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Review of Education Provision

Proposal to Revise the Catchment Boundary for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School Isle of Harris

CONSULTATION REPORT FEBRUARY 2015

Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne

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**CONSULTATION REPORT:
CATCHMENT BOUNDARY FOR LEVERHULME MEMORIAL SCHOOL AND
SIR E SCOTT SCHOOL, ISLE OF HARRIS**

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Review of Education Provision

CATCHMENT BOUNDARY FOR LEVERHULME MEMORIAL SCHOOL AND SIR E SCOTT SCHOOL, ISLE OF HARRIS

Consultation Report

Report by Director of Education and Children's Services

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that the catchment areas for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School be defined as indicated in the ordnance survey map which forms Appendix 1 to the Proposal Document with effect from August 2015.

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Comhairle, at its Meeting on 24 April 2014, 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 that the catchment areas for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School be defined as indicated in the ordnance survey maps which forms Appendix 1 to the Proposal Document with effect from August 2015, being a relevant proposal in terms of Paragraph 4(a) of Schedule 1 of the Act.
- 1.2 While there is no legal requirement for a school to have a defined catchment area, local authorities use the definition as an administrative tool so that children living within a catchment area are normally provided with a place at the school serving that area.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 24 April 2014 the Comhairle agreed that the catchment areas for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School be changed with effect from August 2014. This moved the previous boundary on the west coast on Harris from the Northton village road end on the A859 to just before the village of Seilebost on the A859 which would effectively move the villages of Scarista, Borve and Horgabost into the Leverburgh School catchment area.
- 1.4 Following this consultation, the Comhairle agreed to consult further on the proposal to include the villages of Lickisto, Manish and Geocrab in the Sir E Scott catchment area and not to charge for school transport from these villages to Sir E Scott School pending the outcome of the consultation.
- 1.5 This document relates to a proposal that the catchment areas for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School be defined as indicated in the ordnance survey map which forms Appendix 1 to the Proposal Document with effect from August 2015.

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.1 The current requirements for consultation are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.
 - A proposal document was issued as a result of a decision of 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 20 November 2014 and the consultation ran thereafter for a period of 34 school days until 23 January 2015.
- Public meetings were held on 16 December 2014.
- Pupils and staff were also consulted on 5 February 2015.
- Education Scotland involvement included being sent a copy of the proposal document, their visiting the affected schools and meeting with parents, pupils and staff. They also received a copy of all written representations. Education Scotland 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 requirements, 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 Consultation meetings were held as follows:
- Public meetings at Sir E Scott School and Leverhulme Memorial School, both on 16 December 2014
 - Meetings with staff and pupils at Sir E Scott School and Leverhulme Memorial School on 5 February 2015.

OMISSIONS AND INACCURACIES

- 4.1 There were no inaccuracies or omissions identified in the Proposal Document.

REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 There were no written representations received during the consultation period.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS AND COMHAIRLE RESPONSES

- 6.1 This section details the relevant points raised at public meetings. A full transcript of the public meeting is included as Appendix B.
- 6.2 The responses to the issues raised are detailed below.

EAST COAST BOUNDARY
<p>ISSUE: The villages of Manish, Geocrab and Lickisto were part of the Leverhulme School Catchment area. The previous consultation highlighted parent demand for these villages to be included in the Sir E Scott School catchment area.</p>
<p>RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Comhairle is sympathetic to the proposal on the basis that it is a shorter distance, a better road and it is consistent with historical practice.

EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMI) 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 proposal to revise the catchment boundary for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School. This report is attached as Appendix D. The Report also identifies issues for consideration by the Comhairle as follows.

EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMI) REPORT	
ISSUE:	Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is proposing to revise the catchment areas for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School by including the villages of Lickisto, Manish and Geocrab in the catchment area of Sir E Scott School from August 2015. The proposal is of clear educational benefit. In taking forward the proposal, the council needs to clarify whether the Flodabay area to the south of Manish is included within the amended catchment area for Sir E Scott School. The villages of Lickisto, Geocrab and Manish are closer to Sir E Scott School than they are to Leverhulme Memorial School. The route from these villages to Sir E Scott School also involves less travel on narrow single track roads. The proposal addresses a historical anomaly where the catchment areas within which some children and young people live results in them having to travel to school a significant distance from their home when there is a closer school available. Parents from the villages of Lickisto, Manish and Geocrab who wish their children to attend Sir E Scott School currently make placing requests to the council and then either transport their children to the school or meet the costs of public transport themselves. If implemented, the proposal will address this anomaly. It will reduce the travel time to school for the children directly affected by the boundary change. It will also ensure the children have free transport to school and travel to school on a route that involves less travel on narrow single track roads. All parents, staff and children who met with HM Inspectors fully supported the proposal.
RESPONSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Flodabay area south of Manish should be included within the Sir E Scott Catchment area. • From the time of the closure of Manish School it has been custom and practice for children from the Manish/Flodabay to attend Sir E Scott School. The consultation confirmed the community support for continuation of this practice.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH PUPILS

- 8.1 Interviews were held with pupils attending Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School on 5 February 2015.
- 8.2 The children made the following comments in relation to the proposal to revise the catchment boundary for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School.

Leverhulme Memorial School

- All children consulted were supportive of the proposal.
- All children consulted recognised that the children from these communities always attended Sir E Scott School and that the distance was shorter and the roads were better.
- All the children consulted felt that children from these villages had stronger friendship groups linked to Sir E Scott School.

Sir E Scott School

- All children consulted were supportive of the proposal.
- All children consulted recognised that the children from these communities always attended Sir E Scott School and that the distance was shorter and the roads were better.
- All the children consulted felt that children from these villages had stronger friendship groups linked to Sir E Scott School.

- 8.3 All pupils participated in the previous consultation and were well aware of the issues and therefore effectively engaged in the discussion.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH STAFF

- 9.1 Teaching and non-teaching staff were invited to attend consultations regarding the Comhairle's proposals. The interviews were held in Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School on 5 February 2015. Staff were asked for their views and they made the following comments.

Leverhulme Memorial School

- All staff agreed with the proposal on the basis of history, distance and road conditions.

Sir E Scott School

- All staff present with the proposal on the basis of history, distance and road conditions.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- 10.1 There are no financial consequences associated with the proposal.

CONCLUSION

- 11.1 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.
- 11.2 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc 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". (Section 2(1))
- 11.3 Education Scotland HMI officers visited Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School to speak to parents, pupils and staff. They also had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document and all written responses.
- 11.4 In summary, the Education Scotland (HMI) Report recognises that children in both schools were aware of the proposals with pupils, parents and staff all requesting that Geocrab and Manish be included within the Sir E Scott School catchment area. They noted that both Headteachers and staff interviewed supported the proposal to review the catchment area with staff generally not having strong views about the proposals as the changes affected very low numbers of children. Concern was expressed about the occupancy in Sir E Scott School. However, there is no suggestion that the school will not be able to accommodate all pupils from the proposed catchment areas. The Comhairle, as indicated by Education Scotland, has reassured parents in Leverhulme Memorial School that the proposed changes will not mean the closure of their school and have shared with the Headteacher and parents information in relation to investment and work plan as part of the Capital Investment Programme. Education Scotland recognise that the proposal is of overall educational benefit and that both schools are able to provide a similar range of activities, including Gaelic Medium Education.
- 11.5 The Director of Education and Children's Services, on reviewing all of the submissions, the Education Scotland report and the Equality Impact Assessment concludes that, in order to reflect parental choices and reduce travelling time for some pupils, the catchment areas for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School be defined as indicated in the Ordnance Survey map which forms Appendix 1 to the Proposal Document with effect from August 2015. This would entail moving the boundary to include the villages of Lickisto, Manish and Geocrab in the Sir E Scott catchment area reflecting the historic enrolment pattern for the school.

RECOMMENDATION

- 12.1 It is recommended that the catchment areas for Leverhulme Memorial School and Sir E Scott School be defined as indicated in the Ordnance Survey map which forms Appendix 1 to the Proposal Document with effect from August 2015. This would entail moving the boundary to include the villages of Lickisto, Manish and Geocrab in the Sir E Scott catchment area reflecting the historic enrolment pattern for the school.

RECOMMENDED CATCHMENT AREA

Leverhulme Memorial	Sir E Scott		
Ardvey	Aline	Flodabay	Meavaig North
Borrisdale	Amhuinnsuidhe	Geocrab	Meavaig South
Borsam	Ardhasaig	Govig	Plockropool
Borve	Ardvey Stockinish	Grosebay	Rhenigidale
Finsbay	Ardvourlie	Horsacleite	Scadabay
Horgabost	Bedersaig	Hushinish	Scaladale
Leverburgh	Bowglas	Isle of Scalpay	Seilebost
Lingerbay	Bunavoneadar	Kendibig	Stockinish
Northton	Carrageich	Kyles Scalpay	Tarbert
Quidinish	Cliasmol	Leacklee	Urgha
Rodel	Cluer	Lickisto	
Scarista	Collam	Luskentyre	
Strond	Diracleit	Maaruig	
	Drinishader	Manish	