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Review of Education Provision

**Proposal to Revise the
Catchment Boundary for
Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar
Isle of Lewis**

CONSULTATION REPORT
FEBRUARY 2014

Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne

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**CONSULTATION REPORT:
CATCHMENT BOUNDARY FOR LIONEL SCHOOL AND SGOIL AN TAOBH SIAR,
ISLE OF LEWIS**

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Review of Education Provision

CATCHMENT BOUNDARY FOR LIONEL SCHOOL AND SGOIL AN TAOBH SIAR, ISLE OF LEWIS

Consultation Report

Report by Director of Education and Children's Services

PROPOSAL:

It is proposed that the catchment areas for Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar be defined as indicated in the ordnance survey map which forms Appendix 1 to the Proposal Document with effect from August 2014.

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Comhairle, at its Meeting on 12 September 2013, 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 Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar be defined as indicated in the ordnance survey map which forms Appendix 1 to the Proposal Document with effect from August 2014 as required by the Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010.
- 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 Subsequent to the School Estate Review, resulting in the closure of 8 primary schools it was considered appropriate to review catchment areas to ensure that children and young people have access to the school closest to their home address. Currently a number of anomalies exist whereby children and young people's catchment areas result in them travelling to schools a significant distance from their home when there is a closer school available. In these circumstances, in order for parents to enrol their children in the school closest to their home, they have to submit a placing request and thereby incur additional transport costs.
- 1.4 This document relates to a proposal that the catchment areas for Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar be defined as indicated in the ordnance survey maps which forms Appendix 1 to the Proposal Document with effect from August 2014.

THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 2.1 The current requirements for consulting are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
 - 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 24 October 2013 and the consultation ran thereafter for a period of 32 school days until 11 December 2013.
 - Public meetings were held on 14 November 2013.
 - Pupils and staff were also consulted separately.

- 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 Consultations meetings were held as follows:
- Public meetings at Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar on 14 November 2013
 - Meetings with staff at Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar.

OMISSIONS AND INACCURACIES

4.1 No omissions or inaccuracies were identified in this process.

REPRESENTATIONS

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

Representations from:	Number
• Lionel School Parent Council	1
• Parent	1
TOTAL:	2

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.

THE PROPOSED BOUNDARY WOULD BE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH GALSON
<p>ISSUE: The creation of a boundary between North and South Galson would divide the community.</p> <p>RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently children from Galson attending Lionel and others attending Sgoil an Taobh Siar. This has not seemed to divide the community. • The movement of the catchment area boundary would address the anomaly of families travelling to a school outwith their catchment area, thereby potentially reducing travel costs for affected families.

THE CATCHMENT AREA FOR LIONEL S1/S2 WOULD BE AFFECTED

ISSUE: The proposed change to the boundary would threaten the future of S1 and S2 at Lionel School.

RESPONSE:

- The consultation is in regard to primary school catchment areas only.
- The current arrangements for secondary would not be affected. Indeed, the catchment area of Lionel School would be increased, if the proposal were agreed, because North Galson would become part of the catchment area for Lionel School.

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 Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar. This report is attached as Appendix D. The Report also identifies issues for consideration by the Comhairle as follows.

EDUCATION SCOTLAND (HMI) REPORT

ISSUE: In taking forward its proposals, the council needs to consider fully the respective merits of the suggested boundary changes on the local communities.

RESPONSE

- The proposal has been made in an effort to address the current anomalies regarding current primary school attendance. Consultation has identified community concern regarding the proposal and the view, from a number of members of the community, that the proposal may be divisive and create division in the community of Galson.
- The Director of Education and Children’s Services has considered the views of the Parent Council of Lionel School and individuals who participated in the consultation. It is agreed that a potential division in the community should be avoided and, although it is questionable whether such divisions would occur, the Director would not wish to recommend boundary changes which could lead to any form of community disagreement.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH PUPILS

- 8.1 Interviews were held with pupils attending Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar on 14 November 2013.
- 8.2 The children made the following comments in relation to the proposal to revise the catchment boundary for Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar.

Lionel School

- The proposal was explained and the relocation of the catchment boundary indicated using maps printed on A3.
- The pupils suggested that the proposal would help families who might not have much money, but want to go to Lionel School. The pupils suggested that the boundary line moved further south to Borve.

Sgoil an Taobh Siar

- All pupils were able to find the own homes on the maps. They reported that they did know of any current or future pupils that could be adversely affected by the proposed boundary change.
- All pupils agreed that the proposals seemed fair. They approved of the suggestion in the proposal that pupils that were affected by the proposal could benefit from free transport.

- 8.3 These issues were discussed with the pupils and, where possible, age-appropriate answers provided.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH STAFF

- 9.1 Teaching and non-teaching staff were invited to attend consultations regarding the Comhairle's proposals. The meetings were held on 14 November 2013. Staff were asked for their views and they made the following comments.

Lionel School

- The majority of staff agreed that the proposal was a positive move, but had concerns regarding the positioning of the proposed boundary. They believed that the proposals would allow for more families to access free transport. The support staff suggested that the boundary line should be moved south of Galson and north of Melbost.
- Teaching staff agreed this proposal was a good idea in principle. The teaching staff suggested that the boundary line should be moved south of Galson and north of Melbost.

Sgoil an Taobh Siar

- Both support staff and teaching staff had received the proposal document and agreed that there would be no children currently in nursery or school that would be affected. They were not aware of any future pupils who would be affected. They stated that the pupils currently living in North Galson attended Lionel already. They had no further comments to make on the proposal document and felt that it was a fair resolution to the need for review following the school estate review.

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 (i))
- 11.3 Education Scotland HMI officers visited Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar 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 the benefits of the proposal and stated that consultation was necessary following the school rationalisation process over recent years. The report states that the review of school catchment areas has overall educational benefit (Section 3.1). However, the report also identifies the concern of certain parents and children that going to different schools may, in the long term, have a detrimental impact on friendships (Section 3.3). 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 (Appendix C) recommends that there should be no change to the current school catchment areas of Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar.

RECOMMENDATION

- 12.1 It is recommended that there should be no change to the catchment areas of Lionel School and Sgoil an Taobh Siar and that the catchment areas boundary remain as noted below.

CATCHMENT AREA

SCHOOL	CATCHMENT AREA
Lionel	Adabrock, Butt of Lewis, Cross, Cross Skigersta, Dell, Eorodale, Eorpie, Fivepenny, Galson, Habost, Knockaird, Lionel, Port of Ness, Skigersta, Swainbost.
Sgoil an Taobh Siar	Ballantrushal, Barvas, Borve, Brue, Melbost Borve, Shader,