reasons, were identified. All four 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 Skipness Primary School and realigning the catchment area of Tarbert Primary School to include the current catchment area for Skipness 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 Skipness 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 Skipness Primary School and redrawing its catchment area to the delineated catchment area of Tarbert Primary School is considered to be the most reasonable option in order 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: 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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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Options Appraisal Skipness Primary School