Stirling Council
Schools, Learning and Education

CONSULTATION REPORT

REPORT ON THE CONSULTATION RELATING TO THE PROPOSAL TO PERMANENTLY CLOSE TROSSACHS PRIMARY SCHOOL

21 March 2019

This Consultation Report has been issued by Stirling Council in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010
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1 Proposal

1.1 This Consultation Report has been prepared following the consultation on Stirling Council’s proposal that:

- Education provision at Trossachs Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- Pupils of Trossachs Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Callander Primary School, from 29 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- The delineated catchment area of Callander Primary School be permanently extended to include the delineated catchment area of Trossachs Primary School from 29 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period;
- Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting held on 9 January 2019;
- Education Scotland’s report on the proposal.

1.2 The proposal directly affects the following schools:

- Trossachs Primary School;
- Callander Primary School & Nursery Class.

(See Appendix 1: Trossachs and Callander Primary School Catchment Areas)

2 Purpose of Report

2.1 This is a Consultation Report prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The purpose of the Consultation Report is to:

- Provide a record of the total number of written representations made during the statutory consultation period;
- Provide a summary of the written representations;
- Provide a summary of oral representations made at the public meeting held on 9 January 2019;
- Provide a statement of Schools, Learning and Education response to those written and oral representations;
- Provide the full text of Education Scotland’s report and a statement of Schools, Learning and Education response to this report;
- State how Stirling 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 Stirling Council acted upon it;
- State how Stirling Council has complied with Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 when reviewing the above proposal;
- Provide an explanation of how representations can be made to Scottish Ministers in terms of Section 15(4) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
2.2 Decision

This Consultation Report, together with any other relevant documentation, will be considered for decision by Stirling Council Children and Young People’s Committee on 25 April 2019.

2.3 Scottish Ministers Call-In

As set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Stirling Council is required to notify Scottish Ministers of its decision and provide them with a copy of the Proposal Paper and Consultation Report.

Scottish Ministers then have an eight week period from 25 April 2019 to decide if they will call-in the proposal. Within the first three of these weeks, they will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Until the outcome of the eight week call-in process has been notified to Stirling Council, they will not proceed to implement the proposal approved at Stage 1.1 above. If the Scottish Ministers call-in the proposal they may refuse to consent, or grant consent to the proposal subject to conditions or unconditionally. Until the outcome of the call-in has been notified to Stirling Council, they are unable to proceed to implement the proposal.

2.4 Distribution

This Consultation Report is available from:

- Stirling Council website
- Callander Primary School and Nursery Class, Bridgend, Callander, FK17 8AG;
- McLaren High School, Mollands Road, Callander, FK17 8JH;
- Callander Library, South Church Street, Callander FK17 8BN;
- Schools, Learning and Education, Wolfcraig, Stirling, FK8 2LJ.

Copies can be requested by email to educ-comments@stirling.gov.uk

If you would prefer this Consultation Report supplied in an alternative format or translated into another language, please contact educ-comments@stirling.gov.uk

3 Background

Reasons for Formulating the Proposal

3.1 Trossachs Primary School was mothballed in sessions 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 following decision at Stirling Council Children and Young People Committee. During the period of mothballing, the catchment area of Callander Primary School was extended to include the area covered by Trossachs Primary School and most children living in Trossachs catchment area currently attend Callander Primary School.

3.2 Prior to mothballing, Trossachs Primary School operated as a single teacher primary school serving the village of Brig o’ Turk and the surrounding area. The capacity of Trossachs Primary School is 25 pupils. Trossachs Primary School is a feeder primary school for McLaren High School.
3.3 Prior to mothballing, the roll at Trossachs Primary School had declined to an average of 7 pupils since 2012/13. This included some pupils living in Callander Primary School catchment area who attended Trossachs Primary School by way of a placing request. By August 2016, the roll of Trossachs Primary had fallen to 0.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trossachs PS Roll</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 Future pupil projections for the Trossachs Primary School catchment (using data provided by Forth Valley NHS) indicate that pupil numbers will remain static or decline over the next four years, with an average of one pupil projected to be in age of starting school each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P1 pupils expected</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 These circumstances result in a diminished school pupil population for Trossachs Primary School, with no foreseeable prospect of an increased pupil population.

3.6 Schools, Learning and Education assessed this situation and identified that the preliminary requirements for the proposal had been met.

**Proposal Paper and Educational Benefits Statement**

3.7 Schools, Learning and Education then prepared and published a Proposal Paper, including an Educational Benefits Statement, financial information and an explanation of the reasons for the proposal; alternatives to the proposal and the authority’s assessment of these and the reasons why the authority considers the implementation of the proposal the most appropriate response to the reasons for the proposal. (See Appendix 2: Trossachs Primary School, Proposal & Educational Benefits Statement; 21 November 2018)

3.8 Proposed educational benefits include:

- The larger number of pupils of all age groups, allowing increased social interaction, and a variety of opportunities to work in peer levels and across stages;
- Access to a wide range of opportunities and resources to enhance the curriculum, such as Focus Weeks, Citizenship Groups, Digital Leaders, team sports, partnerships with local businesses and organisations, together with a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs;
- Access to a wide range of staff expertise in areas such as Additional Support for Learning, autism, science technology and mathematics, modern languages, and music;
- Smooth transitions from Callander Nursery and to McLaren High School.

3.9 By highlighting the educational benefits of Callander Primary School, the Council are not implying that many of these benefits did not already exist in Trossachs Primary School. The benefits are being considered when looking at the proposal in terms of what would be provided in the rezoned school of Callander Primary School and Nursery Class.
Alternatives to the Proposal

3.10 Alternatives to the proposal are:

3.10.1 Continued mothballing of Trossachs Primary School. By August 2019, Trossachs Primary School will have been mothballed for three years. This will exceed the maximum length of time recommended in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010:

‘Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period and should be subject to regular review, at least annually, against the same requirements which led to the original decision to mothball the school (or stage of education). 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. The condition of the school building and cost of maintaining the mothballed provision will also be relevant.’ (Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Statutory Guidance, page 17)

3.10.2 Trossachs Primary School could be re-opened. The school would have a very small roll, with roll projections remaining static or decreasing. Trossachs Primary School would continue to have a shared headship with Callander Primary School. This is not considered a reasonable alternative at this time.

4 Pre-consultation

4.1 Schools, Learning and Education undertook a range of activities during September and October 2018 to inform stakeholders that a proposal would be taken to Stirling Council Children and Young People Committee in November 2018. During these activities, officers outlined the consultation process that would take place if the Children and Young People Committee agreed to the formal consultation at the November Committee.

4.2 Officers attended:

- Trossachs Community Council Meeting, 11 October 2018;
- Callander Community Council Meeting, 8 October 2018;
- Callander Primary School Parent Council Meeting, 18 September 2018;
- Callander Primary School Staff Meeting, 18 September 2018.

Written communications were sent to:

- All parents of primary school aged children who live in the catchment area of Trossachs Primary School, 22 October 2018;
- All parents of pupils at Callander Primary School, 22 October 2018;
- All parents of pupils at McLaren High School, 22 October 2018.

The matter was discussed at Callander Primary School and McLaren High School Parent Council in October 2018. A letter from Schools, Learning and Education and a Scottish Government Guidance Booklet were shared and made available at Callander Primary School and McLaren High School.
5 Consultation Process

5.1 On 27 November 2018, Stirling Council Children and Young People Committee agreed to a formal consultation on the proposal to consider the permanent closure of Trossachs Primary School under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

5.2 Length of Consultation Period

The consultation period for the proposal ran from 3 December 2018 to 8 February 2019. This period allowed for the statutory minimum of 30 school days.

5.3 Notice of Consultation

Notice of Consultation was provided to the consultees listed under 5.4. This provided details of how to access the Proposal Paper and Educational Benefits Statement; how to submit responses via Stirling Council website; and the date, time and location of the public meeting.

The Proposal Paper and Educational Benefits Statement, along with Scottish Government Guidance Booklets, were available in Callander Primary School and McLaren High School.

5.4 List of Consultees

- All parents of primary school aged children who live in the catchment area of Trossachs Primary School;
- All parents of pupils at McLaren High School;
- Parent Council, Callander Primary School;
- Parent Council, McLaren High School;
- Staff at Callander Primary School, including staff from Trossachs Primary School;
- Headteachers at Aberfoyle Primary School and Strathyre Primary School;
- Any trade union which is a representative of the staff;
- Trossachs Community Council;
- Callander Community Council;
- Callander Kirk and Trossachs Church.

5.5 Advertisement in Local Media

Notice of Consultation and the public meeting were advertised on Stirling Council’s social media Facebook page and Twitter on Monday 7 January 2019.

5.6 Consultation Activities

- A consultation page was available on Stirling Council website from 3 December 2018 to 8 February 2019;
- An officer attended a meeting to consult with staff on 12 December 2018;
- An officer held a meeting to consult with children on 20 December 2018;
- A public meeting was held on 9 January 2019, 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm at Brig o’ Turk Village Hall, Main Street, Brig o’ Turk, FK17 8HT;
- Following the public meeting, letters were sent on 11 January 2019 to every household in Trossachs Primary School catchment area;
- Officers attended Callander Primary School Parent Council meeting to consult with parents on 22 January 2019.
6 Representations

- 7 children participated in the pupil consultation group on 20 December 2018;
- 8 parents and 1 elected member participated in the Parent Council consultation on 22 January 2019;
- 21 staff attended the staff meeting at Callander Primary School on 12 December 2019;
- 15 members of the public attended the Public Meeting held in Brig o’ Turk Village Hall on 9 January 2019;
- 14 written representations were received during the consultation period 3 December 2018 – 8 February 2019.

7. Summary of Consultation with Children and Response

The total number of pupils who attended the pupil consultation group was 7.

| Callander Primary School pupils (living in Callander PS catchment) | 3 |
| Callander Primary School pupil (living in Trossachs PS catchment) | 1 |
| McLaren High School pupils (living in Trossachs PS catchment) | 3 |
| **Total** | **7** |

**Summary of comments made by**

**Callander Primary School pupils**
- Pupils enjoy school and their learning.
- Pupils like having lots of different staff in Callander Primary School.
- They like the range of opportunities such as clubs and shows at Callander Primary School.
- They feel that the closure of Trossachs Primary School would not have an impact on their school experience.
- Pupils might feel upset because of their memories of Trossachs Primary School.
- Children who are currently transported to Callander Primary School from Trossachs embraced this as part of their educational experience.

**McLaren High School pupils**
- Pupils enjoy the fact that there are more opportunities at high school with different teachers, new friends, different subjects and different styles of teaching.
- Those who had attended Trossachs Primary school felt that the opportunities they had there had been very good.
- Pupils feel that the closure of Trossachs Primary School would not affect them educationally.
- Pupils felt there might be affected emotionally as they had positive memories of Trossachs Primary School.
- Pupils made a number of suggestions about possible alternative uses of Trossachs Primary School building.
Response

Educational experience

- Callander Primary School provides a broad and rich curriculum which is firmly grounded in the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. Children experience high quality learning across all curriculum areas and subjects.
- Class teachers plan effectively so that tasks and activities are matched to children’s varying needs. Classroom learning is supplemented by learning groups across stages and between classes, bringing with that the opportunity to share learning experiences between the youngest and oldest pupils, as well as within the immediate peer group.
- At Callander Primary School, children benefit from a wide range of opportunities for wider achievement.
- By highlighting the educational benefits of Callander Primary School, the Council are not implying that many of these benefits did not already exist in Trossachs Primary School. The benefits are being considered when looking at the proposal in terms of what would be provided in the rezoned school of Callander Primary School and Nursery Class.

Emotional impact

- Schools in Stirling have planned learning opportunities to help support children’s emotional resilience. This is integrated into the health and well-being curriculum.
- To minimise any emotional upset, school staff would work with any individual pupils who feel upset by the proposed closure of Trossachs Primary School.
- Schools, Learning and Education would ensure that should the decision be taken to close Trossachs Primary School permanently this will be communicated to relevant children in appropriate ways, and any reasonable requests will be responded to.

Alternative use of the school building

- Stirling Schools, Learning and Education acknowledges that pupils had suggestions about alternative use of Trossachs Primary School building. Pupils’ suggestions for use of the building were a library, a base for children with additional support needs and a park.
- Callander has a public library that is open including some evenings and at the weekend. In addition to this, the mobile library service visits the village of Brig o’ Turk every second Thursday from 11.05 am – 11.40 am.
- Stirling Schools, Learning and Education has a policy of inclusion for children and young people with additional support needs. There are a small number of children and young people who attend specialist provisions and these are located in areas according to need. Callander Primary School has a specialist provision for children with autism. Currently there is not a need to locate a specialist provision within Callander.
- There are currently 2 parks for children in Callander, as well as the rugby field at the school and the Leisure Centre. The school is having a new ‘Trim Trail’ installed over Easter, as part of their Playground Project.

See Appendix 3: Transcript of Pupil Consultation, 20 December 2018
## Summary of Consultation with Parents and Response

The total number of parents who participated in the Parent Council Meeting was 8 and 1 elected member.

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected member</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
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A number of questions were asked by parents and officers provided responses, as summarised below.

- **What questions were the children asked?**

  Response:
  Children were asked to describe the school they attended and what they liked about their current school. They were asked how they would feel if Trossachs Primary School closed. The children were then given the opportunity to add further comments or ask questions about the proposal to progress to permanent closure of Trossachs Primary School.

- **What difference would it make to Callander Primary School if Trossachs Primary School is permanently closed?**

  Response:
  Based on the information that Stirling Schools, Learning and Education have about predicted school roll projections it is not expected that the closure of Trossachs Primary School would have any significant impact on Callander Primary School. Given the small numbers of children who live in the Trossachs Primary School catchment area, this has meant that 1 or at the most 2 pupils have been integrated into any class in Callander Primary School.

- **Would the cost to transport children from Trossachs Primary School catchment to Callander Primary School add additional burdens on the budget allocated to Callander Primary School?**

  Response:
  Educational transport costs are budgeted on a needs analysis. This budget is held centrally. The cost of transporting children from Trossachs catchment to Callander Primary School would not impact on Callander Primary School’s budget.

- **Would the staff who were employed at Trossachs Primary School have to move from their current role in Callander Primary School?**

  Response:
  A consultation has been carried out with staff. Provisional agreements have been made to accommodate the wishes of the staff concerned.
• Should the decision be made to permanently close Trossachs Primary School, would this provide any additional challenges that would impact on the school management team workload?

Response:
There would be no additional workload for management team should Trossachs Primary School close permanently. Staff viewed the move as a supportive one. The management team will address the needs of the children who live in the Trossachs catchment area as they would any children attending Callander Primary School. This may include accommodating travel time to and from school, and ensuring that communication with parents is highly effective.

• What would happen to the school building at Trossachs Primary School if it is permanently closed?

Response:
Currently the Trossachs school building has been unoccupied since August 2016 to comply with regulations for mothballing schools. Should the decision be made to permanently close Trossachs Primary School, the Assets Management Team would liaise with the community about future use of the building to comply with the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015.

• Is Trossachs Primary School building currently used for any other purpose such as community use?

Response:
Trossachs Primary School building has been unoccupied since August 2016 to comply with regulations for mothballing schools. Should the decision be made to permanently close Trossachs Primary School, the Assets Management Team would liaise with the community about future use of the building.

• Concerns raised about a rising school roll at Callander Primary School and clarification was sought about how rolls are projected.

Response:
The total projected roll of Callander Primary School is predicted to be less than the optimum capacity of the school for at least the next 4 years. A review is underway in relation to Callander Primary School building and future roll projections will be taken into account in relation to this.

9 Summary of Consultation with Staff and Response
The total number of staff who attended the staff meeting was 21.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Callander Primary School staff</th>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trossachs Primary School staff (currently redeployed in Callander Primary School)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headteacher (Callander and Trossachs Primary Schools)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of points made by staff

- Staff understood the consultation process and appreciated the reasons for this being undertaken.
- Staff were committed to all pupils in their school, including those from the Brig o’ Turk community, and should permanent closure be agreed this commitment would continue.
- Staff were aware of how they could comment or ask questions.
- There are a very small number of staff currently working at Callander Primary School who moved from Trossachs Primary School when it was mothballed. These staff expressed a preference to continue as staff at Callander Primary School if a decision is made to close Trossachs Primary School.

Response

- If a decision were taken to close Trossachs Primary School permanently, pupils would continue to be supported and staff would continue to work in partnership with parents.
- Schools, Learning and Education would be able to accommodate the preference of the very small number of staff currently working at Callander Primary School who moved from Trossachs Primary School when it was mothballed, to continue at Callander Primary School if a decision is made to close Trossachs Primary School. This would be supportive of service needs.

10 Summary of Oral Representations made at the Public Meeting and Response

The total number of members of public who attended the public meeting was 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Members of public</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McLaren High School pupils</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key themes arose at the public meeting. These included educational benefits, finance, impact on the community, alternative use of the school building and the consultation process. Each of these key themes is summarised and responded to below.

Educational benefits

Summary of points made

- Underlining the education benefits at Callander Primary School makes it seem like the education provided at Trossachs Primary School was not good enough.
- When children attended Trossachs Primary School they were able to work with children of different ages and were treated more as individuals.
- Children had a very positive experience at Trossachs Primary School.

Response

- By highlighting the educational benefits of Callander Primary School, the Council are not implying that many of these benefits did not already exist in
Trossachs Primary School. The benefits are being considered when looking at the proposal in terms of what would be provided in the rezoned school of Callander Primary School and Nursery Class.

- Children attending Trossachs Primary School had positive learning experiences that their progress in learning and their social and emotional development was fully supported. However, parents chose to send their children to other schools to allow them the opportunity to work with a group of peers within their age range when the school roll continued to remain at less than 10 pupils over a number of years.
- From consultation with children, staff and parents at Callander Primary School there is clear evidence that children regularly have planned opportunities to work with children of different ages through the curriculum and wider life of the school. Callander Primary School have recently undertaken some self-evaluation with pupils using ‘How Good is OUR School?’ The information gathered from this demonstrates that children who attend Callander Primary School feel they are treated as individuals and their needs are well met.

Finance

**Summary of points made**

- The reason the school is being closed is as much to do with economics as anything else - for a Council facing significant budget cuts.
- What would it cost to reopen the school? What does it cost to keep it mothballed?
- The closure of the school has already impacted on the village hall finances as the school used to rent the village hall for recreational activities as well as end of term shows.

**Response**

- If Trossachs Primary School were to re-open, the costs for a full financial year, based on 2018/19 figures, would be £122,437. The additional costs for a full financial year, based on 2018/19 figures, for Callander Primary School are £38,682. Thus the annual recurring savings, based on 2018/19 figures, would be £83,755.
- The annual cost to maintain the building during mothballing of Trossachs Primary School is £3,600 on average. This is based on the cost of providing statutory compliance and frost protection. There are also staffing costs of approximately £1,500.
- Should the decision be made to progress to permanent closure of Trossachs Primary School then Stirling Council would look at minimising any further impact on the finances of the village hall by working in partnership with the community about future use of Trossachs Primary School building.

Impact on community

**Summary of points made**

- If the school is mothballed or closed there is a significant impact on the village.
- The village becomes less attractive to families to move to the village.
- The school closing means that the road is not gritted.
- There is no availability to bid for broadband funding.
- If there is no school in the village there is the potential that this would impact on planning policy.
- The school is not just an educational facility. It is a significant resource for the village.
- If there is no school there will reduced social activity because there would be no school events such as the school Christmas show and social gatherings organised by parents of the school children.

**Response**
- Information from schools indicates that since mothballing no families have moved permanently out of Brig o’ Turk. A family has moved into the area and enrolled their children at Callander Primary School. However, a study has not been undertaken to ascertain whether this proposal would make it less attractive for families to move to the area.
- Winter treatment of the roads within Stirling Council is assessed using criteria in the Environment & Place, Stirling Council Operation Services, Winter Service Policy 2018/2019. Roads in Brig o’ Turk will be serviced following the criteria outlined in this policy.
- Trossachs Community Council Broadband Project submitted a bid to tender in November 2015. The bid does refer to community users, without specific mention of the school.
- Stirling Council is committed to working with the community of Brig o’ Turk to support them in evaluating the services needed to serve their community through a Community Action Plan.
- There is one planning application, received on 24 January 2018. The planning application is for the erection of 6 affordable housing units and 1 four bedroom open market dwelling. Trossachs Community Council objected to this application on 8 grounds. This included ‘the scale of the development is excessive in a small settlement, representing a large percentage increase in the number of properties in the village and breaching the NPA policy on “small scale and single housing developments” in settlements of this size’. It also stated ‘No demand for this number of “affordable” units has been demonstrated in an area with limited employment and public transport opportunities’. Should the proposed housing development progress and the planned 7 houses were erected this would mean new housing of 2 one bedroom, 4 two bedroom and one 4 bedroom house. The pupil product analysis indicates that this would generate less than 2 additional children to the catchment of Trossachs Primary School.
- Members of the Brig o’ Turk community would be most welcome at the schools where children who live in the Trossachs Primary School catchment currently attend. Callander Primary School will extend invitations to the Brig o’ Turk community to attend events at the school and will also liaise with the ‘Bicycle Tree’ newsletter group should they continue to want articles submitted by children who live in the village.

**Alternative use of school building**

**Summary of points made**
- What would happen to the building if the decision was made to close the school?
- Consideration should be given to using the school as a different resource such as specialist centres for music, languages, outdoor learning or as an annex to Callander Primary School or McLaren High School.
- Could the school be looked at as an asset that would not exclude it from re-opening one day?
• The community could take charge of the building, however, people in the community are busy and do not have time to take on the building as part of the community empowerment suggestions.

Response
• If the proposal is accepted and the school closed permanently, Stirling Council Assets team would assume responsibility for the building. All options will be considered for the future use of the property to support the village in terms of both housing and non-housing options. Options regarding the use of funds from any potential sale of the building will be considered.
• Stirling Council Community Engagement team, in collaboration with Stirling Council Assets Management team, would work in partnership with the community to reflect the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Stirling Council would support the community with their aspirations for the building and help them to explore any ideas that the community have.
• Should the school continue to be mothballed, it cannot be used for any other purpose. Stirling Council would continue to keep the building wind and water tight, and frost protection would be on. The building would continue to be unoccupied.
• Stirling Council currently have no additional property requirements to meet their service delivery needs within education or other services.
• Pupils from Callander Primary School already have outdoor learning embedded in their curriculum. Classes from nursery through to Primary 7 access outdoor environments including the local Coilhallan Woods, which is a short, safe walk from the primary school. The school work in close partnership with a range of organisations including the Woodland Trust. Thus, an outdoor learning annex is not required.
• Stirling Schools, Learning and Education has a policy of inclusion for children and young people with additional support needs. There are a small number of children and young people who attend specialist provisions and these are located in areas according to need. Callander Primary has a specialist provision for children with autism. Currently there is not the need to locate a specialist provision within Brig o’ Turk.

Consultation process

Summary of points made
• The community has not been sufficiently consulted.
• The general community involvement in this process has been quite poor.
• It appears that most of the consultation has been done in Callander, with little in Trossachs and Brig o’ Turk.
• The consultation has come too late.
• The National Park should be involved in this consultation.

Response
• Schools, Learning and Education undertook a range of activities during September and October 2018 to inform stakeholders that a proposal would be taken to Stirling Council Children and Young People Committee in November 2018.
• Officers attended Trossachs Community Council Meeting on 11 October 2018 and outlined the background and rationale to the proposal, the date of the Children and Young People Committee in November 2018 and an overview of
the consultation process. Officers explained that should the Children and Young People Committee agree to proceed there would then be further consultation, including a public meeting in January 2019. A final Consultation Report would be taken to Stirling Council Children and Young People Committee in April 2019.

- Similar meetings were held with Callander Community Council, Callander Primary School Parent Council and staff.
- Written communications were sent to all parents of primary school aged children who live in the catchment area of Trossachs Primary School and all parents of pupils at Callander Primary School and McLaren High School. The matter was discussed at McLaren High School Parent Council. Scottish Government Guidance Booklets on the process were shared and made available.
- Children and Young People Committee agreed to proceed to a formal consultation on 27 November 2018. On 29 and 30 November 2018, officers contacted Trossachs and Callander Community Councils to share the e-link to the public consultation and confirm the details of the public meeting to be held on 9 January 2019, which they suggested be shared with their communities.
- Written communications were sent to the minister of Callander and Trossachs Parish Church, all parents of primary school aged children living in the Trossachs Primary School catchment area, all parents of pupils at McLaren High School, and the Headteachers of Aberfoyle and Strathyre Primary Schools.
- An invitation was extended to the Chair to McLaren High Parent Council to attend the public meeting and Callander Parent Council meeting on 22 January 2019.
- Reminders of the public meeting and consultation links were posted on social media.
- Following the public meeting, letters were sent on 11 January 2019 to every household in Trossachs Primary School catchment area.
- A Council officer consulted with the National Park’s planning department about whether they had any plans, and they are aware of the proposal.

See Appendix 4: Transcript of Public Meeting held at Brig o’ Turk Village Hall, 9 January 2019

11 Written representations and Response

11.1 The total number of written representations received was 14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent /Carer</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elected member</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the 14 written representations received:

| Number supporting the proposal to progress to permanent closure | 6  |
| Number neither agreeing or disagreeing with the proposal        | 1  |
| Number requesting mothballing to continue                       | 4  |
| Number objecting to the proposal                                 | 3  |

Key themes which arose from the written responses included educational benefits, finance, impact on the community, alternative use of the school building and the consultation process. Each of these key themes is summarised and responded to below.

### Educational benefits

**Summary of points made**

- It is sensible, rational, economical and better for mental wellbeing and development for pupils to be in larger classes of children of their own age.
- With such small numbers, pupils in Trossachs Primary School would not get the same quality educational experience without peers to work with.
- The closeness of Callander Primary School, the provision of transport to it and the range of activities it can provide outweigh the emotional requisites of past pupils and parents.
- Keeping the school open is not a viable proposition when there are other good primary schools in the area.
- Before Trossachs Primary School was linked with Callander Primary School the children regularly worked with the other small schools in the McLaren High catchment area. There is no reason for children in a small school to be isolated and limited in their experiences.
- The Educational Benefits statement makes no mention of the benefits of Trossachs School. Trossachs provided a high quality education where pupils can mix with all ages and stages.

**Response**

- Callander Primary School provides a broad and rich curriculum which is firmly grounded in the principles of Curriculum for Excellence Children experience high quality learning across all curriculum areas and subjects.
- Class teachers plan effectively so that tasks and activities are matched to children’s varying needs. Classroom learning is supplemented by learning groups across stages and between classes, bringing with that the opportunity to share learning experiences between the youngest and oldest pupils, as well as within the immediate peer group.
- At Callander Primary School, children benefit from a wide range of opportunities for wider achievement.
- Currently, all children from the Trossachs Primary School catchment area who attend Callander Primary School are transported by Stirling Council to Callander, which is 6.4 miles away by road. This arrangement will continue if the proposal is accepted. There are two other local primary schools are within reasonable travelling distance: Aberfoyle (8.3 miles) and Strathyre (13.4 miles).
• Children attending Trossachs Primary School had positive learning experiences that supported their progress and development. Opportunities were available for children to integrate with the community, help children become confident individuals who are able to engage with people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, to be tolerant of much older and younger people and to be active and responsible members of the community. These opportunities are also available in Callander Primary School.
• By highlighting the educational benefits of the Callander Primary School, the Council are not implying that many of these benefits did not already exist in Trossachs Primary School. The benefits are being considered when looking at the proposal in terms of what would be provided in the rezoned school of Callander Primary School and Nursery Class.

Finance

Summary of points made
• Given the reduced number of pupils attending the school and the costs associated with keeping it open, it is the right decision to close the school and sell the property.
• Financially it is not viable in the current climate to finance the significantly higher per head annual costs of a small school when there is an alternative provision available nearby.
• Given the current financial climate, decisions need to provide best value services.
• Resources can be better used in a more cost effective way.
• Education like everything else should be centred in Callander.

Response
• The costs for a full financial year, based on 2018/19 figures, if Trossachs Primary School were to re-open would be £122,437. The additional costs for a full financial year, based on 2018/19 figures, for Callander Primary School are £38,682. Thus the annual recurring savings, based on 2018/19 figures, would be £83,755.
• The unit cost per pupil per year for Trossachs Primary School is £24,487. The unit cost per pupil per year for Callander Primary School is £7,736.
• The annual cost to maintain the building during mothballing of Trossachs Primary School is £3,600 on average. This is based on the cost of providing statutory compliance and frost protection. There are also staffing costs of approximately £1,500.

Impact on community

Summary of points made
• The potential negative affect that the closure of the school would have on the community and its prospects for the future as a place to live in rather than just retire to or visit for a holiday.
• The effect this could have on a young family’s decision to move to the village.
• The impact the closure of the school will have on other service provision in Brig o’ Turk such as a reduction in winter treatment of the roads and accessibility to funding for a local broadband scheme.
• The impact on the Trossachs community has not been adequately assessed.
Response

- Stirling Council recognise that there will be an impact on the community and should the decision be made to progress to permanent closure of Trossachs Primary School the appropriate teams within Stirling Council will continue to liaise with the community to support community resilience.
- Information from schools indicate that in August 2018 a family with primary school aged children moved into the Trossachs catchment area and enrolled their children in Callander Primary School. Since August 2018 during the period that the school has been mothballed no families have moved permanently from the Trossachs catchment area.
- Winter treatment of the roads is assessed using criteria in the Environment & Place, Stirling Council Operation Services, Winter Service Policy 2018/2019. The roads in Brig o’ Turk will be serviced following the criteria outlined in that policy. The same policy is applied to all areas within Stirling Council.
- Other services such as roads and waste collection will not be affected by the permanent closure of Trossachs Primary School.

Consultation process

Summary of points made

- Some residents of Brig o’ Turk, and members of the Community Council have been aware of the Trossachs School plans and schedule for some time.
- This consultation has not been properly publicised within the Trossachs area.
- The consultation was too late.
- Some residents believed that the public meeting was for ‘stakeholders’ and by invitation only.
- An extra year mothballing the School would allow time for discussion and plans to be developed within our community.
- The community is currently working on formulating a Community Action Plan and extending the mothballing would help support the Community Action Plan.
- The proposal of closure comes at a time when a live planning proposal for a development of multiple “Affordable” homes is under consideration by the planning Authority, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park.
- If the decision is taken in April to close Trossachs Primary School and the building is handed over to the Assets team, then there will not have been sufficient time for the community to propose alternative uses for the building.
- The web address link is incorrect.

Response

- Schools, Learning and Education undertook a range of activities during September and October 2018 to inform stakeholders that a proposal would be taken to Stirling Council Children and Young People Committee in November 2018.
- Officers attended Trossachs Community Council Meeting on 11 October 2018 and outlined the background and rationale to the proposal, the date of the Children and Young People Committee in November 2018 and an overview of the consultation process. Officers explained that should the Children and Young People Committee agree to proceed there would then be further consultation, including a public meeting in January 2019. A final Consultation Report would be taken to Stirling Council Children and Young People Committee in April 2019.
- Similar meetings were held with Callander Community Council, Callander Primary School Parent Council and staff.
• Written communications were sent to all parents of primary school aged children who live in the catchment area of Trossachs Primary School and all parents of pupils at Callander Primary School and McLaren High School. The matter was discussed at McLaren High School Parent Council. Scottish Government Guidance Booklets on the process were shared and made available.

• Children and Young People Committee agreed to proceed to a formal consultation on 27 November 2018. On 29 and 30 November 2018, officers contacted Trossachs and Callander Community Councils to share the e-link to the public consultation and confirm the details of the public meeting to be held on 9 January 2019, which they suggested be shared with their communities.

• Written communications were sent to the minister of Callander and Trossachs Parish Church, all parents of primary school aged children living in the Trossachs Primary School catchment area, all parents of pupils at McLaren High School, and the Headteachers of Aberfoyle and Strathyre Primary Schools.

• An invitation was extended to the Chair to McLaren High Parent Council to attend the public meeting and Callander Parent Council meeting on 22 January 2019.

• Reminders of the public meeting and consultation links were posted on social media.

• Following the public meeting, letters were sent on 11 January 2019 to every household in Trossachs Primary School catchment area.

• Stirling Council’s Community Engagement team will continue to support residents with the development and implementation of the Community Action Plan.

• The planning application that is currently live is for the erection of 6 affordable housing units and 1 four bedroom open market dwelling; 2 one bedroom, 4 two bedroom and 1 four bedroom house. The pupil product analysis indicates that this would generate less than 2 additional children to the catchment of Trossachs Primary School.

• A Council officer consulted with the National Park’s planning department about whether they had any plans, and they are aware of the proposal.

• In the Proposal Paper continued mothballing is noted as an alternative to permanent closure. If the school continues to be mothballed the building would remain unoccupied and cannot be used for any other purpose.

• The consultation page on Stirling Council website was accessible throughout the consultation period. During the consultation period, Stirling Council’s website was updated on 17 December 2018. This resulted in the web link address to the consultation page, as provided in the letters, being broken between 17 December 2018 and 10 January 2019 the. The school holiday was between 22 December 2018 and 6 January 2019. The service was made aware of this on 10 January 2018 and this was rectified on 11 January 2019.

See Appendix 5: Written Representations from Public Consultation - 3 December 2018 to 8 February 2019
11 Comments received from Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park

11.1 Stirling Council contacted Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park inviting them to comment on the proposal. On 20 February 2019, Loch Lomond and Trossachs National park submitted comments on the proposal. Although this was received outwith the statutory consultation period (3 December 2018 to 8 February 2019) it was decided that it would be appropriate to include this in the Consultation Report.

11.2 In summary, the National Park stated that their preference, given there is currently a live planning application for affordable housing, is that the school remains mothballed rather than permanently closed. (See Appendix 6, Comments received from Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, 20 February 2019)

12 Education Scotland Report

12.1 In line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was provided by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the Proposal to close Trossachs Primary School. This report is attached as Appendix 7.

12.2 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- Attendance at the public meeting held on 9 January 2019 in connection with the council’s proposals;
- 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;
- Visits to the sites of Trossachs Primary School and Callander Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

12.3 Section 4 of the Education Scotland report summarises their findings and conclusions as follows:

*Stirling Council’s proposal to close Trossachs Primary School and permanently extend the Callander Primary School delineated catchment area to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Trossachs Primary School has clear educational benefits which are currently being experienced by children. Parents, children and staff are agreed about the educational benefits of the proposal. In taking the proposal forward, the council needs to continue to engage with all stakeholders and ensure that the local community is supported in exploring options for alternative use of the Trossachs Primary School building.*

Stirling Council’s Response to Education Scotland’s Report

12.4 Stirling Council welcomes the report from Education Scotland and accepts its findings. The points raised by Education Scotland within the Education Scotland report were also key themes identified through the consultation process and are addressed in this Consultation Report. The main points identified in the Education Scotland report for further consideration are as follows:

*In taking the proposal forward, the council needs to continue to engage with all stakeholders and ensure that the local community is supported in exploring options for alternative use of the Trossachs Primary School building.*
12.5 The Education Authority has set out its commitment to ongoing engagement with all stakeholders and the process for taking the proposal forward within this Consultation Report.

13 Alleged Omissions or Inaccuracies

Section (10) (3) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 also places a requirement on the Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission within the Proposal document 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.

13.1 The following inaccuracies or omissions within the Proposal document were either identified by the Council or raised by consultees during the consultation period:

- Section 2.4 of the Proposal Paper states that 8 children of primary school age were living in Trossachs Primary School catchment area in 2018/2019. This was accurate at the time of writing, however, two of those children have now moved to live in another country.
- Section 6.1 of the Proposal Paper states that Trossachs Primary School is located at the end of a lane off the main road. This should read Trossachs Primary School is situated on an unnamed road with the postcode FK17 8HT.
- Section 8.1 of the Proposal Paper states the annual recurring savings, based on 2018/19 figures is £88,755. This should read should read £83,755.

14 Compliance with Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

14.1 Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 states that:

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.

14.2 Following receipt and consideration of 14 written responses during the consultation period, 1 written response outwith the consultation period, the oral representations made at a public meeting held during the consultation period, and Education Scotland’s report, officers reviewed the proposal.

14.3 The feedback from the consultation was considered by relevant officers within the Council’s Schools, Learning and Education, Finance, Human Resources and Asset Management. This ensured that the Council met the requirements of sections 9(1), 12 and 13(3) (b) of the 2010 Act.
15 Compliance with Section 12A(2)(c) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

15.1 Throughout this consultation Schools, Learning and Education has given special regard to the provision of rural schools within Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

15.2 Trossachs Primary School is designated as a remote rural school. In terms of Section 12A(2)(c) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Stirling Council has given regard to the three required factors as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any viable alternative to closure.</td>
<td>Consideration of possible viable alternatives to the closure of Trossachs Primary School are discussed in the Proposal Paper. In summary these are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Continued mothballing of Trossachs Primary School.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By August 2019, Trossachs Primary School will have been mothballed for three years. This will exceed the maximum length of time recommended in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period and should be subject to regular review, at least annually, against the same requirements which led to the original decision to mothball the school (or stage of education). 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. The condition of the school building and cost of maintaining the mothballed provision will also be relevant. (Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Statutory Guidance, page 17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If a decision were taken to continue to mothball the school, there is no evidence to suggest the projected roll would increase and that there would be sufficient children to ensure the viability of the school. Mothballing is a temporary measure and if the proposal were to be revisited there would be no anticipated change in circumstances in the foreseeable future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During the consultation in the written and oral representations, some consultees put forward mothballing the school for a further year. They suggested this would allow the community to create a Community Action Plan that included plans for alternative use of Trossachs Primary School building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Should the Community Action Plan include alternative use of the school building then Stirling Council Community Engagement team, in collaboration with Stirling Council Assets Management team, would work in partnership with the community to reflect the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. Stirling Council would support the community with their aspirations for the building and help them to explore any ideas that the community have.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Trossachs Primary School could be re-opened.

The roll had dropped to zero when the school was mothballed in August 2016 and roll projections are static or decreasing in the foreseeable future. Parents enrolling children for education have been given the option of nominating Trossachs Primary School but no one has done so since 2016. Maintaining primary education in Trossachs Primary School does not offer best value in the use of public money.

Education Scotland in their report on the educational aspects of the proposal comment on this aspect of the proposal:

*Children at Callander Primary School, including those who previously attended Trossachs Primary School, identify many advantages to being at their own school, including the citizenship groups, the house team meetings and the after-school clubs. They like having more peers and a greater number of teachers. Parents, including parents of children who previously attended Trossachs Primary School, feel that there were too few children to make the smaller school viable and that children needed a wider peer group. Facilities at Trossachs Primary School were also more limited.*

*Callander Primary School staff, including those who had worked at Trossachs Primary School, agree with the proposal for closure. Whilst there were options for flexibility in the curriculum, they feel the lack of peer groups for children was a significant issue.*

**Factor**

The likely effect caused by any different travelling arrangements that may be required in consequence of the Proposal (if implemented) with reference in particular to:

- The effect caused by travelling arrangements including (in particular), that on the school's pupils and staff and any other users of the school's facilities and any environmental impact;
- The travelling arrangements are those to and from the school of (and for) the school’s pupils and staff and other users of the school’s facilities.

**Response**

- Through consultation with pupils it was evident that they accepted travel arrangements as part of their educational experience.
- Stirling Council provides free school transport to the children who live more than two miles from their zoned school by the shortest available route. Therefore, children who live within Trossachs catchment area are entitled to free school transport. Costs for transport are met by Stirling Council and not individual schools or families.
- Currently, children travel in one vehicle and this is the most economically and environmentally friendly option.
- The small number of primary school aged children who live in the Trossachs catchment area travel together and this supports friendships and their social and emotional needs.
- Other children at Callander Primary School live in rural areas and are transported to school. Therefore, travelling to school by car, bus or taxi is accepted as a norm.
• The travel distance of 6.4 miles is not significant and time taken is approximately 15 minutes.
• Children living in Brig o’ Turk who attend secondary education require transport form the village to Callander. This would still be the case if Trossachs Primary School re-opened.
• Families living in rural areas often travel to access sport and leisure facilities, for example, Brownies, swimming and meeting friends.
• Generally, for staff, Callander Primary School is more easily accessible than Trossachs Primary School.

Factor
The likely effect on the local community in consequence of the Proposal (if implemented) with particular reference to:

• The sustainability of the community;
• The availability of the school’s premises and its other facilities for use by the community.

Response
• Information from schools indicates that since mothballing no families have moved permanently out of Brig o’ Turk. A family has moved into the area and enrolled their children at Callander Primary School.
• Brig o’ Turk’s proximity to Callander has meant that most services and facilities required by residents are currently accessed in the town of Callander. This has also applied to work and leisure opportunities. Pre-school and high school education provision is located in Callander. Closing the school will not impact on access to these services and facilities.
• In considering of the likely effect on the local community with regard to the community’s access to the buildings, grounds and facilities if Trossachs Primary School were to close it is noted that the school buildings are not currently used by the local community. Within Brig o’ Turk there is a well equipped and accessible village hall. Thus, there are no community groups who would be inconvenienced by the proposed school closure.
• Some members of the community who attended the public meeting were keen for the building to be retained for an alternative purpose, such as an outdoor learning centre. Stirling Council currently have no additional property requirements to meet their service delivery needs within education or other services.
• Employment could be generated in the village if primary education ceases and the school building were to be converted for other uses.
• There will be a small loss to the local economy due the fact that the school will no longer need to hire the village hall for P.E. or school shows. This has been the case for the past three years whilst the school has been mothballed.
• The Report of the Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education, published in April 2013, makes the following statement about this aspect of rural schools:

> It is important to recognise that a school’s primary function is to provide pupils with the best possible educational experience. (Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education, Scottish Government, 2013, page 30).
16 **Legal Issues**

16.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 throughout this statutory consultation.

16.2 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.

16.3 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:

- Relevant written representations received from any person during the consultation period;
- Oral representation made to it by any person at the public meeting held on 9 January 2019;
- 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.

16.4 It is the intention that this Consultation Report should be published, both electronically and in written form, on 21 March 2019. This meets the statutory requirement to publish this report more than three weeks before consideration of the proposal by Stirling Council.

17 **Scottish Ministers Call-In Closure Procedure in terms of Section 15 (4) of The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010**

17.1 Scottish Ministers have eight weeks to decide whether or not they are going to issue a call-in notice to Schools, Learning and Education Services. The eight weeks begins on the day Stirling Council takes their final decision to implement a closure proposal.

17.2 There is a three week period during which anyone can make representations to Scottish Ministers requesting that they call in Stirling Council’s decision. This three week period begins on the day Stirling Council takes their final decision to implement a closure proposal.

17.3 Therefore, anyone who wishes to make representations to Scottish Ministers can do so until 16 May 2019. Scottish Ministers will have until 20 June 2019 to take a decision on the call-in of the closure proposal.

17.4 If anyone would like to make a representation to Scottish Ministers requesting them to call-in a local authority decision to close a school then they are asked that they please send an email, clearly setting out which of the criteria they feel are grounds for the case to be called in, and provide specific evidence to support their request, to the following addresses: schoolclosure@gov.scot or post to: School Infrastructure Unit, Learning Directorate, Area 2B North Scottish Government, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ
17.5 There is a section of the Scottish Government website which includes this information and the process etc.:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/Schools/Buildings/changestoschoolestate

17.6 Stirling Council cannot, therefore, implement its final decision until the eight week period has elapsed, unless Scottish Ministers have earlier informed the Council that they do not intend to call-in the decision.

18 Personnel Issues

18.1 There are a very small number of staff currently working at Callander Primary School who moved from Trossachs Primary School when it was mothballed. These staff have expressed a preference to continue as staff at Callander Primary School if a decision is made to close Trossachs Primary School. This could be accommodated by the service. This would be supportive of service needs.

18.2 The Headteacher of Trossachs Primary School is a shared headship with Callander Primary School. If a decision is made to close Trossachs Primary School the Headteacher will remain as Headteacher of Callander Primary School. This post will become subject to job sizing.

19 Environmental Issues

19.1 No environmental issues have been identified with regard to this proposal.

20 Review of Proposal

20.1 Following the period of statutory consultation on the proposed closure of Trossachs Primary School, Schools, Learning and Education has reviewed the Proposal as follows:

- Firstly it has given due consideration to the oral representations made at the public meeting, and to all the written representations received. These have been summarised and responded to in this Consultation Report.

- Secondly, it has considered the points raised by primary school children living in both Trossachs Primary School and Callander Primary School catchment areas, and McLaren High School pupils living in the Trossachs Primary School catchment area. These have been responded to in this Consultation Report and provide important feedback for staff working with children and families from the Trossachs Primary School catchment area. The comments and wishes of Trossachs Primary School staff and Callander Primary School staff have also been carefully considered.

- Thirdly, Schools, Learning and Education has considered the content of the report by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the Proposal. We are reassured that children living within the Trossachs catchment area are gaining from the educational benefits outlined in the proposal paper.

- Finally, throughout this consultation Schools, Learning and Education has given special regard to the provision of rural schools. Trossachs Primary School is
designated as a remote rural school. In terms of Section 12A(2)(c) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Stirling Council has given regard to the three required factors. Stirling Council has given due consideration to the likely educational benefits, the likely effect on the community and the likely effect of different travel arrangements; details of this are include throughout this consultation report.

21 Conclusion

21.1 The Proposal to permanently discontinue education provision at Trossachs Primary School is being progressed due to:

- A period of 3 years of mothballing the school which will be reached in June 2019;
- Prior to mothballing, the school roll had fallen to 0 by August 2016;
- Future projections for the school catchment area to 2021 indicate that there will be an average of one pupil predicted to be of age to start school each year.

21.2 A Proposal Paper on the future of Trossachs Primary was presented at the Children and Young People Committee on 27 November 2018. The recommendation was that Schools, Learning and Education proceed to statutory consultation on the proposed closure of Trossachs Primary School. This was approved by the Committee.

21.3 Throughout this consultation, Schools, Learning and Education has given special regard to the provision for rural schools within Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

21.4 The statutory consultation process was robust and provided an opportunity for stakeholders to identify key issues of concern. These issues have been fully considered and Schools, Learning and Education’s response is detailed in earlier sections of this report.

21.5 Education Scotland provided a report on the educational aspects of the Proposal. The benefits identified by Education Scotland concur with those identified by Schools, Learning and Education as in the Proposal Paper. Education Scotland recognised that children at Callander Primary School identify many advantages to attending this school. The Education Scotland report reflects the views of parents who feel that there were too few children at Trossachs Primary School to make the smaller school viable and provide children with a wide peer group.

21.6 No parents of children who could enrol for Trossachs Primary School have chosen to do so.

21.7 There is capacity in Callander Primary School to continue to accommodate all children from the Trossachs Primary School catchment and any predicted to start school in the future.

21.8 Of the 14 written responses received during the consultation, 6 supported the proposal, 1 neither supported nor disagreed with the proposal, 4 asked for continued mothballing of the school, and 3 objected to the proposal. In the comments received from Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park stated that their preference would be to continue mothballing the school.
21.9 This proposal, if implemented, has the potential to provide recurring savings to Stirling Council of £83,755.

21.10 If the proposal is implemented, Stirling Council’s Asset Management team and Community Engagement team would continue to consult with the residents of Brig o’ Turk to explore the future use of the school building.

22 Recommendation

Therefore as a result of:

- The significant decline in the roll at Trossachs Primary School;
- The lack of any pupils enrolling for Trossachs Primary School;
- The educational benefits, which will accrue from the Proposal to close Trossachs Primary School, and the merging of its catchment area with that of Callander Primary School, which have been identified by Schools, Learning and Education and endorsed by Education Scotland.

Schools, Learning and Education therefore recommends that:

- Education provision at Trossachs Primary School be discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- Pupils of Trossachs Primary School catchment continue their education as currently, that is, at Callander Primary School or whichever school they are currently attending;
- The delineated catchment area for Callander Primary School be altered permanently to include the delineated catchment area of Trossachs Primary School from 29 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter.
Appendices
Stirling Council
Schools, Learning and Education
Trossachs Primary School
Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Proposal

1. Introduction

1.1 Trossachs Primary School was mothballed in sessions 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 following decision at Stirling Council Children and Young People Committee. During the period of mothballing, the catchment area of Callander Primary School was extended to include the area covered by Trossachs Primary School and most children living in Trossachs catchment area currently attend Callander Primary School.

1.2 In line with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, this paper proposes a formal consultation be undertaken to consider that:

- Education provision at Trossachs Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;

- Pupils of Trossachs Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Callander Primary School, from 29 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;

- The delineated catchment area of Callander Primary School be permanently extended to include the delineated catchment area of Trossachs Primary School from 29 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter.

2. Reasons for Formulating the Proposal

2.1 Prior to mothballing, Trossachs Primary School operated as a single teacher primary school serving the village of Brig o’ Turk and the surrounding area. The capacity of Trossachs Primary school is 25 pupils. Trossachs Primary School is a feeder primary school for McLaren High School.

2.2 Prior to mothballing, the roll at Trossachs Primary School had declined to an average 7 pupils since 2012/13. This included some pupils living in Callander Primary School catchment area who attended Trossachs Primary School by way of a placing request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trossachs PS Roll</th>
<th>2012/13</th>
<th>2013/14</th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 By August 2016, the roll of Trossachs Primary had fallen to 0. During the course of session 2015/16 all parents had intimated their plan to enrol their children in other schools.
2.4 Since mothballing, the number of pupils resident in Trossachs Primary School catchment area has averaged 8 pupils.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.5 In 2016/17, of the 7 pupils resident in Trossachs Primary School catchment area 3 attended Callander Primary School, 3 attended Strathyre Primary School and 1 attended Aberfoyle Primary School. There were no new Primary 1 children from Trossachs catchment area starting at school that session.

2.6 In 2017/18, of the 8 pupils resident in Trossachs Primary School catchment area 5 of these pupils attended Callander Primary School, 2 attended Strathyre Primary School and 1 attended Aberfoyle Primary School. There were 2 new Primary 1 children from Trossachs catchment area starting at school that session, both of whom chose to attend Callander Primary School.

2.7 In 2018/19 of the 6 children from Trossachs catchment area attending Stirling primary schools, 4 of these children attend Callander Primary School, 1 attends Aberfoyle Primary School and 1 attends Strathyre Primary School. There were no new Primary 1 children from Trossachs catchment area starting at school this session.

2.8 Future pupil projections for the Trossachs Primary School catchment (using data provided by Forth Valley NHS) indicate that pupil numbers will remain static or decline over the next four years, with an average of one pupil predicted to be in age of starting school each year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P1 Pupils expected</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.9 These circumstances result in a diminished school pupil population for Trossachs Primary School, with no foreseeable prospect of an increased pupil population.

3. Most Appropriate Response to Reasons for Proposal

3.1 Callander Primary School is proposed as the catchment area school for pupils resident in Trossachs Primary School catchment. Callander Primary School is 6.4 miles by road from Trossachs Primary School. This provides a local primary school within reasonable travelling distance of the Brig o’ Turk community.

3.2 The roll (P1-P7) of Callander Primary School is 231 (September 2018). This includes an autism provision with a roll of 8. The school has a capacity of 254.

3.3 There is also a nursery class, housed in a separate space, with a roll of 44 (10 pupils enrolled in N4 and 34 enrolled in N5) as of September 2018.

3.4 Due to decreasing birth rates in the Callander catchment area and limited plans for new development, Callander Primary School’s roll is due to decline slightly over the next ten years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projected figures</th>
<th>2019/20</th>
<th>2020/21</th>
<th>2021/22</th>
<th>2022/23</th>
<th>2023/24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optimum Capacity of School</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline roll (CHI + migration)</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils from new development</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative impact</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total projected roll</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity over/under</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.5 Thus there are no school capacity issues at Callander Primary School since the current capacity is 254 pupils.

3.6 Pupils from the Trossachs catchment area are included in these figures. As Trossachs Primary School is currently mothballed, the projections are also based on the assumption that new P1 pupils coming of age in the Trossachs catchment area will attend Callander Primary School.

4. **Likely Impact on Brig o’ Turk Community**

4.1 Prior to mothballing of Trossachs Primary School, some families living within the catchment already chose for their children to attend larger schools locally, including Callander Primary School, due to wanting opportunities for wider social interaction and opportunities for group work with peers. It is therefore unlikely that closure of the school will encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community.

4.2 Two other local primary schools, Strathyre Primary School and Aberfoyle Primary School are also within travelling distance at 13.4 miles and 8.3 miles respectively. Thus should parents wish to place their child at another local school, choices are available.

4.3 In recent years until August 2016, Trossachs Primary School building has only been used for the purpose of educating primary school aged children during school hours. Brig o’ Turk has a village hall used for public meetings, local events, fetes, surgeries and recreational activities. Thus the school building is not considered a hub of community life.

5. **Travel Plan for Pupils**

5.1 Currently all children who live within Trossachs Primary School catchment area are transported in one vehicle to Callander Primary School. If the proposal is accepted, this arrangement will continue as pupils resident in the Trossachs Primary School catchment area would be distance entitled to transport (School Transport Policy, December 2017).

5.2 Currently 14 young people living in Brig o’ Turk are transported to McLaren High School by minibus due to distance entitlement. If the proposal is accepted, there would be no change to this provision.

5.3 Callander Primary School has a School Travel Plan developed by pupils, parents, staff and the wider community. The plan encourages safe, healthy and sustainable travel to school. Community partners involved in the planning have included
McLaren High School, Police Scotland, Callander Climate Change and Callander Youth Project. Where parents choose to transport their children to school, park and stride options are encouraged. There is a free permit parking arrangement with Callander Meadows.

6. **Future use of Trossachs Primary School Building**

6.1 Trossachs Primary School is located at the end of a lane off the main road. The school building is attached to the old school house. The school house is now a privately owned residential property.

6.2 There have been no particular concerns about the school building since it was mothballed in August 2016. As reported to the Children and Young People Committee on 27 September 2018, Trossachs Primary School has been assessed under the new Core Fact assessment criteria and from a condition perspective has been rated at 75% and a B rated property with approximately £60,000 of investment required over the next 5 years. A new suitability assessment was not carried out due to being mothballed, however on 12 May 2016, the Bi Annual Estates paper stated that the suitability is rated as 96% resulting in an A rated building. The building is checked regularly and has not deteriorated in this period. If the school was to be re-opened, some decoration work would be required.

6.3 If the proposal is accepted and the school closed permanently, the Assets team would assume responsibility for the building.

6.4 The property will become surplus to the council’s operational requirements and prepared to be marketed. All options will be considered for the future use of the property to support the village in terms of both housing and non-housing options. Options regarding the use of funds from any potential sale of the building will be considered.

7. **Callander Primary School Building**

7.1 As reported to the Children and Young People Committee on 27 September 2018, Callander Primary School has been assessed under the new Core Fact assessment criteria and from a condition perspective has been rated at 73% and a B rated property with approximately £356,500 of investment required over the next 5 years. The investment cost is additional to this year’s spend on the roofing and external remedial works. The suitability assessment rates the building as 49% and at a C rating, mainly due to the internal layout and functionality of the layout as well as inadequate toilet facilities and activity space for the pupil roll.

   a. The Children and Young People Committee was asked to support the feasibility work through an option appraisal and a strategic business case to be undertaken to look at solutions for the future development of the school.

7.2 Funding will need to be considered for the final long term solution for Callander Primary School. We would be working towards a business case being presented to Scottish Government for the 2020 Schools for Futures Fund, however additional match funding will also need to be secured. This will be subject to the preferred outcome for Callander Primary School and its scope.
8. **Financial information**

8.1 The costs for a full financial year, based on 2018/19 figures, if Trossachs Primary School were to re-open would be £122,437. The additional costs for a full financial year, based on 2018/19 figures, for Callander Primary School are £38,682. Thus the annual recurring savings, based on 2081/19 figures, would be £88,755.

9. **Alternatives to the Proposal**

9.1 Alternatives to the proposal are:

9.1.1 Continued mothballing of Trossachs Primary School. By August 2019, Trossachs Primary School will have been mothballed for three years. This will exceed the maximum length of time recommended in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010:

‘Mothballing is only appropriate for a temporary period and should be subject to regular review, at least annually, against the same requirements which led to the original decision to mothball the school (or stage of education). 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. The condition of the school building and cost of maintaining the mothballed provision will also be relevant.’ (Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Statutory Guidance, page 17)

9.1.2 Trossachs Primary School could be re-opened. The school would have a very small roll, with roll projections remaining static or decreasing. Trossachs Primary School would continue to have a shared headship with Callander Primary School. This is not considered a reasonable alternative at this time.

10. **Educational Benefits Statement**

10.1 This Educational Benefits Statement considers the educational benefits for pupils to attend Callander Primary School, which would be designated as the catchment school, should the proposal be implemented.

10.2 Callander Primary School provides a broad and rich curriculum which is firmly grounded in the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. Children experience high quality learning across all curriculum areas and subjects. Contexts for learning are relevant to children and are explored through learning experiences which are challenging and enjoyable.

10.3 Callander Primary School’s motto, “Your future starts today; Dream, Believe, Achieve” encapsulates the school’s desire for all pupils to have a passion and enthusiasm for learning and an ability to challenge and drive their learning forward. The school values of honesty, respect, co-operation, equality, fairness and responsibility have a high profile within the school and nursery community and underpin the school ethos.
10.4 At Callander Primary School, children benefit from a wide range of opportunities for wider achievement. In the last year, this has included representation at Stirling’s Youth Gathering, participation in a successful Health Week, involvement in a World of Work project in collaboration with Founders4Schools and bidding for funding for playground improvements through Your Place Your Priorities. Pupils have also taken part in a Glee choir competition, being awarded the Esprit de Glee Award for team work and sportsmanship.

10.5 Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are central aspects of all learning at Callander Primary School. There are robust systems in place for tracking and monitoring children’s progress in learning. Most pupils achieve appropriate levels or above in literacy and numeracy. This is broadly in line with local and national levels.

10.6 There are very good opportunities for learning languages. All children have regular opportunities to learn French through a whole school progressive approach to languages learning from nursery to Primary 7. Spanish is being introduced as a third language from Primary 5 and work with a partner service is also underway to deliver British Sign Language to pupils. The school is working towards its Digital Schools Award.

10.7 There is very good access to a range of technologies including iPads and laptops to support and enhance learning benefits pupils at Callander Primary School. The school has recently established a pupil group of Digital Leaders who are working with staff and wider community members on improving digital skills. This will include a digital café and a range of workshops. Pupils have also participated in a variety of coding activities in collaboration with Callander Library.

10.8 Learning experiences are differentiated to meet the pupils’ needs and pupils benefit from being able to work on co-operative learning tasks with others. Class teachers plan effectively so that tasks and activities are matched to children’s varying needs. Classroom learning is supplemented by learning groups across stages and between classes, bringing with that the opportunity to share learning experiences between the youngest and oldest pupils, as well as within the immediate peer group. Support staff are skilled and very well deployed to meet identified needs for individuals and groups of children.

10.9 Callander Primary School has a Support for Learning Teacher for two days each week. This assists in meeting the needs of all pupils, including those with Additional Support Needs. Children with similar needs may work together in groups and benefit from short term support or targeted interventions. Children at Callander Primary benefit from specialist expertise and inclusive practice of staff from the Autism Provision. The use of Makaton to support communication benefits a number of pupils across the school.

10.10 At Callander Primary School, planning learning is a shared activity led by class teachers where pupils are fully involved. Teachers also regularly plan together, sharing ideas and skills. This includes planned links in learning across stages on a fortnightly basis through pupil leadership groups, creating a wealth of opportunities for collaborative and co-operative learning for all pupils. A recent World of Work Week involved all classes working collaboratively with business partners to undertake a variety of design challenges.

10.11 At Callander Primary School, there are pupils of all age groups within the school which allows pupils the opportunity to work in pairs, groups, at peer level and across stages in the school and in mixed sex groups. It also allows the sharing of ideas, peer
support, informal mentoring and relationship building, all of which contribute to the whole school experience for all pupils. This provides opportunities to develop skills for life, learning and work, including leadership, co-operation, and problem solving skills.

10.12 Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop skills in team games and sports during physical education, physical activity and sport lessons at Callander Primary School. The school grounds include a playing field, enclosed play area and gardens. These provide a wide range of opportunities for the pupils to experience a range of team and individual sports, such as rugby, football, cricket, netball and athletics. The school has recently been awarded the Gold School Sports Award. Pupils have represented their school and community in a range of events including the Mini-Stuc Hill race, a lacrosse tournament, badminton competitions and Stirling’s Track and Field event. All Primary 7 pupils gained Bikeability awards last session. The close proximity to McLaren High School enables use of wider sporting facilities including the climbing wall, gym facilities and swimming pool. Young Sports Leaders from McLaren High School regularly support Callander Primary pupils in developing sports skills.

10.13 Outdoor learning at Callander Primary School is an important strength; children are provided with wide and varied opportunities to learn outdoors including access to a range of facilities and businesses in the town of Callander. There are strong links with the National Park. Work with local businesses including the Co-op, and links with the Callander Youth Project, a local care home and Callander Kirk are effective partnerships which enhance the curriculum experience for pupils. A number of successful social enterprise projects including partner services have supported Callander in recently being named as the first Social Enterprise town in Scotland. Through Social Enterprise Academy Schools, Callander pupils have taken part in Dragon’s Den pitches to gain funding towards their group projects, including a project to increase numbers of bees in collaboration with Callander Youth Project and a local community support service through developing an app.

10.14 Callander Primary School has a general purpose room that is organised with science and technology equipment including food technology equipment and a cooker. This room is for use of all pupils, contributing to their learning with STEM subjects and in health, wellbeing and social skills. There are a number of shared learning areas, providing opportunities for group work outwith the classroom environment.

10.15 Pupils attending Callander Primary School have improved opportunities for social interaction as a result of attending a larger school. All pupils have opportunities to interact and socialise with groups of children their own age both in the classroom environment and during break and lunch times and before and after school. The benefit to pupils is that they are given opportunities to widen their social circle, allowing them to foster positive peer relationships.

10.16 All pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to be involved in improving their school at Callander Primary School, such as being in a Citizenship Group, which focus on improving the environment and their community. This has included contribution to community events including road safety awareness campaigns and a St Andrew’s Day performance to the Women’s Guild. The school has been recognised for its eco-work involving children and the local community, recently being awarded their fifth Eco Schools Scotland Green Flag. There are opportunities for children to grow food in the garden areas.
10.17 The leadership team at Callander Primary School is made up of the Headteacher, Depute Headteacher and three Principal Teachers. The Headteacher has recently completed an additional leadership qualification. The school is part of a School Improvement Partnership, working with two other Stirling schools to promote effective self-evaluation for school improvement. The school has a well-planned and committed approach to continuous improvement.

10.18 In a larger school, there are more regular opportunities for staff to review and improve practice as a school, including linking with partner services and other schools in the wider learning community. Access to peer support and development allows staff to engage in professional learning opportunities more readily, sharing ideas and experiences, and supporting delivery of high quality teaching and learning. Recently Callander Primary School took part in the McLaren STEM Challenge (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) focusing on robotics, promoting development of new skills for staff and pupils. Callander pupils recently won the first Primary Maths Challenge at McLaren High School. Staff regularly moderate children’s learning within the school and across learning community schools to ensure consistency of approach.

10.19 At Callander Primary School parents play a key role in the leadership and ethos of the school. The school has an active Parent Council who play a key role in school improvement planning. This has included purchasing equipment and furniture for the break out spaces and library areas. The parents organise a range of social and fundraising events to support the school; this includes supporting lunch and after school clubs many of which are pupil-led.

10.20 Parents are welcomed into school and encouraged to be involved in their children’s learning, including attendance at pupil-led events, for example showcases and assemblies. There are a range of activities and resources available to support parents’ engagement in their child’s learning; this includes the use of the Parent App for effective communication and digital technologies such as the tutorial videos on how to support your child with numeracy. The positive relationships fostered with parents by the school allows them to further support their children in their learning at school.

10.21 Callander Primary School involves children in the formal parental consultation evenings with the aim of opening up learning conversations between teacher, parent and pupil. “Snapshot” jotters are shared with parents three times a year, providing opportunities for parents to view and comment on their children’s learning. There is a well-established Parent Representatives group in addition to the Parent Council who support consultation and evaluation and engage in the review of school policy.

10.22 At Callander Primary School there is a range of activities run by parents and staff after school and at lunchtimes, including music clubs, sports, book club and Scripture Union. This provides the pupils opportunities to develop their interests and talents as well as building on school relationships by continued interaction with their peers across a range of ages and stages. The benefits of healthy activities and sports have an impact on the pupils’ health and wellbeing, which in turn improves their readiness to learn.

10.23 Callander Primary School benefits from an on-site nursery which supports smooth transition into Primary 1 for the youngest pupils. Transition from nursery to Callander Primary School also is enhanced due to the joint planning for learning between nursery staff and school staff. Transition from P7 to secondary school is supported by the larger number of pupils in Callander Primary School, offering peer support and
friendship groups. The close proximity of McLaren High School to Callander Primary School allows for more regular transition visits without transport featuring as a consideration.

10.24 Thus there are a wide range of educational benefits for pupils resident in Trossachs Primary School catchment area if they are to attend Callander Primary School. All areas of their development including learning, social, emotional and physical can be enhanced by being part of a larger school. Key transitions are enhanced and supported by the availability of the on-site nursery and proximity of the high school. Callander Primary school is able to provide a broad, relevant and engaging curriculum with a wealth of experiences which will help children to be prepared for life, learning and work in the 21st Century.

21 November 2018
Transcript of Pupil Consultation, 20 December 2018

Present:
Pupil 1, Pupil 2, Pupil 3, Pupil 4 (Callander Primary School)
Pupil 5, Pupil 6, Pupil 7 (McLaren High School)

Sandra Logan (Link Officer), Tanya Starkey (Headteacher of Callander and Trossachs Primary Schools)

Sandra Logan explained the current situation regarding Trossachs Primary School. The process of consultation was explained. Sandra Logan explained that the purpose of the meeting was to capture the children's views regarding the public consultation of the closure of Trossachs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sandra Logan</th>
<th>Please describe which school you attend and describe what you like about your current school.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 7</td>
<td>McLaren High - more opportunities than primary school, different teachers, move around classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 6</td>
<td>At McLaren High I have lots of friends. It is a wider of circle of people to get to know. We learn in different stages and levels. It is better differentiation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 5</td>
<td>What I like about McLaren High is that I got to know new people, make new friends. I really like that there are different subjects, different teachers, different styles of teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 2</td>
<td>I am at Callander Primary and I really enjoy everything in my school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 1</td>
<td>I like Callander Primary because I enjoy lots of maths.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 4</td>
<td>I go to Callander Primary and I like it because of all the different staff in my school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 3</td>
<td>Callander Primary is great because you get lots of different opportunities - clubs, shows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Logan</td>
<td>If Trossachs Primary closed how would you feel, what are your thoughts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 3</td>
<td>If it did close it wouldn't make any difference to me, the travelling to Callander doesn't bother me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 4</td>
<td>I don't mind if the school closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 1</td>
<td>I don't know if I would want it to close or not as I have never been there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 2</td>
<td>I might feel a bit upset as I have memories of the school pond but I have friends in Callander.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 5</td>
<td>The closure would not affect me educationally but I think it would affect me personally as I have a lots of memories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the school closed what would the school be used for instead? I am very worried about the school being demolished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Logan</td>
<td>There are various options. The assets team who look after all council buildings will carry out something called an options appraisal. This may mean other uses or perhaps the possibility of being sold as housing or a private business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 5</td>
<td>I think it must be expensive to mothball the school but I don't want the building to be demolished as it has a lot of history. Perhaps the school could become a library.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 6</td>
<td>The space could be turned into a park as the village doesn't have a park. The closure wouldn't impact me as I hadn't attended Trossachs as a primary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 7</td>
<td>I don't mind if it closes but I understand that some children may like a small school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Logan</td>
<td>Does anyone have any other comments? Or anything that they would like to be taken into consideration as part of this consultation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 5</td>
<td>My dad was sent a letter saying that Callander would offer a better education experience. I feel that Trossachs shouldn't be discredited as the opportunities I had were very good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Logan</td>
<td>The educational benefits of Callander need to be stated as part of the proposal. However, in stating the educational benefits of Callander Primary school that in no way was intended to reflect badly on Trossachs Primary School. I am sure that children who attended Trossachs Primary School will have had a positive learning experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil 6</td>
<td>Perhaps the school could be a base for children with additional support needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transcript of Public Meeting held at Brig o’ Turk Village Hall, 9 January 2019
Chairperson – Carolyne McDaid, Service Manager, BGE, Schools, Learning and Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carolyne McDaid</th>
<th>I would like to welcome you to our meeting tonight. I am Carolyne McDaid and I am a Service Manager within Schools and Education with Stirling Council. It is good to see so many people here so thank you for coming along. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Village Hall Committee for having us tonight. I am going to chair the meeting this evening. First we will do some very brief introductions and then I will give you an outline of how we are going to run the meeting. I will get the team at the front to introduce themselves and then it would be good if you would like to introduce yourselves. Do that in a way that is comfortable to you but if you want to let us know if you live in the community, or have children in the high school or children who previously went to Trossachs Primary that would be of interest to us. [The attendees introduced themselves.] This meeting forms part of the formal statutory consultation around our proposal to permanently close Trossachs Primary School. The formal consultation has been running from 3 of December and it runs through until 8 of February. After 8 February, we will produce a consultation paper which will include the feedback and the comments and the questions from tonight and that will go back to Stirling Council’s Children and Young People Committee on the 25 April 2019. At that point, the Committee will make a decision around the proposal. The purpose of tonight is to hear your views and your comments, and to allow you to ask any questions which we will do our very best to answer. It is possible that we may not be able to answer some of your questions until a decision is made around whether the school will permanently close or not but where we can answer questions we will do so. We are recording the meeting so that we can have an accurate record and minute which will form part of the consultation paper. We will now give you a brief background and a brief overview of the consultation process. Sandra Logan will do this, then we are going to open up to questions, to comments and to hear your views. And before we start we want to reassure you that we are here to listen and to hear what you have to say.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandra Logan</td>
<td>I know that many of you are probably aware of the proposal because it has been shared widely through the community council and on the public website but I will just outline some of that to you. The education provision at Trossachs Primary School is proposed to be permanently discontinued from 28 June 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter. It is also proposed that the pupils which currently live within Trossachs Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Callander Primary School from the 29 June or as soon as possible thereafter, and that the delineation of the catchment area is included in the catchment of Callander Primary School. The reasons for the proposal are: • In August 2016 the roll fell to zero. This reflected a declining roll over a number of years. Since 2012, the roll’s been under 10 pupils, and over that course of time the average has been 7. In 2016, 2017 and currently this year as well, the school has been mothballed. Mothballing is a temporary measure where the school is closed temporarily for various reasons but on this occasion is has been because there have been no pupils enrolled. I will give you a bit of background around that and then talk through what some of the issues are around the proposal.</td>
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Schools, Learning and Education undertook preliminary considerations in August 2018 and through that work we established that Trossachs Primary School met those preliminary requirements. Therefore we would be proposing consultation on a permanent closure from session 2019/2020 under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

Between September and October, the local authority undertook informal consultations with the community to inform them of the proposal and to look at the education benefits that we were going to put into the proposal. This included meeting with Callander Primary School parent council and with the staff team [at Callander Primary School]. Notes were put in the Callander Primary School newsletter and the McLaren High School newsletter. We also sent individual letters to children who are currently of primary school age that live within the Trossachs Primary School catchment area. We sent information to pre-school groups and we met with Callander Community Council and Trossachs Community Council. The officers widely shared the intention to take the proposal for a formal consultation to the Committee.

On the 27 November, the Children and Young People’s Committee agreed to progress to a formal consultation and to consider the permanent closure of Trossachs Primary School. It was also agreed that the Chief Education Officer would prepare and publish a consultation report on the proposal to consider the permanent closure and that this would be brought to a Committee decision in April 2019.

There are alternatives to the proposal. The two alternatives are:

- We could continue mothballing Trossachs Primary School. By August 2019 Trossachs Primary School would have been mothballed for three years, which exceeds the maximum length of time recommended in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act. If anybody has any questions about mothballing we can take those later in the meeting.
- Trossachs Primary School could be reopened. The school would have a very small roll with roll projections remaining static or decreasing. Nobody has enrolled in Trossachs Primary School over the last three years although when parents who live in the catchment area enrol their children at Callander Primary School they are offered the option of their preference. Stirling Council do not consider opening the school again as a reasonable alternative given the fact that nobody has enrolled their children for the last three years and projections show that the roll will remain very low.

The current arrangements are:

- Children who live in Trossachs catchment currently attend Callander Primary School. There are a few, by placing request, who attend Strathyre and Aberfoyle Primary Schools. Trossachs Primary School building has been unoccupied since August 2016.
- The travel and transport arrangements: the maximum statutory walking distances are set out in legislation. It is 2 miles for children up to the age of 8 and 3 miles for children aged 8 and over, to their catchment school. Stirling Council’s policy is more generous than that and at the moment it is that all children will be transported if they live 2 miles and over from their school, whether they’re at primary or secondary school. All of the children who live within Trossachs primary catchment who access the school transport are currently transported to Callander Primary School in one vehicle. All children who live in Trossachs if the proposal were to go ahead would qualify for free school transport.
- In the proposal paper a number of education benefits have been outlined and that’s part of the statutory requirements. By highlighting the educational...
benefits of Callander Primary school the Council is not trying to imply that these benefits did not already exist in Trossachs Primary School but they are being considered when looking at the proposals in terms of what would be provided in the proposed rezoned school of Callander Primary School.

We have a summary with us tonight if people have not already seen it and copies of the proposal are available here too. If you have not had a chance to read them prior to the meeting please do ask for them.

I’m now going to outline that statutory consultation process.

This meeting tonight forms part of the statutory legal framework as part of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Considerations from this evening will be published in a minute of the meeting on Stirling Council’s website under the statutory consultation for Trossachs Primary.

We are approximately halfway through the process. The next steps are: involvement of Education Scotland to review and prepare a report on the education benefits of the proposal. Stirling Council will send oral representations and written representations via the website or emails to Education Scotland on the 15 February 2019. Education Scotland will prepare and submit a report back to the local authority by the 1 March. The final consultation report will be published on the 21 March and will be presented to the Children and Young People Committee on the 25 April 2019. The Council will notify of any decision following the Children and Young People Committee and they will do this in all the ways we have been notifying people of the consultations, so through Callander Primary School and McLaren High School information letters, letters to specific parents who live in the area, preschool groups, community councils, users of the school facilities and the decision will also be placed on the Stirling Council website.

If the permanent closure of Trossachs Primary School is proposed by Committee, this will be taken to Scottish Ministers by the 15 May 2019 and Scottish Ministers will decide if the proposal will be called in or not, and if the proposal will be implemented in full, in part or not at all.

Carolyne McDaid

Sandra, thank you very much. We were conscious that many of you knew much of that as you will have read the documentation and we have covered this at other meetings but we knew that there might be people here who had not heard the information before so we thought that it would be helpful to do that. Now we want to take comments questions and views would be most welcome. So I will hand over the microphone if there is anyone who would like to say something first.

Member of the public

I think there are two issues which I think are quite distinct and should be dealt with separately.

The first is why the school is being closed, the real reason behind it and that is as much to do with economics as anything else. I do not think there is any doubt about that, that this is a cost which arguably the value is not being accrued in the same way on a pupil basis as it is in Callander or any larger primary school. So you may argue that the cost per pupil in a school like Trossachs Primary School is not the same as in a school like Callander. For a Council that is facing significant budget cuts, these areas would attract special interest.

The second point is, and I think [my children] might have something to say about this, is about the educational benefits of Callander Primary School, which by virtue of being held out as such, could be construed as not being available at Trossachs. And if that becomes an accepted norm, then other small village primary schools in Scotland facing the same uncertainty, those arguments could be trotted out to help their closure. So I think we need to be clear that the education may be different in
Callander than in Trossachs but we can’t say one is better than the other. I do not believe that it is. And that needs to be recorded and not used as a justification for “it’s alright, let’s just move everything to Callander.”

So there’s that side of it, the educational side, and the other side of it is the impact on the social fabric of this village of closing the primary school. And there is one. And what the Council might do to mitigate that if the school is closed. Or does the Council just walk away and say “Well we’ve saved a load of money there, done deal” or does the Council walk away and say “We’ve taken out a massive resource and a big and important aspect of the community away from the community, this is what we’re going to do instead.” If this was a car plant in Dagenham being shut, the government would be all over it with mitigation to replace the damage done. And I suppose, possibly on a pro rate basis, this is a car plant in Dagenham, our school in Brig o’ Turk and the impact has been big already, for reasons I will go into later. I spoke to a guy up in Loch Schiel yesterday and I mentioned that our school might be closing and his response was “That’s your village finished”. I did not question him any further, but that was his response “That’s your village finished”.

Member of the public

Just to follow up on a couple of those points. I was disappointed in your consultation document. I was not really aware of the exercise because I do not sit on the community council, but listening to your description right now, I think it is striking how much consultation you seem to have done in Callander and how little seems to have happened in Trossachs, in Brig o’ Turk. Now that may just be my perception, so I am prepared to be corrected on that. But I was disappointed in your document because you seem to dismiss the impact quite lightly on the village of removing the school. Nor do you seem to questions the reasons for the falling roll. So we find ourselves in a community which is struggling to maintain permanent residents in the face of an ever increasing tide of holiday homes, and while the tourism business is essential and important and we want to embrace it we do not want to do that to the risk of the community as a whole. As people have left, there are fewer permanent residents. And one of the reasons people do not come is because of the school being closed and not available. Your document does rather gloss over the impact. There is a bit of a vicious circle going on. There is no school so families don’t come. Families don’t come so the roll drops. I think you have underestimated the impact of that and as [previous commenter] says, if the school closes it really takes something out of the village. In your consultation document, you imply that the school was not performing an important role, was not at the heart of community life. Well it was once. When my kids were at the school, there were lots of events on in the school, people who had no children at the school went and took part and were involved. The school used the village hall for things so I was really very disappointed in how quickly you seemed to cover that. I accept it may have been covered in other things I did not take part in but that has been my impression.

Member of the public

This is very much the Children and Young People Education Committee, which is a very isolated way of viewing what is going on here. The school closing means the road is not gritted, it means there is no ability to bid for broadband funding on the back of having an education facility in the village. I wonder how this could be approached and looked at more holistically, by Stirling Council, not just within the Children and Young People Committee. I am very concerned that this is an Education Committee and this major decision is hidden behind this Committee rather than being looked at from the top down by Stirling Council.

Carolyne McDaid

Sandra is now a Team Leader within our service, but Sandra was previously the Headteacher at Callander Primary School and Trossachs Primary School, and was in that post at the time at which the mothballing first happened. So for information, Sandra can you provide a bit of history about that journey to mothballing which happened over those few years?
Sandra Logan

The roll had reduced to 5 pupils. Over the course of 2015/16, it reduced further to 4 pupils. At this point parents made the decision that they did not want their children to return to Trossachs Primary School after the summer. They moved their children voluntarily, there was no persuasion from the Council. They felt that the children were not getting an opportunity to work with peers their own age. All of the pupils in the school were in a different age group. There were no two children at the same stage at that time. Parents talked previously about trying to encourage people to put placing requests in to come to Trossachs Primary School and at least one parent actively campaigned over a number of years in which they went out in other communities and leafleted people and parents chose not to do that. It was not an Education decision that the roll fell to zero, that was a parental choice. And again, although it is mothballed, people are given an opportunity to enrol their children at Trossachs or show an interest if they want them to go to Trossachs and since 2016, no parent has done that.

Member of the public

The school is not just an educational facility in a community of this size. When I first came here twenty five years ago, I had no children, and my first interactions with the community were through school events, through prize give-ins and there was an infamous cheese and wine party that happened in this hall and that is how I got to know a lot of people and so the school is bigger than just teaching the kids who live here and roundabout. I would also like to say that the fact that all the kids are of different ages, I saw that as a benefit to my kids. When [my son] started at school there were 22 children, several of them came up from Callander. [My son] was the only one of his age but he went out and about to other schools, he was put in a taxi and sent to Strathyre or to Gartmore and that was a huge benefit to him, he’s a very confident young man now and I put that down to his experience at Trossachs. The other benefit from the school that the kids got was that they were treated more as individuals I think. [name given], my youngest son, who Tanya knows, was not as confident and he struggled with going to the bigger school but he was able to go to Callander more often and get used to being around more children, more noise and all the rest of it, but still be at Trossachs. The older kids always looked out for the younger kids which is a great thing to teach them, they are still friends with their buddies from primary 1 now as adults, I do not think they would have got that at Callander. And although I think [my son’s] experience at Callander was fantastic, it missed the point a bit to say that they were all different age groups as I do not see that as a disadvantage. I wonder if there is a different way to approach this by looking at the school as an asset and using the school for something else in a way which means if the opportunity ever arose of reopening, which is maybe unrealistic, it would be possible. Like [previous commentator], I have not been aware of all the consultation process that’s gone on until recently, and I am active within the community. In a way, the consultation has come too late. Community should have been consulted about a school that’s this important to the community right at the beginning, at the same time as the parents were, the rest of the community should have been consulted.

Member of the public

I suppose I am going to reiterate what [two previous commentators] said, that I do feel that general community involvement in this process has been quite poor. The only way I knew about this meeting was through a Stirling Council post on Facebook and I do not think you can assume that people are on Facebook. It is wider than the current pupils in primary. From a personal point of view, we are attached to the school, we share a septic tank with the school as far as we know, although that’s never been made clear. The school roof is leaking, the doors are open, lights are on. I found the door open last winter, it had obviously been open for ages because there were a lot of leaves inside and you know, you can’t just have a building and abandon it. That affects us two and nobody else in the village and I appreciate that. But I just think that like everyone has said, you need to consider the impact on the wider community and other options, can it be used as an outdoor education centre or something along those lines rather than just shutting it. It is not just a building that’s isolated in the community. I feel the wider
impacts have been quite ignored. [My husband], who is at McLaren High School, had not heard about this either. So he’s a teacher at that school yet did not know about the meeting. It has not been widely publicised and I’m quite shocked, actually, that this many people from the community are here tonight given one post on Facebook, which is all I saw of it.

**Member of the public**

I want to highlight the issue of this clearly being an Education focus from Stirling Council about what happens, whether the school closes or not, and no wider thought about what impact that has on the community. And I suppose just pushing that a little bit further, should a decision be made to close the school, then what happens then. Does it just get put on the open market? Could it be sold to someone as a holiday home for example? That would be a pretty major to a lot of people in this community and it is that kind of information that people are looking to hear about as well.

**Member of the public**

Parental choice. Quite a lot has been made, and possibly quite rightly so, about the fact that there was a period when resident parents were electing to send their children to alternative schools whilst there was a perfectly good one in the village and on the basis of that you might make the argument that nobody is interested in the school. I wonder what that might look like over the long term, the roll in this school over the 140 years of its existence, or whatever it is, will have fluctuated, albeit with bigger numbers, and within that time I suggest that because of the way transport is not many people who are living in the village would have sent their children elsewhere. The opposite used to happen. There were people living in Callander who elected to send their children to Trossachs so there is a flipside to parental choice, as you would expect, and we had people who saw the benefits of the education here and decided their Callander resident children would be education at Trossachs. There is not much to be gained about saying “some people did that and some people did the opposite so where does that leave us” you could take a view of Trossachs Primary School being quite close to Callander Primary School and therefore being an additional resource for Callander Primary School. To say that it’s a real privilege which isn’t actually on offer to many larger primary schools in Scotland – what can we do with this? How can we make it work for the benefit of both schools and both communities? Callander has things to offer which Trossachs Primary never did. The reverse was very much the case as well, in that Trossachs Primary School had things to offer which Callander could never. A bit of careful examination of those differential advantages could lead someone to say “well actually there’s a real benefit, a real resource here, that we could actually use, to the benefit of the whole community.”

**Tracey Mills**

Fiona and myself are not from Education, we are from the Assets team which manages assets for the whole of Stirling Council.

**Member of the public**

I am quite worried that the way it has been phrased is that the socialisation benefits of Callander are being bigged up in a way that makes it look like that was an issue at Trossachs Primary, whereas what is not being bigged up at Callander Primary School is the fact that it is a school within the countryside with forest on its doorstep. You could write that about Trossachs Primary School and say they do not have that at Callander. You see what I mean? By bigging up a positive you are actually creating a negative.

**Tracey Mills**

Just like any other building that we have, which is available for the community to use, the Council will look at, through a particular process, any aspiration that would be in the affordability and we have community link officers that would work quite extensively with local communities, so perhaps there is a purpose for the building and we would look at all of that as part of the next phase of this process, once we knew what the route we wanted to go down was. If we have to mothball it for another year, it will basically stay as is, we will have to keep it, wind and water tight, frost protection will be on, we will not be doing anything with the building if it is mothballed for another year. Does that clarify the situation from that perspective?
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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Carolyne McDaid</td>
<td>Isabelle, could you provide some information about the roll projections? Roll projections, I think, can only be done for about five years into the future because of birth rates but Isabelle has done some analysis around this.</td>
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<td>Isabelle Smit</td>
<td>We do get information from NHS about what the number of births will be in the community and this isn’t come as a surprise to any of you as you’ve mentioned it yourselves but because of the way the demographic is changing here in Brig o’ Turk, because of the holiday homes and so on, you will know yourselves that there are not that many children of school age who could potentially want to enrol here. The figures that I have show that we’ve got a maximum of 2 who could potentially want to enrol in August 2019, then 1 in 2020 and 1 in 2021. On top of that just to point out that across all of Scotland as well as Stirling Council the birth rate is dropping and that’s not at just Brig o’ Turk, so realistically we would not be able to project any significant increase at all beyond more than 4 or 5 pupils. I know that the point has been made that people might not choose to come and live here because the school is closed, we have tried to keep open that option. The projections would stay quite low. We have also run the projections for Callander Primary School and we are confident that there is enough room in Callander Primary School and there will continue to be so that any children from the Trossachs Primary School area will be able to continue to attend that school and have a space there. Whether the arrangement stays at it is now or were Trossachs Primary School to close, any pupils living in this area will have catchment rights at Callander and would be guaranteed spaces there. One last thing as well I work quite closely with colleagues in Planning and there is not any development at the moment. That is something that we take into account, both development due to happen in Callander and also any that would occur in the Brig o’ Turk area, there have not been any planning applications that would suggest to us that new pupils will be brought into the area through that route, through new housing.</td>
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<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>On that last point, that’s a bit of a touchy subject. It is very difficult, in fact you cannot get planning authorisation within this area to build a house to live in. It has to be for tourist accommodation. That’s another thing that our community is facing, it has had a huge impact on the community. Almost 40% of properties in the area are either second homes or tourist homes, or holiday lets. And the other point I wanted to make about parents enrolling their kids back into Trossachs – as a parent I know that once I had moved my kids to another school, there’s no way I would be transferring them back somewhere else. You are just not going to take them away from their friends and from what they know when they are at primary school. So I think it is really unrealistic to expect any parents of the children who have now gone to Callander Primary School to re-enrol them at Trossachs.</td>
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<td>Kevin Kelman</td>
<td>One of the themes that has shone through this evening is communication and have all the residents been made aware of what is going on. I am wondering if there are any further suggestions as to how we can help that as it is still a process which is open and we want to make sure that everyone who has a voice is heard.</td>
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<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>I would say that quite simply you could send a letter to everyone within the community council area. I think that’s either 80 or 120 houses – we recently delivered newsletters to everyone for a different community project and that’s not really a huge task with the small numbers in this community.</td>
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<td>Kevin Kelman</td>
<td>Do you have a mailing list we could use?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>No we just have an informal list. It’s only 120 people, it’s not a massive job.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolyne McDaid</td>
<td>We will agree that this will be done as Stirling Council have the necessary addresses.</td>
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### Member of the public

**Hello. I have a comment, and a question as well. Quite a lot has been made of the fact that no parents have enrolled their kids for the last three years. I would like to know: is that a positive choice? Are they given a letter where Trossachs Primary is mentioned by name as well as Callander?**

**Tanya Starkey**

Our enrolment procedures are that when we communicate into the community the enrolment dates for Primary 1, say in January, within our newsletter and things, we also say that these are the dates for Trossachs too and we put links to Stirling Council’s website, to the online enrolment. We have done that since Trossachs Primary was mothballed. So when it comes to the annual enrolment of the Primary 1 children in January we put out in our newsletters that there is also the option for parents to enrol their children at Trossachs so yes it is mentioned by name, and it is put out at the same time as the other information, and about where parents can do that and where more information can be found.

**Member of the public**

A lot has been made of that fact but it should be positive rather than just people being let to enrol because on the face of it, what [previous commentator] alluded to, if parents have their kids at a different primary they are very unlikely to want to change for any reason but also if they know the primary is mothballed it would not be a natural choice so it would really need to be pointed out as an option but as you said it is so that’s fine.

**Member of the public**

Can I just ask, if the will of the community after the consultation is that we would want the school to remain mothballed, with an option to be reopened in the future, is that what will happen?

**Kevin Kelman**

In Sandra’s presentation, she mentioned the three different options.

**Sandra Logan**

This is part of the consultation, there is also a consultation with pupils and there’s the public consultation on the website as well. All of those representations are gathered together and reported as part of the consultation process and there’s steps to that, so it would go to Committee, Committee decides whether it goes to Scottish Ministers and they ultimately make the decision.

**Member of the public**

What would it take for the recommendation to change?

**Carolyne McDaid**

The Committee will ultimately make the decision in April as to what happens next. It is then sent to Scottish Ministers, who can comment on that.

**Member of the public**

You said pupils were consulted, can I ask which pupils?

**Sandra Logan**

All primary school pupils which live within the Trossachs catchment area and secondary school pupils were invited to that consultation too. And [pupil] was one of the pupils that came to the consultation, so thank you very much for your contribution at that meeting. But also on the public website, pupils can put their comments on too.

**Member of the public**

I wanted to clarify something. Someone said earlier that it is not best practice to keep a school mothballed for a fourth year, and it was not your view that keeping the school open was recommended either, so your recommendation to the committee will be to close the school? But you will also report the consultation along with your recommendation? I just wanted to clarify that to make sure.

**Member of the public**

I think that’s quite a helpful clarification because I was thinking that none of the parents with primary school aged children who live in the area are here tonight. Can we assume that they have been consulted separately? And have come to a view?

**Sandra Logan**

All parents have been lettered twice individually and have been invited to community council meetings and parent council meetings.
<p>| <strong>Member of the public</strong> | Picking up on [previous commentator’s] point, in your document you are saying either mothball, not recommended or close, at the very start [previous commentator] referred to the economic necessities and I think we all appreciate that, we are all council tax payers as well, but it struck me in the document that there appears to have been no consideration for another role for the school. There are other communities who have developed their schools into specialist centres for things, music or languages or whatever it might be. Is it conceivable that as a result of this exercise you might add to the options you are considering so that instead of just reopening the school as it was with a very small roll, it takes a different role, so developing the point that [previous commentator] was making about a resource. Is there a third option that should be on that list? |
| <strong>Member of the public</strong> | McLaren High School is the only high school in the national park and I do not think they make enough of that and if they had an outdoor centre somewhere like Trossachs, which keeps it as an educational building. |
| <strong>Tracey Mills</strong> | A part of one of my roles is dealing with all the services, not just education to look at their service delivery needs. At the moment there are no additional property requirements to deliver any additional operational needs across the entire council, so that’s not just education. We rely on properties like this bring run for the community by the community. At this point in time on the work that we have done there is no need for the building from a council perspective. That does not rule out any option for the community having aspirations for the building, that’s quite important to be put out there. It will not automatically go to market if there is interest there from the community to take the building and do something with it, then that is something that we will collectively look at, as a collective council and there are community link officers to help develop any ideas which are potentially there. |
| <strong>Member of the public</strong> | Can you provide examples of how the community has used buildings in other areas? |
| <strong>Tracey Mills</strong> | There’s quite a lot of different small and big scales. Extreme ones would be like in Fife Council where a community has taken up library functions for argument’s sake, right the way down to a community centre that used to be owned by a council that has now been taken up by a community, probably in a similar way to the way this building [village hall] is run, so there’s a lot of good examples out there, on the Scottish Government website about community transfer. We are working on a couple of models, for a group I am aware of that is involved in Highland Games, that is interested in developing a Highland Games training centre in the middle of Stirling, taking on one of our buildings which currently does not have a roof. They are getting funding and building a business case to take this on and have a Highland Game centre of excellence. They do take a couple of years to develop the business model and get the funding. If there are any ideas, there are people within the council who can help that develop. |
| <strong>Member of the public</strong> | Can I push that a bit further? You said “we would consider that” but is there a financial decision to be made about whether you would support a community to go ahead and explore something versus selling it? |
| <strong>Tracey Mills</strong> | Under the new Community Empowerment Act – or rather to go back a bit there used to be a policy called best for less value, if we had a community group to take on ownership of a building, if the proposal was there they could lease it for a pound, the new community bill allows that discussion to be had about what the outcomes for the community would be compared to what you would want to release the building for, it is a part of a big package. There is no financial drive. It is very much down to the bigger package. We are government by certain criteria and rules, we have to go through the proper process. |</p>
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<th>Member of the public</th>
<th>There's probably more people that know more about the community empowerment act in this room than the average and that knowledge helps us to understand these things take a lot time, and you're consulting us now up until the end of February for a potential closure in June/July. That is not enough time.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tracey Mills</td>
<td>Community groups can put their registration in with the Council.</td>
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<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>Yes but these are big things that need to be built upon. This process has been brewing for three years and none of us on this side of the room are familiar with the Education Scotland Act that this consultation works with. If we had this consultation in year one, sitting in this hall, being really clear, then maybe we'd have all our ducks in a line to be ready for a potential closure this summer. But we are not and that's a great risk, to do that now. The potential to give us a bit more time, with more mothballing, to think about these different options, to look at other things. Every year Stirling Council spends a lot of money sending people on outdoor education courses, take that all in house, we have a resource here. It seems to be very blinkered the way it is being looked at the moment both within Education and assets and with regards to its value within the community. Very short timescales, very big decisions.</td>
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<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>I have two quite specific nitty gritty questions. One to the asset manager.</td>
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<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>Before you ask your questions, can someone address the point [previous commentator] and I have both made as to whether there is a willingness to look at other options? Your document reads as if you've decided to close and you are telling us that is your decision. Is there any willingness at all to consider keeping it open as a different kind of resource, or would that only be done after the decision is made to close?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Kelman</td>
<td>There has been discussions about what the building can be used for in the meantime, during the mothballing, but as part of our procedures, we need to keep it so that it can open as a school tomorrow. So we cannot make any changes whilst Trossachs Primary is still registered as a primary school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>That’s not really addressing the point, which is that you are consulting on a proposal to close the school, you are not consulting on a proposal about the future of the school. It’s either closing it or reopening it exactly as it is. My question is, and I think what [previous commentator] was alluding to, is there a willingness on part of the Council to think differently about this, or are you saying that simply is not possible?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracey Mills</td>
<td>If another service wanted it that would have to be driven – another service would have to come forward with their operational requirements and whether that would stack up. At this moment in time, the work we have done shows that the models which are in place are not looking to be changed. At the moment, there is no operational service who wants to take charge, there is no aspiration for taking on the building. We would expect it to be led from the community rather than the council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>The big problem with that is that as we've already agreed, it is a dwindling community, we are faced with the closure of the tea room opposite in the last 18 months, 2 years, and that has a major impact as well. It is a very small community but it has a very long and rich social history to it, it is worth investing and preserving. But for a community with a very small population it's very hard, when everyone's working in their own jobs and have their own responsibilities, to put the energy into developing that. We’ve looked at the work it would take, for example, for a community buyout of the tea room, and I don’t think that not many of us have the energy and time commitment to do that, which is a massive shame for that</td>
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building and for the history and what it offered to the national park. It sounds like a
great thing to reach out and say to the community “you can do something if you
want” but the reality is that it needs additional help to be able to do that.

Tracey Mills: I completely take that on board and understand that. What I would also do is flag
up where we have worked with other communities to realise their aspirations and
because the demand, or the supply, has been there or not been there it has
actually had a detrimental aspect on other assets of the community. So picking up
on your tea room, anybody who is willing to develop ideas across the building – I
want to separate the building from the service delivery – you would have to be
careful that you weren’t impacting on this building. So for example, we would have
to make the other building financially stack up, which might mean taking lets which
are actually here and putting them into the other building, to make it financially
stack up. You would need to work this through, one building might have an impact
on other assets. The only advice I can give is to collectively look at all the
community assets and not look at one – for instance the cheese and wine you
mentioned earlier on, you said it was in here and not necessarily in the school, so
actually is there links there that this building could deliver aspects that you are
looking for? Looking at a masterplan?

Member of the public: That was another thing that I wanted to pick up from the documents that I read
online. There was reference made to there not being a need for the space that the
school provides because the space is here but actually we are quite good in the
Trossachs at separating things out and using things for different purposes and the
school and the hall have worked really well together. You’re right, you’d have to
make sure you were not taking anything away but I am quite sure in a community
like this nobody is trying to take anything away from the hall. We’ve had
discussions about the community buyout of the tearoom as well and whether that
would step on the toes of the hall but nobody wants to do that.

Member of the public: I think we need to be a little bit careful about planning for the future of what you
have now referred to as the “Trossachs building”. It’s the Trossachs Primary
School still and it hasn’t closed yet, and we need to keep that in mind, ambitious as
people may be to see another use for it. Two other points: have I missed
something? Is there anybody here from the National Park? No? That’s a really
bad thing because you mentioned earlier, the planning of development in this
village is focused on holiday homes and not dwelling, and that has a massive
impact on the future of the school. The national park should be here in this
consultation, hearing what’s being said and being questioned on the impact of their
policies on the village life, school included. Rather more nitty gritty stuff to asset
manager, to the nearest ten thousand, what does it cost a year to have that
building/school mothballed?

Tracey Mills: I can get that figure to you, I do not have it with me.

Member of the public: And you know where I am going now, what does it cost to run Trossachs Primary
School as a school per year?

Sandra Logan: I do not have the most accurate and up to date figures for that but approximately
£98,000 per year.

Member of the public: So your figure will be significantly less than that?

Tracey Mills: Yes because bearing in mind I am only doing things such as frost protection
heating, so to mothball it, my costs are greatly reduced.

Member of the public: And your £98,000 does not include the cost of a gritter going up and down? That
would be assets? No - roads. But there is a cost there that is also being saved.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carolyne McDaid</th>
<th>We are enquiring about the gritting.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Member of the public</strong></td>
<td>My cynical hat has noticed that all of Glenfinglas Road was being retarred this morning and I was wondering if it was for the benefit of this meeting?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Aileen More</strong></td>
<td>Just to clarify, the financial cost to reopen Trossachs Primary School we have estimated at around £122,500.</td>
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<td><strong>Member of the public</strong></td>
<td>Is that just a capital outlay to reopen?</td>
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<td><strong>Aileen More</strong></td>
<td>No that is an annual cost to run it.</td>
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<td><strong>Member of the public</strong></td>
<td>I know you said do not look too far into the future, but if the school shuts and the community cannot take it on, what happens then? Is it just put on the market and sold?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tracey Mills</strong></td>
<td>Yes. However I would like to clarify that we would look at what it is sold for. We have taken the point about planning, and we would want to understand what their policy is around holiday homes. One of our elected members did ask the question about whether it would be sold for housing and at that point we had not done that work. But we would want to understand what planning would support and how we can help that, and we could put that in our criteria.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Member of the public</strong></td>
<td>And if it is no longer mothballed but empty, would it still be maintained?</td>
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<td><strong>Tracey Mills</strong></td>
<td>I would have to maintain the building, yes, because we would not want to let it fall into a state of disrepair. We would not be doing that. It does not make sense for it to sit there doing nothing if it is not mothballed.</td>
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<td><strong>Member of the public</strong></td>
<td>May I point out that the closure of the school has already had an impact on the finances of the village hall? Because for many years, the school had used the village hall for recreational classes, gym classes, end of term shows and that has made quite a dent in the income of the village hall. The village hall is relatively new, but on the site of the hall, the previous building was of great use to the education department when the school had to shut down. We have always worked well with the school. Outdoor education in this area is quite popular and for many years now schools from Edinburgh have come to do their Duke of Edinburgh awards here, using the hall as a briefing point. This building is not suitable for dormitories but it is a space for briefings.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Member of the public</strong></td>
<td>Just a general comment. Living here for 30 odd years it seems to me, everything’s down to the money. The Scottish Government have brought out all these things about community buyout to keep communities together. But a village primary school is instrumental in keeping a community together, it does not need to be bought out by us, we’ve already shown we do not have enough people here to have enough time to put in the application form to forward these kinds of ideas, talking about the tearoom. And I suspect the same will happen if you put the school up to sale. It is all very well saying the community has got to do something about it, but people work, you guys work, how much free time does any individual got in this community to put in these massive application forms to make a different in this community, and that is one of the problems. I have never had children, my wife is a teacher, so I have some sort of interest in schools. The numbers mentioned about kids dwindling, maybe some of the community have to look at themselves in retrospect, maybe they shouldn’t have sent their kids to private schools, or wherever they sent them, but these figures you mentioned about the number of kids are slightly skewed because people elected to send their kids to different schools and I don’t think that was ever looked at. Why did they do that? Is it because they wanted to break up the community and shut the school? I don’t think so. There must have been a reason for these people and I heard it saying...</td>
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that they thought the education would be better in Callander, but apparently now their children have grown up a bit they realise it was a mistake. So the low numbers of figures that you guys were quoting as a reason I think is flawed. The problem is now we do not have enough houses for people with kids to move in here. We cannot turn the clock back. But looking forward, you are saying the best thing is for us to close the school and you guys put in an application to run it, but I think that’s a heavy burden on us.

We have already had a planning application in that’s kind of disappeared, it was the outline thing for half a dozen houses. It disappeared into the horizon. I do not think fitting 4 houses into the school playground will make much of a difference. You cannot force people with children to come and live here. The other option is bad for us because it goes for housing, but there might be no children moving in. The way forward would be the school is not mothballed, to me that is the worst option because we would have another meeting here in a year’s time talking about the same things, so the option is to close the school and the community does something with it.

Member of the public
Under what circumstances can you envisage recommending to the Education committee that the school is not closed?

Carolyne McDaid
Our proposal is to close the school.

Member of the public
National Park again. Some of the aspects about the planning in the village and encouraging people to live here which might mean the school had a future, that is quite fundamental to what is going on here, the National’s Parks role in the future of this village. In a joined up policy about Education they really ought to be involved and been asked about what they’re doing to encourage people to dwell rather than just visit the national park. I hadn’t quite realised how important their role is. I do not have a holiday home, I don’t know if anyone here does, but do people pay council tax on a holiday home? They pay less. So a dwelling house benefits the council coffers more than a holiday home would be correct. If the national park have a policy of encouraging holiday homes rather than dwelling homes, that impacts on the finances of Stirling Council and should that be the case, as well as all the social aspects.

Member of the public
Have the national park made any comments on your proposal so far?

Isabelle Smit
I have spoken to my colleagues in the planning department at the national park whom I work very closely with whether they have anything in the pipeline coming up and I specifically did consult with her within the framework of this consultation here, so we haven’t had any other comments from them but rest assured that they are aware of what is happening but certainly we can go back to them after this meeting and ask them specifically for comments then, and ask if it would impact on their policy.

Member of the public
Do you know if the national park has made any other comments on other schools which have closed in this same situation?

Kevin Kelman
The last two schools that have closed were Lochearnhead and Inversnaid and they did not comment on those.

Member of the public
May I make a comment about the council tax? It is possible and has been implemented in some areas that holiday homes pay increased rather than decreased council tax.

Kevin Kelman
No as far as I am aware Stirling Council has not implemented this.
Member of the public: If the proposal went through that the school would shut and the community expressed in the simplest terms an interest in taking on the asset, how long would the community have to formalise this? Because we have looked at even the intent document, and that itself requires months of work. So I am just wondering if it would be six months, or a week.

Tracey Mills: There is clear criteria laid out as part of the bill and what we would do is that we would work with you. We have community link officers that would help progress the business model and funding applications. There are also funding officers so we can put you in touch with the correct people to help the process.

Carolyne McDaid: Any further questions?

Member of the public: What is the spend per pupil at Callander Primary School?

Member of the public: Whilst we are waiting on that figure, can I come back to the short term versus long term aspect? You looked at five year projections for pupil numbers in a school that is 150 years old. You should be looking at 50 year projections, not 5 year projections. It’s very hard but people do it, people do it on national scales, though the NHS might not. If the national park were here they could say whether their policy might change to protect small communities from holiday homes and we could go from 60 full time properties to a 100 full time properties here which would make a significant difference. That could happen within ten years. Some of these things are about policy, some about birth rates, some about long term projections. What has been done so far has been very short term and education focused, not really adequate.

Aileen More: I don’t have the cost per pupil. The additional cost for Callander was £38,000. We will get you the cost per pupil.

Member of the public: Yes I would like that, it would be of interest.

Member of the public: Can I just make a final comment? I think that it is profoundly disappointing that we are sitting here now, three or four months out from a final decision to close a village school, which regardless of its recent history in the last couple of years, has for a century or more been a key part of the village and I certainly was not aware of there being any consultation before this proposal came forward, so if there was a consultation from the Council about what uses the school might be put to as a Council run educational resource, I missed that completely so I think it is really disappointing and you’re saying that you’re not actually consulting, you’re telling us that you made a proposal and what do we think of it, that’s not consultation in my book. When I was talking earlier about whether you have considered other uses, I wasn’t thinking about things that the community might do by taking on the asset, I was thinking about other ways of having a lively primary school in the village, perhaps as a specialist education resource. Given that policy is about reducing the attainment gap and improving the quality of education, where has the thinking been about how the primary school in Brig o’ Turk might contribute to that? Maybe there has been some in which case I apologise, but it is completely invisible from where I’m sitting this evening and that’s really disappointing.

Member of the public: I just want to support that by reiterating what I said earlier on, the future of this school, not building, lies in it being bolted on to the side of Callander, as it is so close, and adding value to the Callander offering in a way that is unique. We’re all looking for a way to keep this school open, if I was on your side looking for a way, I wouldn’t necessary be looking at an outdoor centre but how can the asset be used to support Callander and make Callander an even better primary school. [To his two sons] What do you guys think? Do you think there’s an option there? You’re the only ones who has experience of both.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>McLaren High School Pupil</th>
<th>Yes, I think it would be of value because there were two pupils who came over from Callander. I think they benefitted quite a lot from that. They spent time with us, they were involved with the Christmas play. They only came on a Monday. So it is possible that children from Callander might benefit. It should be considered as an annex or extra resource for Callander.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Isabelle Smit</td>
<td>It is something that we have talked about. I think the feeling that we had about it is that there would be significant transport costs involved for the Council in bringing pupils to Trossachs to make use of that facility and Callander Primary School has got good access to its own outdoor area, including a forest not far at all from the current Callander Primary School building. So it's whether or not we could justify having that as an annexe as of course as a Council, one of our duties is to ensure fairness and equitability with our resources across all of our constituents and whether we can justify Callander having access, at cost to the Council, to that additional facility when they already have quite good outdoor space. And about the projections, I do very long term projections for some of our very big developments, 3000 units of housing, but the further you go into the future the more the levels of uncertainty increase. Demographically the birth rate is falling, we have very robust projections for the next five years as the children are already born and are easy to count. When you look very long term, particularly when it comes to a small school and small numbers, there is so much uncertainty that the numbers would actually be worthless.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member of the public</td>
<td>What can we feed back? Can we only feedback on whether we are for or against the proposal?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolyne McDaid</td>
<td>You can comment in whichever way you choose to do so.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Kelman</td>
<td>Thanks very much to everyone for coming along. The responses are open until the 8 February. We will get a letter out to everyone within the Community Council area and we welcome further feedback and comments before we take that to the Children and Young People Committee in April. Thank you very much.</td>
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## Written Representations received from 3 December 2018 to 8 February 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representation 1</strong></td>
<td>Given the reduced number of pupils attending the school and the costs associated with keeping it open, I am of the view that Stirling Council are taking the right decision to close the school and sell the property.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Representation 2</strong></td>
<td>I would support the permanent closure of Trossachs Primary. The social aspect of any future pupils joining the nearest alternative primary is of an advantage as are the learning opportunities on offer in larger learning groups. The distance for children to travel to an alternative school is not excessive. Financially it is not viable in the current climate to finance the significantly higher per head annual costs of a small school when there is an alternative provision available nearby. Resources can be better used in a more cost effective way. Rural small schools can have many positives in a community but there needs to be a sensible and sustainable approach when considering the viability of keeping the school open for potential pupils rather than permanent closure.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Representation 3</strong></td>
<td>The school should be closed. The cost of running the school is not cost effective.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Representation 4</strong></td>
<td>As a resident of Brig o’ Turk and a former pupil of Trossachs Primary School, I am very worried about the negative affect that the potential closure of the School will have on our community and its prospects for the future as a place to live in rather than just retire to or visit for a holiday. This consultation has not been properly publicised within the Trossachs area; it is only at this last stage (January 2019) that the majority of residents within the Trossachs area are being made aware of it. Please note that the link (web address) which is used to point people to the consultation papers and response method in the communication of 10 January is incorrect. I feel that the statement that it is ‘unlikely that closure of the school will encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community’ is utterly wrong. I personally know one family with two primary school age children who are planning to move away in the Spring due to lack of local amenities and the fact that they need to put their children on a bus for 30 minutes each day to attend primary school. To say that the lack of a primary school in this village wouldn’t effect a young family’s decision to move here is wrong. This community is right at the start of the process of producing a Community Action Plan, it will take several months to get that in place. Part of the point of the community action plan is to discuss amongst the community and put plans in place for future ventures such as community run amenities. If the decision is taken in April to close Trossachs Primary School and the building is handed over to the SC Assets team then there will not have been sufficient time for our community to propose alternative uses for the building. An extra year mothballing the School would allow time for discussion and plans to be developed within our community. Having said that, it would be far better for this community if the School were to stay open in some form in an educational role. I am aware that discussion about this has taken place but can see no mention or record of it in the proposal. Could this be discussed more widely? An extra year of mothballing would also present suitable opportunity for this.</td>
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<td>Representation 5</td>
<td>I believe it is sensible, rational, economical and better for mental wellbeing and development for pupils to be in larger classes of children of their own age. Social interaction with peers is vital to develop a rounded personality. Trossachs Primary was once this place when there were 15 plus pupils. The likelihood of this number being achieved now is extremely unlikely. The closeness of Callander Primary, the provision of transport to it and the range of activities it can provide far outstrip the emotional requisites of past pupils and parents. The need to have 2 staff on duty at all times for a handful of pupils is not realistic and not cost effective. The upkeep of the building far exceeds the benefits of the school. I really do not see that keeping the school open is viable proposition when there are other perfectly good primary schools in the area. I therefore support the view that the school must be closed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representation 6</td>
<td>It is sad but the school should be fully closed. Education like everything else should be centred in Callander. The property should be offered to the Trossachs Community to turn it into a vibrant social enterprise so bringing more life into the village. The property MUST NOT be sold to developer to turn it into yet more holiday homes. Holiday homes have halved the community size in the Trossachs in the last 15 years - the result the school is closed.</td>
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<td>Representation 7</td>
<td>I am in agreement that the proposal to move to permanent closure of Trossachs Primary School is the right decision. If there are no pupils then it makes sense that public resources are used wisely to educate children in a nearby school. If the roll of the school was to increase from the current roll of zero it is not anticipated that this will grow beyond very small numbers. With such small numbers children would not get the same quality educational experience without peers to work with in areas such as P.E., Talking and Listening, Modern Languages and Science. I believe that children thrive educationally when they have peers to collaborate with. I understand that communities feel emotionally attached to their village schools. However, I have experience of a few villages in the Stirling Council area continuing to thrive and plan community events despite there being no school in the village. Given the current financial climate as a Council Tax and Income Tax payer I feel strongly that we all need to support decisions that will provide us with best value services.</td>
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<td>Representation 8</td>
<td>Please retain mothball status until the community completes the local action plan.</td>
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<td>Representation 9</td>
<td>We find it hard to see our school being closed. It is a place where memories were created, ideas evolved for two hundred years or so. Due to the lack of childcare here in Brig o Turk, we had no option than to enrol our children to Callander Primary School. It should become a place to be remembered once mothballed with a sign highlighting the school history and achievements. My husband was happy when his first two kids went to Trossachs Primary School. His kids always speak fondly about it and headteacher. We understand due to the lack of children the school cannot be open, but to mothball it entirely is a tragedy for the community.</td>
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| Representation 10 | In summary, I am strongly opposed to the closure of the school but see it as very likely, bordering on inevitable. I would however like to highlight some inconsistencies in the proposal: 2.3 - “all parents had intimated their plan to enrol their children in other schools” - this is incorrect. One parent (who lived in Callander) planned to do this and one child was moving up to McLaren. The parents of the remaining 3 children (including my family) felt obliged to move our children as 3 was too small a number. 2.4 - I believe that the figure ‘8’ in the “2018/19” box should be ‘6’, as in paragraph. 2.6. 4.1 - I disagree with the conclusion that “It is therefore unlikely that closure of the school will encourage families with school-age children to leave the community or discourage young families from moving to the community.” My family moved to the village particularly because of the existence of the small, friendly school. We were dissatisfied with having to send our son to the larger town school and this contributed to our decision to leave the area for the time being. We are considering returning to Brig o’ Turk (now with 2 primary school aged children) and our decision will be directly influenced by the presence of a school in the village. Furthermore, there has been discussion of creating housing, including ‘affordable housing’ in the village. Having a school in the village would clearly help with attracting young families to the area. 4.3 - “Thus the school building is not considered a hub of community life.” - The school building itself may not have been used for community activities but the school itself played an incredible part in community life when it was open. In 2015/16, the school Christmas play was presented in the village hall along with the Brig o’ Turk playgroup (also now closed) and there was standing room only in the village hall. I understand that in previous years there was much more interaction between the school and community.

| Representation 11 | I am deeply concerned by this proposal. The Educational Benefits statement makes no mention of the benefits of Trossachs School. It is all about Callander. Trossachs also provides a high quality education where pupils can mix with all ages and stages. Trossachs School provides endless opportunities for Eco Work and outdoor learning - pupils were the youngest to ever receive a John Muir award for their environmental work were they not? The school has countless technology such as multiple interactive whiteboards and computers. Trossachs School had until mothballing consistently accepted placing requests from outside its catchment - highlighting the special qualities of the education service provided. Similarly, the impact upon the community is grossly downplayed in the report. Whilst social activities take place in the hall how many of these were due to events run by the school - the Christmas show for example filled the hall each year, providing an opportunity for all generations in the Trossachs to mix. Similarly, the proposals do not take into account the proposed development of 7 houses on Dorothy’s field. Seeing as the Trossachs Community is at the outset of a community action plan I would urge the council to continue to mothball the school until that process is complete so that the community can decide what it wants its future to look like and to establish a means to generate pupils for the school if, as I suspect, it wishes to maintain the School. I was also concerned that I was not written to about these proposals until more than half way through the consultation - I was not aware of any proposal to close the school before that! As such I missed the meeting which was held! (Why was community member not an option on this form? Total disregard for those of us who live and work in the Trossachs)
I am opposed to the proposal to permanently close Trossachs Primary School this year for the reasons below. The impact on the Trossachs community has not been adequately assessed. In fact, the section in the summary document titled "Likely Impact on Brig o’ Turk Community" is quite frankly appalling. There is clearly no understanding of the value of a school to a small community and there has been no attempt to look at how the school and community worked together until shortly before it was mothballed. The fact that the village has a village hall is irrelevant - it's not about the school building. In fact, the loss of the school is a significant loss in income to the village hall in terms of school use and of school social events.

There is absolutely no acknowledgement of the social impact the loss of the school will have. My two children attended Trossachs Primary School and I have no doubt that the integration of the school with the community has played a huge part in their ability to engage with people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, to be tolerant of much older and younger people and to be active and responsible members of the community. It is possibly difficult to understand the real value of this if you have not experienced it yourself. It is worth noting that the school is not "at the end of a lane" as stated - basic facts like this should be correct. No assessment has been made of the likely impact on other service provision in Brig o’ Turk should the school close and therefore no proposal has been made on how to mitigate potential losses. For example, there is already a reduction in winter treatment of the roads and accessibility to funding for a local broadband scheme would be reduced by lack of a school. These are big things for a small community and must be considered too.

I take exception to the list of Educational Benefits which by its inclusion implies these benefits would not exist to pupils at Trossachs Primary School. I had a son at Trossachs Primary School when the headship changed to be linked with Callander Primary School. This gave the children the unique opportunity to benefit from two completely different types of school and certainly my experience of it was that it worked extremely well. Before Trossachs PS was linked with Callander PS the children regularly worked with the other small schools in the McLaren High catchment area. There is absolutely no reason for children in a small school to be isolated & limited in their experiences. At the meeting held in Brig o’ Turk in January 2019, it was mentioned that there are no planning applications for new homes in the community. First of all this is incorrect. There is a live application for an affordable housing development on the road up to the school. Secondly, Trossachs Community Council is corresponding with the planning authority about the fact that it is currently not possible to obtain planning permission to build anything other than property for tourism or affordable housing in Brig o’ Turk. Should there be a change in planning policy, it is likely that the situation regarding planning applications will also change. Finally, I think the consultation process has been seriously lacking. This is perhaps a casualty of the lack of understanding of the likely impact on the community. Undertaking a "consultation" when all of the children have been moved to another school is frankly consulting far too late. The process needs to include input from all local stakeholders including Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park and needs to have a REAL assessment on the impact for the Trossachs community. The decision to close Trossachs Primary School is about much more than the building where children are taught and how to transport them to another one. It is a decision which has the potential to change the nature of our community forever and that has quite clearly not been addressed. Therefore, I would like the mothballing of Trossachs Primary School to continue for another year to allow a full and
proper assessment of the impact of its closure to be carried out and for proposals to mitigate any detrimental effects to be put forward.

Representation 13

As a resident of Brig o’ Turk, and member of the community council I am fortunate in being aware of the Trossachs School plans and schedule for some time. Having reviewed documentation and attended meetings I would like to suggest that although the letter of the education process has been followed for school closure, the wider impact and long term effect on a small community require a more holistic assessment. Though the value of community and long term (> 5 year) patterns of housing and demographic may not strictly be required, the timing and detail below move me to propose a delay and to continue mothballing.

On Whether all Options Have Been Considered

There was no evidence presented that options for alternative use or vision for the school have been considered. Outdoor education, field centres (how much does Stirling spend sending children to third-party OECs?). Without visibility of any report or document demonstrating vision considerations it is not clear that there has been a strategic assessment. Why is the ONLY high school in the National Park at Callander not a leader and exemplar in outdoor skills, learning and crafts? This lack of leadership seems narrow minded and not making use of potential available.

On Population Planning and Timescales

The Trossachs school is well over 100 years old. The impression was given that population projections based on planning were only assessed for a few (5?) years into the future. For a school, which is typically a building that lasts multi-generations this seems unreasonable. Existing planning (Dorothy’s Field) was not taken into consideration (perhaps just Stirling planning records were checked and not LLTNPA). Critically, it is the Park Authority that sets planning policy and they were not represented in the consultation. In a community where 40% of properties are rentals or second homes a change in policy to build local communities would make a massive difference in the local demographic and potential family population, as well as local home development. This must be considered before a final decision is made.

On Local Impact

Finally, the indications at meetings that assets could simply and quickly be transferred to a community is disingenuous. The community know the effort in local fundraising, rights to buy and possible opportunities in the village. Whilst there is a local action plan in development, a closure before the end of 2019 will pre-empt local decision making.

A more holistic Stirling Council, Community and LLTNPA decision and not just education services decision and process is required. The relatively low cost of mothballing continuing seems a small price to pay.

Representation 14

Trossachs Community Council discussed the current Review of Trossachs Primary School earlier this month. A number of local residents attended and made a number of points during a wide-ranging and often passionate discussion.

In outline, the Community feels that the current exercise needs to be delayed, pending further analysis and investigation, a “Final” Consultation Paper and a decision in April will not give sufficient time for all the factors involved to be properly considered. Areas that the Community wish further explored include the following points:
It is a shame that the initial "Consultation" period was already half over before many in the local Community found out about it. A meeting in Brig o Turk was held by Council officials but many people in the area were unaware of it, it could have been significantly better publicised. Some who were aware of it thought entry was for "stakeholders" and by invitation only. We also understand that extensive "Consultation" has taken place with local groups and interested parties in Callander, less so here in the village actually concerned. It was pointed out that the School is not "at the end of a Lane" as described in the proposal document, in fact geographically it is almost central to the village core. The statement that the village also has a hall used for events so the building is not " hub of community life" considerably underplays the impact having a school with all its activities provides to the village, with the school using the hall for plays, end of term prize-giving and other events, while the social cohesion provided by the parents council, regular fundraising activities and socialising should not be ignored.

We also consider that the impact assessment provided significantly underplays the value of Trossachs Primary School from an educational point of view and as part of the Community. That it was a small school with multiple ages taught in one space is seen as very much a positive, benefits including teaching children to co-operate and look after each other and the flexibility that this methodology gave in terms of allowing children to learn at their own pace, independent of their physical age. Those needing more time could work with younger children on some subjects, those needing greater stimulation could work with the older age-group and so on. The wider impact on the Community is not mentioned at all. Loss of the Primary School will affect issues like winter road-treatment and further reduce the attractiveness of the village to young families in a Community already hard-hit by the conversion of family homes into holiday lets. The proposal of closure comes at a time when a live planning proposal for a development of multiple "Affordable" homes is under consideration by the planning Authority, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. (LLTNPA Ref 2018/0020/DET) This small estate would be within 200 metres of the school. The irony of closing a school just as young families might be considering moving to the area would be high.

The proposal would also cut across the development of a new Community Action Plan, being produced in conjunction with the National Park’s Community Partnership. This document will lay out development plans for the local area including the potential for new or re-purposed housing. The Community Action Plan will be developed over the next few months and will thoroughly investigate the Community's views on a wide range of subjects, the future of the School would be high on the list of issues to be considered. The Plan would also bring into the discussion the National Park Authority and its planners, with their priority outcome of “Population decline is being addressed by attracting and retaining more skilled working age and young people within the National Park and by providing a better range of housing options.” To undercut this plan by closing the School at this stage would not be sensible.

The Community would therefore request that the current "Mothballing" is continued for at least a further year in order to allow time to fully consult the Community on the wider issues and allow completion of a more holistic plan for creating a sustainable working Community, in line with the National Parks vision.
Comments received for Local Lomond and Trossachs National Park, 20 February 2019

Our preference, given there is currently a live planning application reference 2018/0020/DET for affordable housing and pressures with capacity at Callander Primary school, is that the school remains mothballed rather than permanently closed.

We note the points that are raised around the planning approach in Brig O Turk. The National Park planning policy for Brig O Turk is set out in the Local Development Plan where Brig O Turk is identified as a small rural community. Whilst there hasn’t been land for development formally identified, there is support in the Local Development Plan for affordable housing (and a limited amount of open market housing may be permissible where it is demonstrated as essential to the viability of the affordable housing scheme) in the small rural communities.

The context why the policy seeks to restrict new housing to affordable housing in small rural communities was that through our evidence and research there was a clear need identified for the plan need to provide more opportunities for affordable housing that would enable households who live and work here, or want to move to the Park to live and work. These would provide smaller sized and family sized homes to allow families, young people of working age to remain within the National Park rather than provide allocations that could be used as second or holiday homes. There is more information on the evidence in the population and housing background paper and our approach on page 13 of the Housing Supplementary Guidance.

Derek Manson
Development Planner
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park
Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Stirling Council to permanently close Trossachs Primary School and add its catchment area to the delineated catchment area of Callander Primary School.

February 2019
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 Stirling Council’s proposal to permanently close Trossachs Primary School and add its catchment area to the delineated catchment area of Callander Primary School. Trossachs Primary School has been ‘mothballed’ since August 2016. 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 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:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 9 January 2019 in connection with the council’s proposals;
- 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
- visits to the sites of Trossachs Primary School and Callander Primary School, 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 Trossachs Primary School, the likely effect on the local community and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements of the proposed closure. Trossachs Primary School has been classified by Scottish Ministers as a remote rural school.
2. Consultation process

2.1 Stirling Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

2.2 The council undertook a range of pre-consultation activities in September and October 2018 to inform stakeholders about the proposal which would be taken to the Children and Young People Committee in November 2018. This included attendance at Community Council, Parent Council and staff meetings, as well as sending written communication to parents of children who live in the catchment area of Trossachs Primary School, and to those whose children attend Callander Primary School and McLaren High School. An information booklet about the proposal was shared and made available at Callander Primary School and McLaren High School.

2.3 The consultation ran from 3 December 2018 to 8 February 2019. Notice of the consultation and details of the public meeting were advertised through social media by the council. A consultation page was available on the Stirling Council website throughout the consultation period to provide information and to invite responses. Consultation meetings were held by authority officers with children and staff during December 2018. The public meeting was held in Brig o’Turk Village Hall on 9 January 2019, which was attended by 15 members of the public. Following the public meeting, letters were sent to every household in the Trossachs Primary School catchment area. Authority officers also attended Callander Primary School Parent Council to consult with parents. Fourteen written responses to the proposal were received during the consultation period. Of these, six responses supported the proposal, three opposed the proposal, four recommended extending the mothballing of the school and one neither supported nor opposed the proposal.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council has set out a number of reasonable arguments in support of its proposal. The council states there will be educational benefits for children if the proposal goes ahead. These benefits are generally the advantages of attending a larger school. These include the greater range of opportunities for children’s achievement beyond the school day, including lunchtime and after-school clubs, some of which are run by children. A larger school with more staff and greater resources supports a wider curriculum, including the learning of languages and access to information technology to improve digital skills. The significantly higher school roll presents increased opportunities for children to work with their peers in pairs, small groups or cohorts. Callander Primary School can offer a broader range of sporting opportunities such as rugby, football, cricket, netball and athletics, and has easy access to facilities in the school and at the nearby McLaren High School. All children benefit from regular involvement in citizenship groups, including First Aid, Eco Schools and Road Safety, which focus on improving the school environment and its community. Work-related opportunities exist with local partnerships including the National Park, the Callander Youth Project and a local care home. The location of Callander Primary School leads to more straightforward transition from nursery to primary and from primary to secondary school as these establishments are in walking distance of each other. Overall, these are all benefits which are already being experienced by children as Trossachs Primary School is mothballed and the majority of children from its catchment area are now attending Callander Primary School.

3.2 Children at Callander Primary School, including those who previously attended Trossachs Primary School, identify many advantages to being at their own school, including the citizenship groups, the house team meetings and the after-school clubs. They like having more peers and a greater number of teachers. Parents, including parents of children who previously attended Trossachs Primary School, feel that there were too few children to make the smaller school viable and that children needed a wider peer group. Facilities at Trossachs Primary School were also
more limited. Parents are very keen that savings made through the closure of Trossachs Primary School should be re-invested in Callander Primary School. Callander Primary School staff, including those who had worked at Trossachs Primary School, agree with the proposal for closure. Whilst there were options for flexibility in the curriculum, they feel the lack of peer groups for children was a significant issue. Some members of the community who attended the public meeting were keen for the building to be retained for an alternative purpose, such as an outdoor learning centre. They would prefer the mothballing to be extended whilst options are explored.

3.3 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 considered possible alternatives to the proposal prior to consultation. One alternative would be the continued ‘mothballing’ of Trossachs Primary School. However, this would exceed the three years recommended for this approach in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

3.4 The other alternative considered was reopening the school. However, the roll had dropped to zero when the school was mothballed and roll projections are static or decreasing in the foreseeable future with no new housing planned in the area with only one current planning application under consideration since January 2018. Parents enrolling children for education have been given the option of nominating Trossachs Primary School but no one has done so since 2016. The council identified educational benefits for children attending Callander Primary School in its proposal paper and was clear that there was no implication that some of these benefits did not exist in Trossachs Primary School. However, they do apply to the proposed rezoned school of Callander Primary School.

3.5 The council further considered the likely impact of closure on the local community. It observed that the school building was only used for the purpose of educating primary-aged children during school hours as there is a local village hall which is used for community purposes, and so the school building was not used as a hub of community life. Currently, all children from the Trossachs Primary School catchment area who attend Callander Primary School are transported by the council in a single vehicle to Callander, which is 6.4 miles away by road. This arrangement will continue if the proposal is accepted. The council has identified that two other local primary schools are within reasonable travelling distance: Aberfoyle (8.3 miles) and Strathyre (13.4 miles).

4. Summary

Stirling Council’s proposal to close Trossachs Primary School and permanently extend the Callander Primary School delineated catchment area to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Trossachs Primary School has clear educational benefits which are currently being experienced by children. Parents, children and staff are agreed about the educational benefits of the proposal. In taking the proposal forward, the council needs to continue to engage with all stakeholders and ensure that the local community is supported in exploring options for alternative use of the Trossachs Primary School building.

HM Inspectors
February 2019