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**Review of Education Provision**  
**at**  
**CROSS SCHOOL**  
**Isle of Lewis**

**CONSULTATION REPORT**  
**SEPTEMBER 2010**

**Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne**

**COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR**  
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**Review of Education Provision**  
**CONSULTATION REPORT FOR CROSS SCHOOL**  
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## **Review of Education Provision at Cross School, Isle of Lewis Consultation Report**

### **Report by Director of Education and Children's Services**

#### **CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL THAT :**

- **Education provision at Cross Primary School be discontinued with effect from 30 June 2011**
- **That the pupils of Cross Primary School continue their education at Lionel School, from 18 August 2011**
- **That the catchment area of Lionel School be extended to include the current catchment area of Cross Primary School.**

#### **BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Comhairle, at its Meeting on 18 February 2010, authorised the Director of Education and Children's Services to proceed to undertake the necessary statutory consultation with parents, staff, pupils and other interested parties affected by the proposal regarding the proposed closure of Cross School as required by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 1.2 This decision relates to the implementation of the Strategy for the Future Provision of Education in the Western Isles. The Comhairle is required to provide its statutory services as effectively and efficiently as possible. It is therefore necessary to be strategic in the delivery of education to ensure Best Value. School rolls in the Authority as a whole have been falling year on year for the last thirty years and this, based on population projections, is a continuing trend. This trend has resulted in there being more buildings in the school estate than are considered necessary for the delivery of high quality education.
- 1.3 In order to ensure appropriate investment in education at a time of financial challenges it is necessary that the Comhairle make the most efficient use of its finances and resources. The current level of over-capacity in schools combined with the high maintenance costs and poor condition of many of the school buildings throughout the Western Isles is a significant drain on resources and presents a major obstacle to investment in education and school buildings.
- 1.4 Cross School is designated as a very remote rural school. In terms of Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010, the Comhairle has given special regard to -
  - any viable alternative to the closure proposal,
  - the likely effect on the local community in consequence of the proposal (if implemented), with reference in particular to
    - (a) the sustainability of the community,
    - (b) the availability of the school's premises and its other facilities for use by the community;

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

## THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

2.1 The current requirements for consulting on proposed school closures are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

- A proposal document was issued as a result of a decision approved by the Comhairle as detailed in Appendix A. A copy of this document was issued free of charge to the consultees as listed in the Proposal Document and was also published on the Comhairle website.
- An advert was placed in local newspapers on 13 May 2010 and the consultation ran thereafter for a period of 34 school days until 30 June 2010.
- A public meeting was held on Tuesday, 1 June 2010.
- Pupils and staff were also consulted separately.
- HMIe involvement included being sent a copy of the proposal document, their attendance at the public meeting and their visiting the affected schools and meeting with parents, pupils and staff. They also received a copy of all written representations. They then prepared a report on the educational aspects of the proposal ( Appendix D)
- This Consultation Report is the Comhairle's response to issues raised during the consultation period including a response to identified inaccuracies in the consultation information.
- This Consultation Report will be published at least three weeks before a final decision is taken by the Comhairle on the proposal.

### Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

2.2 An Initial Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment (Appendix C), in line with statutory legislation, was undertaken in relation to the proposal for the School. There were no discriminatory or detrimental consequences identified to the proposal being implemented. Therefore a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

## CONSULTATION MEETINGS

- 3.1 Consultations meetings were held as follows:
- Public meeting at Cross Primary School on 1 June 2010
  - Meetings with staff at both Cross and Lionel Schools were held separately.
  - Meetings with pupils at both Cross and Lionel Schools were held separately.

## OMISSIONS AND INACCURACIES

4.1 Within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 there is guidance on how errors or omissions should be addressed. In paragraph 9.1 of the Proposal Document Cross School was described as an accessible rural school when in fact it is a very remote rural school. An advertisement to that effect was placed in local newspapers. Attention was drawn to the error at the Public Meeting and the correct definition was given. This error was not deemed to be material and therefore no further action was taken in relation to this matter.

## REPRESENTATIONS

5.1 The written representations received during the consultation period are detailed below.

Representations from:	Number
• Individual written representations (2 with 2 signatures)	4
• Parent Council	1
• Staff Professional Associations	2
• Bòrd na Gàidhlig	1
• NHS Western Isles	1
• Fire Service	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>10</b>

## SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS AND COMHAIRLE RESPONSES

6.1 This section details the relevant points raised at public meetings and in the written submissions. A full transcript of the public meeting is included as Appendix B. A copy of all written representations will be published as part of the Report to Comhairle Members.

6.2 The responses to the issues raised are detailed below.

<b>TRANSPORT</b>
<p><b>ISSUE:</b> A number of transport related issues were raised by parents, including seating capacity on buses, distance to walk to school and bus times.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the bus contracts are agreed, provision will be made within the contract to ensure that pupils who are entitled to school transport will be accommodated.</li> <li>• The walk to school will not exceed the Comhairle policy (one mile).</li> <li>• In the majority of rural schools within the Outer Hebrides, the catchment area is greater than the one mile distance.</li> <li>• The distances that pupils have to travel to and from school are clearly important in any assessment of appropriate transport provision. In addition, distances of themselves have to be set in the context of road conditions, and the time that such travelling takes.</li> <li>• The extended travel time for pupils at Cross School would not exceed 15 minutes. All pupils would be travelling to school within the maximum travelling time of 30 minutes for primary pupils as stated within the Comhairle's Home to School Travel Policy.</li> </ul>

<b>DATE OF PROPOSED SCHOOL CLOSURE</b>
<p><b>ISSUE:</b> Parents asked why the school was amongst the first proposed for closure.</p> <p><b>RESPONSE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The closure of Cross School is part of a strategic review of the Western Isles School Estate.</li> <li>• The timetable was scheduled with a view to allowing schools and their communities plan the necessary transition arrangements.</li> <li>• The Review of the School Estate is committed to ensuring that pupils will receive quality education in quality buildings. Cross School is currently designated Condition C, whilst Lionel School is designated Condition B. Lionel School currently has the capacity to accommodate all the pupils at Cross School; therefore there is no need to delay the proposal.</li> </ul>

**SCHOOL CAPACITY AND CURRICULUM**

**ISSUE:** Parents raised issues in relation to the capacity at Lionel School and the educational advantage.

**RESPONSE:**

- Lionel School does have capacity to accommodate all pupils from Cross School.
- In the event that the S1-2 provision continues at Lionel School there will still be capacity to accommodate Cross pupils based on current enrolments and future projections.
- The School Estate Review and the consultation exercise arising from the School Estate Review is not based on a criticism of the attainment profile of the individual schools, but rather on the viability of the school, and the ability of the Comhairle to provide quality education in quality buildings in a more efficient way.
- There is no evidence to suggest that the closure of Cross School would result in any detriment to levels of educational attainment. However, it will provide a better learning environment with more resources and better class groupings to facilitate learning and teaching.
- Pupils from Cross School have in the past transferred to secondary education at Lionel School. All parents have been very happy with the provision and this is reflected in pupils' achievement and engagement with learning.

**CONSULTATION**

**ISSUES:** Some parents were concerned that pupils were consulted.

**RESPONSE:**

- The consultation took place under the terms of the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010. That act places a responsibility on the Department of Education and Children's Service to consult with all relevant stakeholders. Pupils are considered as relevant stakeholders and therefore included in the consultation.
- The Department informed the Head Teacher of the proposed pupil consultation. The Head Teacher subsequently informed parents and pupils.

**FINANCE**

**ISSUES:** A number of concerns were expressed regarding the cost of education at Cross School and the potential of viable options.

**RESPONSE**

- The annual budgeted school running cost per pupil, as reported to Scottish Government, is obtained by dividing the total budgeted school running cost by the school roll. The total revised cost for 2010/11 is detailed in the following table.

<b>Cross School 2010</b>	
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>
Employee Expenses	81,855
Premises Related Expenditure	7,955
Utilities Related Expenditure	9,186
Resources Related Expenditure	6,161
Transport Related Expenditure	2,998
Catering Related Expenditure	5,218
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>113,373</b>
Parent Council Funding	430
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113,803</b>
Number of Pupils	14
<b>COST PER PUPIL</b>	<b>8,129</b>

- A number of alternatives to closure were considered:
  1. **Upgrade Cross school to at least category B and make it DDA compliant**  
 This option does not provide the means to increase the roll of the school, thereby providing educationally beneficial class groupings, which would enrich the learning experiences. Currently, the Comhairle does not have the financial provision to meet the ongoing demands in terms of repairs and maintenance and adaptation of premises to meet DDA requirements. In this regard, the Comhairle are unable to provide optimum learning and teaching environments for pupils.
  2. **'Maintaining the two sites under the one head teacher'**  
 This is the status quo. The Comhairle is of the opinion that the status quo is not an option for the reasons as set out in the Proposal Document.
  3. **'Make best use of the current assets by letting rooms within the school to CnES/community'**  
 Letting rooms within school premises is very difficult. The security of children and their protection is paramount at all times. If the school premises were to be let to community groups it is hard to see how the security of the pupils could be maintained at acceptable levels.
- The Department is not aware of any group of any community group that has expressed an interest in sharing the running costs of Cross School.
- The HMIe report highlighted that "While significant investment could improve the building, it would not necessarily increase the number of children attending the school. The Comhairle justifiably believes this is not a viable alternative to the closure of Cross Primary School."
- Effective learning and teaching at the primary stage is most effective when pupils have the opportunity to work collaboratively in peer settings. The use of technology, in isolation, would not provide the social and personal interactions that support active learning that could be provided in Lionel School.
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<b>BUILDING</b>	
<b>ISSUES:</b>	Information was requested on the condition category of the building subsequent to recent works.
<b>RESPONSE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross school, subsequent to the recent works, still remains a Condition C building.</li> </ul>	

<b>SCHOOL ROLL</b>	
<b>ISSUES:</b>	Some parents felt that the roll could increase in future years.
<b>RESPONSE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over an 8 year period the school roll in Cross has fallen by 57%. There are no indicators that the school roll is going to rise significantly.                      Effective learning and teaching is highly dependent on children's ability to interact with their peer group and teacher in relation to their learning. There is no evidence to suggest that very small composite classes do better than the maximum composite class size of 25 pupils</li> <li>• Some of the specific benefits of attending a school with a larger roll in the context of the Western Isles are:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased opportunities for pupils, including both curricular and extra curricular</li> <li>○ A larger pupil population will enable greater flexibility in grouping children for learning and teaching.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

- There will also be greater flexibility in the development of staff to meet the learning needs of pupils
- The pupils will have access to a wider range of activities than are available to them at present. They will be in larger groupings, alongside pupils of similar ages.
- In the event of Cross School amalgamating with Lionel School, class sizes would still be considered small and within the maximum composite class size of 25. Estimated groupings are as follows:
 

Cross School	Cross and Lionel Combined
English Medium P1-7: 14	English Medium P1-2: 15
	English Medium P3-5: 14
	English Medium P6-7: 16
	Gaelic Medium P1-4: 18
	Gaelic Medium P5-7: 18

- It is the view of the Education and Children's Services Department that quality of teaching is the single most important factor, not the class size. This view is supported in the recent 'Review of Class Size Control Mechanisms' as reported in August 2010 by the Working Group set up by the Scottish Government.
- Douglas Cairns, HMIe Assistant Chief Inspector advised the Scottish Government's Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee (2010) that "by and large, the spectrum of quality across small rural primary schools seems to be much the same as the national average." It can be seen from the above comments that there is no definitive advantage to be gained for pupils being educated in a smaller school.
- The Comhairle in recent years has seen a steady growth in its enrolment in Gaelic Medium Education. The Education and Children's Services Department's revised Gaelic Plan will set a target of at least 50% of P1 enrolments in Gaelic medium education over the next 3 years. This is considered realistic on the basis that many parents whose children are enrolled in Croileagan do not enrol their children in Gaelic Medium Education, where their local school only provides education through the medium of English. It is anticipated that some children from the Cross Pre-school provision, that would have enrolled in English Medium will in the future enrol in Gaelic Medium in Lionel School.

**HMIe REPORT**

- 7.1 In line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was provided by HM Inspectorate on the educational aspects of the proposed closure of Cross School and the transfer of pupils to Lionel School . This report is attached as Appendix D.
- 7.2 The Report also identifies issues for consideration by the Comhairle as follows.

**HMIe REPORT**

**ISSUE:** The Comhairle should assess the quality and availability of primary classroom accommodation at Lionel School, particularly while S1/2 secondary education continues there.

**RESPONSE**

- The Comhairle has assessed the sufficiency and suitability of primary classroom accommodation at Lionel School against the national standards, and is satisfied that there is capacity to accommodate Cross pupils, should the secondary department continue beyond 2012.
- Lionel School is suitable and has sufficient accommodation to support Curriculum for Excellence delivery at the primary stages.

**ISSUE:** The Comhairle should address parents' concerns with regard to the calculation of the cost of educating a child at Cross Primary School.  
In its final consultation report, the Comhairle should also ensure that it has fully considered and explored viable alternatives to closure, including those raised during the consultation.

**RESPONSE:**

- The Comhairle has recalculated and revised the cost per pupil for Cross School;
  - A number of alternatives to closure were considered.
1. **Upgrade Cross school to at least category B and make it DDA compliant**  
This option does not provide the means to increase the roll of the school, thereby providing educationally beneficial class groupings, which would enrich the learning experiences. Currently, the Comhairle does not have the financial provision to meet the ongoing demands in terms of repairs and maintenance and adaptation of premises to meet DDA requirements. In this regard, the Comhairle are unable to provide optimum learning and teaching environments for pupils.
  2. **'Maintaining the two sites under the one head teacher'**  
This is the status quo. The Comhairle is of the opinion that the status quo is not an option and for the reasons as set out in the Proposal Document.
  3. **'Make best use of the current assets by letting rooms within the school to CnES/community'**  
Letting rooms within school premises is very difficult. The security of children and their protection is paramount at all times. If the school premises were to be let to community groups it is hard to see how the security of the pupils could be maintained at acceptable levels.

**ISSUE:** The Comhairle should assess its transport arrangements, in particular the arrival and departure times for very young children at Lionel School. It should assess its arrangements to ensure the safety of children when they disembark from school transport at the end of the school day.

**RESPONSE:**

- The distances that pupils have to travel to and from school are clearly important in any assessment of appropriate transport provision. In addition, distances of themselves have to be set in the context of road conditions and the time that such travelling takes.
- When the bus contracts are agreed, sufficient capacity is written into all contracts to cover the pupil numbers who are entitled to school transport.
- All bus contractors meet rigorous contractual obligations. All bus drivers have appropriate SCRO checks and the service is delivered to a high standard.
- The walk home from school would not exceed the Comhairle policy for pupils being asked to walk to school (1 mile).
- In the majority of rural schools within the Outer Hebrides the catchment area is greater than the one mile distance.
- The extended travel time for pupils at Cross School would not exceed 15 minutes. All pupils would be travelling to school within the maximum travelling time of 30 minutes for primary pupils as stated within the Comhairle's Home to School Travel Policy.
- Pupils will be picked up and dropped off adjacent to their home. Parents are responsible for the safety of their child at pick up and drop off points. This is consistent with practice across the country. However, contractors could be asked to use hazard warning lights as an added safety measure when picking-up and dropping-off pupils.

**ISSUE:** The Comhairle should take full account of the composite response submitted by Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

**RESPONSE:**

- Bòrd na Gàidhlig commented on areas where the Education and Children's Services Department should do further work to promote Gàidhlig and, in particular, the uptake of Gaelic Medium Education.
- As a result, the Education and Children's Services Department has re-focused its bid proposal for Gaelic Specific Grant to work with Bòrd na Gàidhlig and partners to increase the primary enrolment numbers and maximise opportunities for Gaelic Medium Education. This will also include the possibility of later entry to Gaelic Medium Education and an emphasis on Gaelic Medium Education in all pre-school provision associated with local primary schools.

## SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH PUPILS

- 8.1 Dependent on the size of the school, consultation with pupils was carried out on the basis of a representative focus group and a cross section of stages or whole school. In each school the children and young people were asked to work in groups to identify:
- Benefits in bringing the schools together
  - Issues of concern
  - Areas they felt they might need help with
- 8.2 In this consultation it was the unanimous view of all pupils that they wanted to retain their own school.

### Summary of Consultation with Cross School Pupils

**Benefits:**

- More school events in which to participate;
- More, and different, teachers;
- More after school clubs;
- New friends;
- A wider circle of friends;
- Access to the swimming pool;
- More sporting activities;
- Some had friends and family members already at Lionel School;
- Lionel School was a safe place;
- There would also be benefits for the pupils in Lionel School;
- Pupils had enjoyed the joint work conducted with Lionel School before Easter;
- Pupils already knew the school and some of the staff.

**Issues of Concern**

- Increased travelling time;
- Problems might occur with making friends in a bigger school;
- Unfamiliarity with lay-out in bigger school;
- Unfamiliarity with staff in a bigger school;
- Staff in receiving school would not be so familiar with incoming pupils;
- Pupils would lack confidence in a bigger school and would miss the staff with whom they are familiar;
- The school has a long community history;
- The school is well resourced;
- A lot of money has been spent on the school and this would be wasted;
- The school has a good reputation;
- The school is an attractive place to learn;
- The playground is popular with pupils;
- Pupils would be negatively affected by having to move school when they did not want to.

**RESPONSE:**

These issues were discussed with the pupils, and where possible, answers were provided. Pupils were assured that any potential change in the arrangements for their education would be a gradual process which would engage them fully.

**Areas where we might help**

- Parents of incoming pupils to be shown round school prior to start date;
- An induction day for all pupils, not just P7 pupils;
- Pupil Council used to relay information;
- Pupils who have attended Lionel School to come in to school to talk to pupils;
- Teachers to give guided tours to incoming pupils;
- A 'Meet your teacher' day;
- School website to be used to display plan of school and other important information;
- A 'Buddy' system to be in place for all new pupils
- Older cousins, brothers and sisters to be used to pass on information about the new school.

**RESPONSE:**

Most of the suggestions provided by pupils were reasonable and an undertaking was given that should the proposal be accepted, there would be further discussion with the pupils in order to prepare a transition plan.

**Summary of Consultation with Lionel School Pupils as the receiving School****Benefits**

- 2 schools waste more energy
- Provides access to more friends
- Bigger playground
- More money could be raised by more parents
- Pupils could participate in more activities together
- Improved communication
- Have more friends
- Might educate us more

**Issues of Concern**

- Lionel might be too crowded
- Cross pupils may miss their own school
- Cross pupils wont know where things are
- Classes might be too small
- Where would the Cross teachers go?
- More travel for Cross pupils
- If there is more people there will be more chance of fighting
- If you close the primary there will be more chance of the secondary closing
- The dinner ladies will be over worked
- Bigger numbers make too much work for the teachers
- There will be more little and more work for DR
- There might be more bullying
- There might not be enough supplies
- The school would have to use more electricity
- If Cross comes there is more chance that our S1/2 would go
- Why do they need to come when they already have a good school?
- Why do they need to come when they like their own school

**RESPONSE:**

These issues were discussed with the pupils, and where possible, answers provided.

**Areas where we might help**

- Give the Cross pupils an induction week
- Arrange a party for the 2 schools
- Start some project work together now
- Arrange a visit and show them where everything is
- Arrange meetings with the pupils
- Have a week of meeting friend
- We could keep the secondary open
- Build an extension to the school
- Sell Cross school for a lot of money

**RESPONSE:**

Most of the suggestions provided by pupils were reasonable and an undertaking was given that, should the proposal be accepted, there would be further discussion with the pupils in order to prepare a transition plan.

**SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH STAFF**

- 9.1 All teaching and non teaching staff were invited to attend consultations regarding the Comhairle's proposals. The staff made the following observations which they wished to be recorded.

- Individual concerns were set out regarding redeployment, including the flexibility which working in the local area afforded to the non-teaching staff, and the possible transport difficulties which redeployment might cause.
- The condition of the school building was seen as good, with recent rewiring, insulation, fencing and tarring having been carried out. A wireless network had been installed. The closure of the school was seen as a waste of public money in the light of this.
- The building was currently well used and well resourced.
- The suggestion was made that consideration be given to situating a Gaelic Medium Unit in the school, serving the wider area.

**CONCLUSION**

- 10.1 Throughout this consultation the Comhairle has given special regard to the provision for rural schools within Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010,
- 10.2 In recognition of the impact of school closures on local communities, the Comhairle undertook, in addition to statutory consultation, community conversations in order to share with stakeholders the challenges for education together with its aspirations for a review of educational provision designed to provide 'Quality Education in Quality Buildings'.
- 10.3 The consultation process was robust and provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to identify key issues of concern. These issues have been fully considered and the Comhairle's response detailed in sections 6, 7, 8 and 9 above.
- 10.4 The Standards in Schools (Scotland) Act 2000 requires local authorities " to secure that the education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential". (Para 2.1)
- 10.5 HMIe visited Cross School to speak to parents, pupils and staff. They attended the public meeting on 1 June 2010 and had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document and all written responses.

- 10.6 In summary, the HMIE Report recognises the merits of the closure proposal.  
*“The proposal from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to close Cross Primary School and transfer children to Lionel School from August 2011, offers some educational benefits to the children directly affected by the proposal and more widely across Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. Children would have greater opportunity to learn and engage in social activities with others of similar age and stage. Children would be able to learn through interaction and collaboration to better achieve the outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence. They would have access to better and more modern facilities. Children would have improved access to Gaelic medium education. They would have access to a wider range of extra-curricular activities, although travel could restrict some children’s participation. Teachers would have more opportunity for professional dialogue and to share good practice.”*
- 10.7 The HMIE report provides evidence that the proposal to amalgamate Cross School with Lionel School will produce:  
Educational benefits:
- Can deliver Curriculum for Excellence effectively
  - Will assure more effective use of resources – financial, staffing and estate
  - Will ensure that pupils are educated in buildings fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
- 10.8 In its submission in response to the consultations, Bòrd na Gàidhlig commented on areas where the Education and Children’s Services Department should do further work to promote Gàidhlig and, in particular, the uptake of Gaelic Medium Education. However the Bòrd welcomed Comhairle nan Eilean Siar’s aspiration that GME should be available in all primary schools in the Western Isles through the implementation of the Schools Estate Strategy. In particular, Bòrd na Gàidhlig would not oppose the closure of Cross School.
- 10.9 The Director of Education and Children’s Services, on reviewing all of the submissions, the HMIE report, Bòrd na Gàidhlig’s response and the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix C) recommends that the best and most sustainable educational provision for the current catchment area of Cross Primary School would be provided at Lionel School and that the education provision should be discontinued at Cross Primary School from 29 June 2012.
- 10.10 The Director of Education and Children’s Services recommends that a transfer of pupils from Cross School to Lionel School will have educational benefits and that the learning opportunities and experience for pupils will be significantly widened. There will be :
- increased opportunities for pupils, both curricular and extra-curricular activities;
  - greater flexibility in grouping children for learning and teaching;
  - greater flexibility in the deployment of staff to meet learning needs;
  - a larger staff will offer a wider range of expertise resulting in increased opportunities for sharing effective practice, more collegiate support and a wider range of learning and teaching approaches;
  - more management support to promote school improvement.
- 10.11 Pupils and parents of Cross School would have access to a modern educational establishment, which is fully equipped and designed to meet the needs of pupils and fully deliver a Curriculum for Excellence. There is an opportunity for the pupils, staff and parents of both schools to benefit from working together to ensure that the very best quality of learning and teaching is available to all pupils, irrespective of their needs or abilities.
- 10.12 The proposal will result in pupils at Cross School attending a building that is modern and better designed for the delivery of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century curriculum.
- 10.13 The closure of Cross School will both improve efficiency of the school estate and enable investment in education and provide a better educational experience for pupils.
- 10.14 Should the proposal be approved the Director of Education and Children’s Services will work with parents and staff in Cross and Lionel Schools to develop a transition plan that will ensure an effective transition for pupils and staff to Lionel School.

## RECOMMENDATION

11.1 It is recommended that

- a) the Education provision at Cross Primary School be discontinued with effect from 30 June 2011;
- b) the pupils of Cross Primary School continue their education at Lionel School, from 18 August 2011; and
- c) the catchment area of Lionel School be extended to include the current catchment area of Cross Primary School.