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Review of Education Provision
at
CASTLEBAY SCHOOL NURSERY
Isle of Barra

CONSULTATION REPORT
May 2012

Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR
Education and Children’s Services Department

Review of Education Provision
CONSULTATION REPORT FOR CASTLEBAY SCHOOL NURSERY
Isle of Barra

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Review of Education Provision at Castlebay School Nursery, Isle of Barra Consultation Report

Report by Director of Education and Children's Services

CONSIDER THE PROPOSAL THAT:

- **Accommodation within Castlebay School's Primary Department be made available to house the Gaelic and English Nursery rooms.**
- **The Nursery remains within the Children's Centre building until accommodation within the school has been inspected and approved by relevant bodies.**

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Comhairle, at its meeting on the 15 of December 2011, 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 moving of pre-school provision from the children's centre into Castlebay Primary Department as required by the schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 1.2 Castlebay 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 proposal,
 - the likely effect on the local community in consequence of the proposal (if implemented), with reference in particular to the sustainability of the community,

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 12th of January 2012, initially it was proposed that the consultation run for 30 school days up until the 29th of February 2012. On request by the Castlebay Community School Parent Council the consultation period was extended to the 14th of March 2012. The consultation period therefore ran for a period of 44 school days.
 - A public meeting was held on Wednesday 1st of February 2012.
 - Pupils and staff were also consulted separately.
 - HMle involvement included being sent a copy of the proposal document and their visiting the affected school and nursery 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. 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 Castlebay Community School on the 1st of February.
 - A meeting with staff was held separately on the same day.
 - A meeting with pupils was held separately on the same day.

OMISSIONS AND INACCURACIES

- 4.1 Within the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 there is guidance on how errors or omissions should be addressed. With regard to the Castlebay School Nursery Proposal Document a few minor errors were identified and listed at the public meeting held on the 1 February 2012. The Note of this meeting is available in Appendix B. These errors were not deemed to be material. However, the proposal document was amended and was made available on the internet. No further action was necessary in relation to this matter.

REPRESENTATIONS

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

Representations from:	Number
• Community Petition with 283 signatures	
• Individual written representations	24
• Eoilgarry Parent Council (1 Joint submission with Eoilgarry Parent Council and Barra Children's Centre)	2
• Castlebay Community School Parent Council (1 Joint submission with Eoilgarry Parent Council and Barra Children's Centre)	14
• Voluntary Action Barra	1
• Barra Children's Centre (1 Joint submission with Eoilgarry Parent Council and Barra Children's Centre)	3
• Campbell Stewart and MacLennan & Co Accountants	1
• Barra Church of Scotland	2
• Rhoda Grant, MSP	1
• Jamie McGregor, MSP	1
• Alasdair Allan, MP	1
• Angus MacNeil, MP	1
TOTAL:	51

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.

ACCOMODATION
<p>ISSUE: The majority of responses were in relation to the proposed new nursery accommodation within Castlebay Community School's Primary Department. There was a concern that the building was inferior to the current pre-school accommodation and that there would be a negative impact on existing primary school pupils. Accommodation issues focussed predominately on the outdoor play area, location of the toilets, snack and cooking facilities within the nursery rooms, lack of flexibility with accommodation should the school roll increase, lack of accommodation for children with ASN and compliance with Health and Safety and DDA</p>
<p>RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery children will have a new fenced off nursery garden. All children will have access to the nursery garden and the tarmac and grass areas of the playground. The session will be timetabled to ensure that the nursery children are not in the main playground during the 15 minute school break. The Playground will be secured.

- In light of parents' concerns regarding the location of the toilets, the nursery layout has been reviewed. By swapping the existing GP room (proposed new nursery room) with the infants classroom, nursery children will have closer access to the infant toilets. In addition, the remaining nursery room will have a toilet and changing facility off the playroom. This will reduce the size of the playroom for the English Nursery. However there will still be adequate space to meet the demand for English nursery places. Hand washing facilities will be available within the playroom and within the toilets.
- In all Comhairle nurseries, nursery children prepare low risk foods on tables within the nursery playroom. When children make food that requires cooking, food can be cooked within a small worktop oven or hob, in a microwave or on a cooker in another part of the school. Therefore, the opportunities to cook and prepare snack will not be affected by this proposal. Snack preparation areas are subject to checks from environmental health and the Education and Children's Department catering section to ensure that they meet food hygiene standards and all health and safety requirements.
- There is no anticipated disadvantage to primary pupils. Primary children currently access their classrooms on wet days. Reading books will be available from within the classrooms and main library.
- In addition to ASN provision within the secondary departments, a small ASN consultation room will be available in the primary department. There will be access to the spare teaching space and nursery rooms when they are vacant. It is best practice to ensure that most children with ASN have their needs met within mainstream classrooms rather than extracting them.
- Currently the nursery operates five mornings a week and two afternoons. It is not anticipated that parents dropping off and picking up their children for these sessions would cause disruption to the classrooms. Parents will "buzz" their child's playroom for access and take their child directly to their playroom. This is normal practice and has not caused disruption in any other school with a similar type of access arrangement.
- There will be one additional teaching space available for flexible use. In addition, one nursery classroom will be available for use five afternoons a week and the remaining nursery classroom will be available for access 3 afternoons a week.
- There will continue to be some flexibility of use of classrooms within the school. The proposal allows for one extra teaching room that can be used flexibly. In addition, the Gaelic nursery room can accommodate up to 29 children aged 3 years to 5 years should the demand for Gaelic places increase.
- There is a requirement that all nursery accommodation will meet all health and safety requirements. Building works will therefore comply with all necessary regulations including Fire and the Disability Discrimination Act. An asbestos management survey of the school has been completed. This survey indicates that there are no areas of the school likely to contain asbestos. In addition, as required by the relevant HSC Guidance, a refurbishment/demolition survey will be carried out before any work takes place.

Access, Parking and road safety

ISSUE: Several parents indicated that parking would be problematic and that there were safety concerns with regard to road crossings, secure access to the school, and the ramp entrance to the infant department and the entrance within the secondary school.

RESPONSE:

- The current plans do not include the amendment or relocation of the parking for the pre-school. It is envisaged that parents will continue to use the existing public car park and walk to the school. This is an acceptable distance to walk and is not further than is expected of other nursery parents. The proposal is based on the assumption that parents will accompany children on any crossing of the road at established crossing points. Traffic control measures are also in place to reduce traffic speed at this location.
- A secure door entry system will be in place.
- The ramp access adjacent to the proposed additional new entrance will be designed and installed in accordance with all current regulations covering disabled access. The approach to the side of the primary school will be graded, guarded and signed to provide a safe area in accordance with current access regulations.
- The main entrance to the nursery will be through the old infant entrance at the Primary Department. Parents will not be expected to use the secondary department entrance. It is not envisaged that nursery children will use the staircase within the school building. However, this will be considered within the final design. If this area has to be considered, appropriate safety precautions will be taken. Where children do leave the building to access other parts of the school or facilities within the community, risk assessments will be completed and control measures in place to ensure their safety.

Impact on Community
ISSUES: A few parents were concerned that Community groups such as the parent and toddler group may suffer from withdrawal of Comhairle support and that the lack of income from rent will put Barra Children's Centre in a difficult financial situation.
RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Comhairle does not financially support the Toddler Group and it is not anticipated that the relocation of the nursery will have an adverse affect on the Toddler Group. It is anticipated that the Toddler Group would continue to operate from Barra Children's centre. • The Comhairle has made a commitment to support the community identify alternative uses for the building. • The Children's Centre has secured funding for a Development Officer. It is anticipated that this officer would work with the Comhairle's Community Development Officer to find alternative uses for the building. • The Comhairle currently have a rental agreement for the two nursery playrooms for 52 weeks of the year but only require use of the building for 39 weeks of the year. In addition, the rooms are used in the mornings with only two afternoon sessions being used. The relocation of the nursery may offer the community more flexibility with the use of this building.

Finance
ISSUES: There was concern that the cost associated with upgrading the school to accommodate the nursery would not be the best use of money, that the works may be temporary (due to the proposed whole school works) and that remaining within Barra Children's Centre would be the most economical option until the whole school works are completed.
RESPONSE:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no proposal to replace the existing primary. It is hoped that all of the work will service the improvement work. The refurbishment is designed to make the best use of the school's facilities. • Education and Children's Services staff believe that the proposal document meets best value in that it utilises capacity within Castlebay School in refurbished provision that is already owned by the Comhairle. In addition, all utilities and service charges are already being met within Castlebay School. • With the amendments to the plans, the detailed cost of adapting the school to accommodate the nursery will be in the region of £70,000. The cost of remaining within Barra Pre-school will cost the Comhairle £14,490 per year on rent, heating lighting and cleaning. This cost would therefore be recouped within 5 years. • The building committee could expand Barra Children's Centre by applying for funding. However, as the service provided from the building is a statutory service of the Local Authority it is unlikely that the building committee could access the same funding sources as they would if the service provided was a voluntary service. • The Comhairle's rental agreement is determined by the district valuer and any increase in provision may have an additional cost in rent. In addition, if the building committee were to increase the size of the building to increase the number of children they could accommodate, they would need to review the current toilet provision and include a nappy changing area.

Educational Advantages
ISSUES: Some parents were not convinced of the educational advantages put forward by Comhairle Officials. There was also some confusion about the definition of transitional arrangements and a seamless Early Level education.
RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is much easier for staff to share resources, time and space within an integrated setting. To engage with the infant department under the current arrangements, children have to be dressed in outdoor clothes, walk to the building crossing the main road and take off outdoor clothes. In an integrated service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Groups of children can go with one member of staff into the infant class to work with children in the infant class on projects. ○ One member of staff can remain working in the playroom with a small group of children as they will be within easy access of other teaching staff. ○ Children from the infant class can go through to the nursery in groups to work with the nursery children on tasks. ○ There is an opportunity for nursery staff to work with the teachers in the classroom and for classroom auxiliaries, assistants and teachers to work with nursery staff in the playroom.

- As the day to day management responsibility will be devolved to the primary depute head teacher, there will be greater access to and support from the management of the school.
- Transition is the process where you assist a child prepare from the move from pre-school to primary. This process is currently in place between the nursery and the primary department at Castlebay Community School and Eoligarry Primary school. However, the educational benefits highlighted result from a seamless early level where children have a continuous interaction between each other for their activities and learning. This will be achieved by small groups of children moving between the nursery and the classroom and should not have a detrimental effect on the capacity of the classroom. Transition arrangements in place between the nursery and Eoligarry School would remain in place regardless of the location of the nursery.

Community proposals for meeting the demand for Gaelic places

ISSUES: Within their submission Barra Children's Centre, Castlebay Community school and Eoligarry Parent Council asked that the Comhairle consider the following alternatives to allow for the increase in demand for Gaelic places:

Option One: Change the pattern of delivery of statutory pre-school provision in line with the fluctuating demand for the service (split children, ante pre-school in the afternoons and separate morning and afternoon)

Response

Due to the need to increase staffing, this option would have a significant increased running cost and would not meet the needs of all parents and children for the following reasons.

- Most parents request a morning place.
- The Comhairle avoids segregation by age within a nursery setting. Service delivery is based on the stage of the child and not their age. In addition, in most rural areas there are insufficient numbers to consider this option and it may cause a precedent for other areas.
- There would be no extended care for working parents.
- Parents with two children in different age groups would not be able to access the service for their children at the same time.
- As places would be allocated on a first come first serve basis, children who are not eligible for pre-school funding until later in the academic year would be disadvantaged. It is likely that afternoon sessions would enrol mostly younger children thus causing segregation by age.

Option Two: Make modifications to the nursery floor plan within the Barra Children's Centre to increase the space available for the Gaelic classroom.

Response

- There was insufficient detail to provide an appropriate response to this issue. However, as the Comhairle's rental agreement is determined by the district valuer any increase in floor space may have an additional cost in rent.

Option Three: Extend the Children's Centre with a sunroom to provide additional space for both nursery rooms and bring additional benefit to the nursery learning environment.

Response

- This option does not provide an optimum Education Provision as outlined in the Authorities proposal. Funding would need to be secured to build the sun room and it is likely that there would be an increased rental cost to the Comhairle.

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 relocation of Castlebay Nursery. This report is attached as Appendix D

7.2 The Report also identifies issues for consideration by the Comhairle as follows.

HMIe REPORT
<p>ISSUE: Issues relating to the security of the building which were raised by HM Inspectors in the inspection report of January 2008 have not yet been addressed. Whilst the Primary Department is accessible it does not meet the statutory requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2006.</p> <p>RESPONSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently plans for security works to be undertaken. These works will encompass the whole of Castlebay School and will accommodate the requirements of the pre-school area. There are some parts of the school that are not DDA compliant. However, the Primary Department is more compliant than the secondary department. Some of the main items highlighted in the areas of the DDA report regarding the Primary Department have been addressed and will be further improved by the proposed works to integrate the pre-school provision.
<p>ISSUE: The proposed accommodation in the primary department is used after school for activities that include music and dance tuition. If the proposal were to be taken forward it would be important for alternative accommodation to be allocated for these users of the service.</p> <p>RESPONSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative accommodation has been identified within the Secondary Department for these activities.
<p>ISSUE: The Comhairle needs to consider the viable alternatives outlined within the proposal document more fully including the possibility of operating morning and afternoon sessions.</p> <p>RESPONSE:</p> <p>All alternative options were considered in detail. It would not be possible to operate both morning and afternoon sessions for the reasons outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nursery ran at a deficit of £980 per head in the financial year 10/11. This proposal would have an additional staffing cost of two members of staff, two afternoons a week. • Consideration was taken of the strong demand for Gaelic places and the fact that the afternoon sessions would be integrated with children attending all day care in English. Afternoon sessions would therefore be bilingual rather than full Gaelic immersion. • Most parents required a morning place to fit in with their working patterns. This option would therefore not suit some working parents. • As places would be allocated on a first come first serve basis, children who are not eligible for pre-school funding until later in the academic year would be disadvantaged. It is likely that the afternoon session would enrol mostly younger children thus causing segregation by age which the Comhairle tries to avoid within early education.
<p>ISSUE: The current proposal does not provide sufficient clarity about how the quality of the environment will be better for children. In its final report the Comhairle needs to ensure that these strong concerns are addressed. The Comhairle needs to consult parents and staff about the design of plans for the proposed accommodation of the nursery.</p> <p>RESPONSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All issues identified by parents regarding the proposed accommodation have been addressed within the body of this report. • One staff member has visited a minimum of four similar Comhairle nurseries, one in Uist and three on Lewis. This member of staff will now have the opportunity to feedback this information to colleagues. • Detailed plans will be produced and provided to parents and staff. Photographs of other similar Comhairle nurseries will also be provided.

ISSUE: The proposals are designed to address current issues of accommodation. However, the Comhairle plan to review and update the accommodation in Castlebay Community School by 2015. The proposal needs to be considered strategically within that context, taking into account roll projections in the nursery and in the primary department.

RESPONSE:

- The future development of the school will not be affected by the proposal to add the pre-school. The current proposal enhances the facilities. Future development through the School Estate Management Plan and the Capital Programme will further enhance the campus.
- School rolls form part of the brief and figures used for design purposes are based on current rolls with a 30% safety net for increased rolls. Although the school rolls will increase in the next few years they are not projected to rise to a point where an extra classroom is required.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH PUPILS

8.1 Consultation with pupils was carried out in discussion with the pupil council. Children and young people were asked to work in two groups (Primary and Secondary pupils) to identify:

- Advantages of incorporating the nursery with the school.
- Disadvantages of incorporating the nursery with the school.
- Areas that could be improved.

8.2 In this consultation pupils were positive about the integration of the nursery with the school.

Summary of Consultation with Castlebay Community School Pupils

Advantages:

Primary

- Nice for P1s to see their old friends.
- Feel better about settling in.
- Children won't be shy
- Nice for older brothers and sisters to see younger brothers and sisters.
- Bigger playground for pre-schoolers
- Primaries would like to play with pre-school toys.

Secondary

- More space (for the nursery children)
- Better facilities
- Secure environment
- P1's to interact with younger pupils
- More people in to pre-school
- Free up area (in children's centre)
- Don't have to walk up for swimming and PE
- Could possibly get the bus (from home)
- Transition is easier
- Get to use the smartboard (nursery children)
- Pressure off parents.

Disadvantages

Primary

- Same playtime: pre-schoolers might get hurt.
- Nursery use separate entrance and exit.
- The bike stand is unused: could be used for parking.
- Falling on the gravel (nursery children) could get hurt.
- Grassy garden not safe.
- Prefer a wooden fence for garden because people climb the wire fence
- Move the toys from the classroom to the nursery room (this was put forward as a suggestion rather than an advantage or disadvantage).
- Toilets are a bit far away.
- Sometimes use the room (GP room) for Golden Time.

Secondary

- Money (building costs)
- Confusion (in community in relation to proposal)
- Scared (pre-schoolers may be scared in school setting)
- Cross road to get to school (parents)

Questions

- Where would computers and topic boxes go?
- How would the printers work (with class in a box lap tops)?
- Why not use senior toilets?
- Clubs, where would they go.

AREAS THAT COULD BE IMPROVED/SUGGESTIONS

- Make surroundings better
- (for nursery children to) Take a few visits first
- Could stay the whole day

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION WITH STAFF

- 9.1 All teaching and non teaching staff were invited to attend a consultation meeting regarding the Comhairle’s proposals. The advantages and disadvantages associated with the proposal were discussed.

Advantages:

- Interaction between the pre-school children and infant stages.
- Benefits for learning and teaching.
- Close proximity to Primary Department
- Seamless early level
- Closer relationship with nursery staff
- Parents would no longer need to walk through a public area to access their statutory pre-school place.
- There would be more opportunity to identify children with ASN at an earlier stage.

Disadvantages:

- Concern that the facilities including the garden space would not be as good.
- Concern re the storage of resources
- Concern if ASN input was only in secondary
- Concern that parents would interrupt teaching
- That the school setting would be more formal and more restrictive for parents and nursery children.
- There would be challenges within the school re accommodation and storage.
- Parking may be a problem
- Buggies may be a problem

Questions and Answers

- Q - Would noise be a problem? A - Due to the location of the nurseries this was not thought to be an issue.
- Q - What would happen if the IT hub in the Depute HT Office? A – This would be moved.
- Q – What about Health and Safety, secure area and fire meeting point? A - This would be reviewed prior to final design. Final design would be dependant on feedback.
- Q – What would happen to resources in room four? A - Alternative storage would be found.
- Q – What about the flexibility of the morning drop off? A - Opening times would remain as they are.
- Q – Would nursery children have a different entrance? A - Yes.

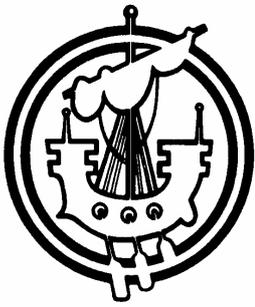
CONCLUSION

- 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 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 – 9 above.
- 10.3 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) The Director of Education and Children's Services is of the opinion that, with a seamless early level curriculum, this proposal provides an enhanced educational opportunity for nursery and primary children.
- 10.4 HMle visited Castlebay School to speak to parents, pupils and staff and had the opportunity to review in detail the proposal document and all written responses.
- 10.5 In summary, the HMle Report recognised the merits of the proposal to relocate the nursery. “The Comhairle's proposal sets out the educational benefits of relocating the nursery class within the primary department which will meet the demands for nursery places on both Gaelic and English medium. There would be potential for strengthening the working arrangements between staff through building more effectively upon children's prior learning and for sharing expertise and resources. There would be greater scope to develop approaches to self evaluation.”
- 10.6 The HMle report provides evidence that the proposal to move the pre-school provision from the Community Centre to the School will provide the following benefits:
- Strengthen the current working arrangements to build upon children's prior learning at the early level.
 - Provide more opportunities for staff to share practice, expertise and plan the curriculum together at the early level.
 - Provide more flexibility of accommodation for primary children.
 - Provide more opportunity for the management of the school to monitor and evaluate the quality of education in the nursery.
 - There would be better scope for the nursery staff to work with primary staff in self-evaluation across the nursery class and primary school.
- 10.7 The Director of Education and Children's Services, on reviewing all of the submissions, the HMle report and the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix C) recommends that the best and most sustainable pre-school educational provision for the Isle of Barra would be for the nursery to be relocated within the school building.
- 10.8 The Director of Education and Children's Services recommends that accommodation within Castlebay School's Primary Department be made available to house the Gaelic and English Nursery rooms. This will have educational benefits and the learning opportunities and experience for pupils will be significantly widened. There will be:
- Greater opportunity for a seamless Early Level Education for nursery for children and children in Primary One.
 - Greater flexibility in grouping children for learning and teaching;
 - Greater flexibility with the availability of resources for all children across the Early Level.
 - 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.
- 10.9 Pupils and parents of Castlebay Nursery would have access to a refurbished educational establishment, which is fully equipped and designed to meet the needs of children and fully deliver a Curriculum for Excellence.
- 10.10 The relocation of the nursery will both improve efficiency of the school estate and enable investment in education.

- 10.11 Should the proposal be approved the Director of Education and Children's Services will work with parents and staff in to ensure an effective transition for children and staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 It is recommended that -
- a) Accommodation within Castlebay School's Primary Department is made available to house the Gaelic and English Nursery rooms.
 - b) The Nursery remains within the Children's Centre building until accommodation within the school has been inspected and approved by the relevant bodies.



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Education Provision
PROPOSAL DOCUMENT – JANUARY 2012

Review of Education Provision

CASTLEBAY SCHOOL NURSERY
Isle of Barra

Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

Education and Children's Services Department

Review of Education Provision – January 2012

PROPOSAL DOCUMENT FOR CASTLEBAY SCHOOL NURSERY Isle of Barra

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Review of Education Provision: January 2012 Castlebay School Nursery, Isle of Barra

Report by the Director of Education and Children's Services

PROPOSAL

It is proposed that:

- accommodation within Castlebay School's Primary Department be made available to house the Gaelic and English Nursery rooms.
- the Nursery remains within the Children's Centre building until accommodation within the school has been inspected and approved by relevant bodies.
- children continue their pre-school education within Castlebay Primary School from 25 October 2012.

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar aims to allocate resources in a way which will secure the best possible educational experience for pupils in the Western Isles. Implicit in this key objective is the effective deployment of resources in order to secure continuous improvement in educational achievement and attainment, and to provide better facilities in the most viable settings. In order to achieve this it is proposed that nursery provision within Castlebay be moved across the road to the Primary Department of Castlebay School.
- 1.2 The Comhairle, at its meeting on the 15 December 2011, 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 moving of pre-school provision from the Children's Centre into Castlebay Primary Department as required by the schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 1.3 This document relates to a proposal to move Castlebay Primary Nursery from the Children's Centre across the road from the school to within the Primary Department. It is anticipated that this relocation will take effect from 25 October 2012.

CONSULTATIVE PROCESS - SUMMARY OF PROCESS FOR THIS PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

- 2.1 This Proposal Document has been issued as a result of a decision approved by the Comhairle to seek views on the proposal outlined in this paper.

Proposal Document issued to consultees and published on Comhairle Web-site

- 2.2 A copy of this document will be issued free of charge to the consultees listed at appendix A, and it will also be published on the Comhairle website: www.cne-siar.gov.uk

Publication of advertisement in local newspapers

- 2.3 An advertisement will be placed in the Stornoway Gazette, West Highland Free Press and Guth Bharraidh. In addition, there will be announcements related to the Consultation process on Radio nan Gaidheal.

Length of Consultation period

- 2.4 An advertisement will be placed in local newspapers on the 12 January 2012. The consultation will thereafter run until close of business on the 29 February 2012, which includes a period of 30 school days.

Public meeting

- 2.5 A public meeting will be held on the 1 February 2012, the details of which are given in this document.

Involvement of HMle

- 2.6 When the Proposal Document is published, a copy will also be sent to HMle by the Comhairle. HMle will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Comhairle from any person during the consultation period or, if HMle agree, a summary of them. HMle will further receive a summary of any oral representation made to the Comhairle at the public meeting that will be held and, as available (and so far as otherwise practicable), a copy of any other relevant documentation. HMle will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 23 March 2012 after the Comhairle having sent them all representations and documents as mentioned above. In preparing their report, HMle may visit the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there, as they consider appropriate, and may make such reasonable enquiries of such other people as they consider appropriate.

Preparation of Consultation Report

- 2.7 The Comhairle will review the proposal having regard to the HMle Report, written representations that it has received and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting. It will then prepare a Consultation Report. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be advertised in local newspapers. It will be available on the Comhairle web-site and from Comhairle Headquarters, as well as at the school, free of charge. Anyone who has made written representations during the consultation period will also be informed about the report. The report will include a record of the total number of written representations made during the consultation period, a summary of the written representations, a summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting, the Authority's response to the HMle Report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the HMle Report and any other relevant information, including details of any alleged inaccuracies and how these have been handled. The Report will also contain a statement explaining how it complied with the requirement to review the proposal in light of the HMle Report and representations (both written and oral) that it received. The Consultation Report will be published at least 3 weeks prior to the Comhairle making a decision.

Decision

- 2.8 This Consultation Report together with any other relevant documentation will be considered by the Education and Children's Services Committee who will make a recommendation. This recommendation will then be subject to the approval of the Comhairle.

Note on Corrections

- 2.9 If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal Document either by the Comhairle or any person, the Comhairle will determine if relevant information has been omitted or, if there has been an inaccuracy. The Comhairle will then take appropriate action which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of the Proposal paper or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and HMle will be advised.

PUBLIC MEETING

- 3.1 A Public Meeting will be held to discuss the proposal. Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Comhairle and will be addressed by representatives of the Education and Children's Services Department and other senior officers of the Comhairle.
- 3.2 The meeting will be an opportunity to:
- Hear more about the proposal
 - Ask questions about the proposal
 - Have the views of all stakeholders recorded so that they can be taken into account as part of the proposal process.
- 3.3 Arrangements for the meeting are as follows:
- **Venue:** Castlebay School
 - **Date:** Wednesday 1 February 2012
 - **Time:** 7pm
- 3.4 A note will be taken at the meeting of questions and views. This note will be published on the Comhairle web-site, and a copy will be made available on request. The meeting will also be recorded.
- 3.5 The Comhairle will also take into consideration any written or electronic submissions on the proposal, which may be submitted to schoolconsultations@cne-siar.gov.uk or to the **Chief Executive at the Comhairle Offices, Sandwick Road, Stornoway HS1 2BW, to arrive not later than 5pm on Wednesday 29 February 2012.**

GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE NEED FOR A SCHOOL ESTATE REVIEW

GENERAL BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Currently, there are a total of 28 pre-school providers within the Western Isles of which Comhairle nan Eilean Siar directly manages 20. Over the past few years the Education and Children's Services Department has been striving to ensure that all nursery classrooms operate from within a school. Of the 20 nurseries under the direct management of the Comhairle 13 operate from within the school campus. Of the 7 remaining nurseries 3 will move into school premises on completion of building projects and it is hoped that a further 2 will move into school premises on completion of a Statutory Consultation, if that is the Comhairle decision.
- 4.2 In October 2005, Castlebay School Nursery became a Comhairle run service under the management of Castlebay School. This service is located in the Children's Centre across the road from Castlebay School. Up until 2002, a nursery was located within the school campus. In 2002, a Gaelic and English Nursery moved to a purpose built Children's Centre across the road from the school. Accommodation within this building consists of two purpose built playrooms, toilets and a small kitchen. Parents access the nursery from within the community building through a secure entry system. The nursery also has a dedicated garden area to the rear of the building. Both nursery rooms are separated by a corridor. The nursery has an unusual feature in that both rooms have removal partitions which allow the rooms to merge or for one room to increase in size by extending in to the corridor space. The nursery is registered to accommodate 36 children aged 2.5 – 5 years. The Comhairle has a rental agreement for the use of this nursery space, the annual rent was £6399.96. In July 2011, the building committee wrote to the Comhairle to notify them that the rent was to increase to £11,199.96. The Comhairle requested a report from the District Valuer, prior to agreeing to this increase in rent. The district valuer's report has since come back and a rent of £8,200 has been agreed. This figure does not include utility bills.

- 4.3 Over the past few years the number of parents requesting Gaelic Medium Pre-school Education has risen and in 2009, it was necessary for the partition in the Gaelic nursery room to be moved and for the Comhairle to apply to Social Care Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS) to increase the numbers. The nursery is currently registered, with the regulatory body SCSWIS, for 36 children aged 2.5 years to 5 years.
- 4.4 Two pre-school sessions are in operation each morning, one through the medium of Gaelic offering 20 nursery places and one through the medium of English offering 16 nursery places. In addition, the Comhairle runs an afternoon childcare session. This service is subject to demand and service provision has fluctuated over the past few years.
- 4.5 Despite the increase in the number of places, the demand for places in Gaelic still outweighs the number of places available and not all children have been able to be accommodated. In addition, although the current extended room allows more children to be enrolled in Gaelic, this arrangement is not satisfactory as the room has effectively grown into the corridor space. Children and parents accessing the English playroom have to go through the Gaelic playroom and children in the English playroom requiring access to the toilets have to access them by going through the Gaelic Playroom.
- 4.6 In April 2010, as part of the asset management planning of the Comhairle, the Comhairle approved the "Schools Estate Management Plan". Castlebay School was identified as a school of high priority for remodelling. This school is considered to be a category C (Poor) building and the Comhairle aim to improve to category B (Satisfactory) by 2015.
- 4.7 The Comhairle is charged 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, as far as can be seen, this is a continuing trend.
- 4.8 The problems relating to the existing education provision within Castlebay can be briefly stated-
- a) A split site creates challenges for transition arrangements and joint projects within the Early Level of the Curriculum.
 - b) The cost associated with operating from a separate building is difficult to maintain.
 - c) The costs, relating as they do to enrolment numbers, are very high.
 - d) The existing building does not meet the demand for morning pre-school places.
- 4.9 The requirements which have to be addressed by the Comhairle are-
- a) to provide a quality education service for children and young people aged 3-18.
 - b) to adjust the school provision to reflect the present and projected pupil numbers.
 - c) to enhance the facilities available to all pupils aged 3-18
 - d) to bring the costs of the education provision to a level which the Comhairle can afford while aspiring to enhance the quality of Learning and Teaching environments.

COMHAIRLE ASPIRATIONS

- 5.1 In order to address the requirements in a rational and fair way throughout the Western Isles the Comhairle is;
- a) committed to providing the highest quality of educational opportunity and experience for school pupils and nursery children within available resources;
 - b) committed to consultation procedures which communicate accurate information about the benefits of change;
 - c) committed to change which is carefully planned, adequately resourced, and phased appropriately;
 - d) committed to ensuring that schools and nurseries are properly resourced to provide a better environment for learning and teaching;
 - e) committed to the view that projects linked to the School Estate Review should have priority within its programmes of Capital and Revenue expenditure.

- 5.2 This will be done by –
- reducing surplus capacity in schools
 - improving the condition and suitability rating of schools through capital projects and addressing maintenance issues
 - improving property flexibility
 - meeting statutory requirements of Disability Discrimination Act 2006 (DDA).
- 5.3 The Scottish Government issued its 'Building Better Schools: Investing in Scotland's Future' document in September 2009. The document sets out the Government's aspirations for the school estate and states:
- "All children and young people will be educated in, and community users will use, schools that are 'fit for purpose' in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency;
 - Schools and nurseries are well-designed, accessible, inclusive learning environments that inspire and drive new thinking and change and which support the delivery of high quality educational experiences through *Curriculum for Excellence*;
 - Schools and nurseries are integral parts of the communities they serve, with pupils making use of community facilities and communities accessing school facilities;
 - Schools and nurseries accommodate and provide a range of services, activities and facilities that make a difference to people's health and well being, to sustaining economic growth and to the strength and vibrancy of communities;
 - A sustainable school estate whose design, construction and operation is environmentally and energy efficient; contributes directly to delivering the year-on-year reductions in greenhouse gas emissions introduced by the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, which is resilient to the impact of climate change and which leads by example in matters of environmental performance;
 - A school estate that is efficiently run and that delivers maximum value for money;
 - A school estate which is flexible and responsive - both to changes in demand for school places and to learners' and teachers' requirements and wishes, and where the beneficial impact of change is maximized by thorough consultation and engagement with users and stakeholders".
- 5.4 In order to maintain an adequate level of provision it is necessary for the Comhairle to allocate its resources in a way which will secure the best possible education for pupils in the Western Isles. Implicit in this objective is the effective deployment of resources in order to provide better educational facilities. The Comhairle believes that it must continue to look at the current provision of education in the Western Isles, to plan ahead and to determine the best way in which educational facilities of a higher standard can be made available for present and future generations.
- 5.5 The advantages of relocating the Castlebay Primary Nursery from the community building to the school can be summarised as follows :
- a) More efficient and effective deployment and development of staff and more effective flexibility in grouping children for learning and teaching.
 - b) There is an opportunity for reinvestment of savings from the School Estate Review in the Education Service to ensure all children and pupils are educated in buildings that are well designed and accessible, with inclusive learning environments.
 - c) There will be greater opportunity for a seamless Early Level Education for nursery children and children in Primary One.
 - d) There will be an increase in the number of Gaelic Medium nursery places and English Medium Nursery Places. The number of nursery places will increase from 16 to 20 in the English Medium Nursery Class and from 20 to 24 in the Gaelic Medium Nursery Class. This increase will accommodate all parents currently requesting Gaelic Medium Pre-school Education.
- 5.6 Even if the advantages were ignored, the present situation cannot continue for much longer as the existing building is not meeting the needs of the service users. As revenue budgets are subject to cuts over the next few years it is likely that there will be insufficient resources to maintain the running costs associated with being accommodated in the community building. There is however 'one-off' funding available which could be used to convert the school to accommodate the two nursery classrooms. The cost of this project will be in the region £63,000.

KEY FACTORS

Demographic Trends and School Rolls

- 6.1 The total school rolls have fallen steadily since Comhairle nan Eilean Siar was established as a new Education Authority in 1975. Predictions made about falling school rolls in the past have proved to be accurate and therefore have been reliable. The total roll (primary and secondary in the Western Isles) thirty two years ago was 6,246 while in September 2011 this had fallen to 3,553. In the last eight years the pupil roll in the Western Isles has fallen by 11%.
- 6.2 As pupil population has declined, the level of funding has also fallen in line with that decline. This has the effect of making the current pattern of provision an unsustainable one, particularly in the context of the necessity to make major cutbacks at present and for the foreseeable future.
- 6.3 Despite the overall decline in pupil population, enrolments within the nursery have been high for the past few years. However, the Community Health Index Figures for children under three, June 2011, indicate that while the numbers are likely to very high in the academic year 2012/13 they will decrease substantially after that.

CONSULTATION PROPOSAL

- 7.1 It is proposed that:
- Castlebay Primary Nursery relocates to within Castlebay Primary School.
- 7.2 This will be achieved by –
- Making an additional teaching space for one nursery room by combining the Depute Head Teacher office, ASN office/resource area and corridor area (Appendix 4, area one).
 - Providing ‘class in a box ICT resources’ for all primary classes.
 - Converting the former ICT class to a classroom room (Appendix 4, area two)
 - Converting room 22 to a nursery classroom.
 - Installing a security system to the primary school entrance.
 - Moving the Depute Head Teacher office into one of the smaller office areas (Appendix 4, area three and four)

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

- 8.1 **Educational Benefits**
Through the Curriculum for Excellence, children’s progression in learning is indicated through curriculum levels. The Early Level applies to children of pre-school age and P1 children. When a nursery is incorporated within a school there is seamless early level education resulting in a significant advantage to the learning and teaching of both the pre-school and primary one children. The close proximity of the nursery class to the infant class enhances staff and children’s opportunity to work together on joint projects, benefit from each other’s area of expertise and share resources. Nursery children have access to the school’s resources and become familiar with school surroundings therefore providing a seamless transition from nursery to school. Children in Primary one have access to the nursery room and resources thus enriching their school experience.

School

- 8.2 Castlebay Community School comprises of a Nursery, Primary and Secondary Unit. In September 2011 the Primary Department had a roll of 70 pupils, 38 of whom are taught through the medium of Gaelic. In December 2011, the nursery had a pre-school enrolment of 27. The capacity of the Primary school is 125 pupils.

- 8.3 Currently accommodation within the Primary Department consists of two Gaelic Medium Classrooms, two English Medium Classrooms, a General Purpose Room, an ICT Room, an ASN resource area/office, an office for the Depute Headteacher, male and female infant and junior toilets, a disabled toilet and two small staff bases.
- 8.4 It is proposed that the accommodation be adapted to provide: two Gaelic Medium Classrooms, two English Medium Classrooms, one General Purpose room that could be converted to a classroom should school rolls increase, one Gaelic Nursery room and one English Nursery room.
- 8.5 This would be achieved by converting the ICT room to a classroom and by equipping each class with “class in a box” laptops for the children. In addition, the office and ASN resource area/office would be converted to a teaching space for use by one of the nurseries. As the school recently purpose built an ASN learning area in the secondary unit for the whole school the space in the Primary Unit is no longer required. Office accommodation would be identified for the Depute Head Teacher in one of the small staff bases and in a shared office with a Depute Head in the Secondary Unit.

Learning environment

- 8.6 Nursery children would benefit from having larger playrooms, direct access to the infant classroom and facilities within the school including the gym, swimming pool, canteen and library. Children would no longer have to cross the road to access these facilities. The Primary School has a playground that has recently been developed to include a grassed and planting area and a small enclosed garden. There is also a large tarmac area which has painted games and would be beneficial to nursery children when playing on wheeled toys.
- 8.7 As both nursery rooms will not be in operation all day the nursery can be used by groups of children from the infant class as and when required. This will expand and enhance the experiences available to primary school aged children. Primary school aged children will have the added advantage of having younger children in the school. This fosters a sense of responsibility and citizenship.
- 8.8 By having the nursery within the school there will be greater flexibility in the deployment of staff to meet the learning needs of nursery and primary children. Staff in both the nursery and school will benefit from additional Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities to be gained by working and learning with a larger range of teaching colleagues. A larger staff will offer a wider range of expertise resulting in increased opportunities for sharing practice and more collegiate support.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

- 8.9 The pupils of Castlebay Primary School would have instant access to laptops through the class in the box technology. Each classroom in Castlebay has an interactive whiteboard. As the current nursery building is community owned and rented on a lease basis it would not be cost effective to install smart boards in the nursery rooms for the nursery children. In addition, due to the large number of windows and the moveable wall between the nursery rooms there is a lack of wall space to mount smart boards. The move to the school would ensure that all nursery children had access to a smart board.
- 8.10 The Comhairle recently installed a new IP telephone system throughout most Comhairle premises. This phone system runs over the Comhairle's network and has very low cost to the Comhairle. When this type of phone system is installed within a Comhairle office or school the service no longer has to budget for phone bills or phone rental thus providing a saving to the service. Individuals within the system are easily accessed by dialling an internal phone number thus improving access to colleagues. This phone system is available within the school but is not available within the Children's Centre.

Additional Support Needs (ASN)

- 8.11 Castlebay Primary School has the facilities to cater for the needs of all children, including those with a full range of additional support needs.

Gaelic Medium Education

- 8.12 Castlebay School has a long established and thriving Gaelic Medium provision and enrolments in Gaelic continue to increase. In December 2011, 18 children were enrolled in Gaelic Medium pre-school provision in Castlebay School Nursery. This figure will increase as children become eligible for pre-school education throughout the year.

Pre-school provision

- 8.13 44 Pre-school places could be provided within Castlebay Primary School. This would increase the number of places available by 8. An analysis of current attendance patterns shows that the majority of parents require access to pre-school education in the morning. All additional places would be available in the morning. Afternoon spaces would continue to be subject to demand.

Accessibility of premises

- 8.14 The Primary School has an access that is on the ground floor and all classroom areas are accessible to those with restricted mobility. Further work is planned to make the school Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) compliant.

Capacity

- 8.15 Castlebay Primary School has a capacity for 125 pupils; its current occupancy rate is 56%. The present users of Castlebay Primary School will not be disadvantaged by the addition of Castlebay School's Nursery pupils. Despite this, to ensure that there is flexibility in the future, an additional teaching space is being created for one of the nurseries.

Likely effect on the Local Community

- 8.16 The Children's Centre that the nursery currently occupies would be affected by the lack of rent from the nursery. The management committee of this building will require support to identify alternative uses for the space and sources of funding. The Comhairle is committed to supporting the voluntary committee through this process.

Travel

- 8.17 The current nursery building is approximately 150 metres from the Primary School. It is therefore not anticipated that there would be any detrimental effect on the travel arrangements for the children. There is a car park opposite the school that parents could use to pick up and drop off children.

Summary of Educational Benefits

- 8.18 Attending a school will have educational benefits for children currently at Castlebay School Nursery. The learning opportunities and experience will be significantly increased. The specific benefits are listed below:
- greater flexibility in grouping children for learning and teaching;
 - increased early level curricular opportunities for both the nursery children and children in P1.
 - greater flexibility in the deployment of staff to meet learning needs;
 - an integrated 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;
 - improved access to management support.

Other Benefits

- 8.19 In addition to the educational advantages the following advantages apply:
- More flexibility in the use of the Playrooms for both the nursery and the school.
 - More capacity to allow a larger enrolment of children into Gaelic.
 - Reduced overheads therefore greater sustainability and viability.
 - More efficient and effective deployment and development of staff.

- 8.20 The proposal will result in pupils at Castlebay School Nursery attending a building that is better designed for the delivery of a 21st Century curriculum.

CONSIDERATION OF FACTORS AFFECTING RURAL SCHOOLS

- 9.1 In terms of Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Castlebay School Nursery is an accessible Rural School. Consequently special regard has been given to the following factors in the preparation of this document.

Viable Alternatives to Relocation

- 9.2 There are four alternative options for the future provision of pre school education in Castlebay. Each option is listed below:

Option one – No Change

- 9.3 All nursery children would remain within the current community owned building and the service would operate as it does just now. This option is not a viable option for the following reasons:

- The service would not meet current demand for Gaelic pre-school education places.
- The service may not meet the demand for Gaelic pre-school places in the academic year 2012/13.
- The location of the building does not lend itself to integrated working with the infant department of the school resulting in reduced opportunities for joint projects, sharing practice and resources.
- The current nursery rooms are not suitable for the installation of smart boards.
- The building is run by a voluntary management committee and the Comhairle have a lease for the use of the rooms. The rent has become prohibitive making the cost of running a service from this building unviable. In addition to the cost of the rent, the Comhairle has additional running costs associated with occupying this building.

Option two – Split Provision

- 9.4 One nursery class would move to the school and the other nursery class would remain in the community building. This nursery class could open the moveable walls between both rooms and have access to the whole nursery space. This option is not a viable option for the following reasons:

- This option would create a divide between families and children enrolling in Gaelic and English.
- Staff within the community centre would be isolated.
- There would be less opportunity for integrated working between nursery staff.
- One staff group would be disadvantaged as they would have less opportunity to work with colleagues in the infant department.
- One group of children would be considered to be disadvantaged as they would not have access to the same educational experiences as the other group.
- The Comhairle would have a split service that would be difficult to manage.
- The cost of operating from the community building would remain prohibitive.

Option Three – Operate morning and afternoon sessions

- 9.5 Nursery places available in both the Gaelic and English Nurseries would revert to 16 places in each room in the morning thus allowing the Gaelic nursery to improve their facilities by closing the removable wall in to the corridor. 16 places would be available each afternoon through the medium of Gaelic. A total of 48 places would be available and places would be allocated on a first come, first serve basis. This option is seen to be unviable for the following reasons:

- As almost all of parents request a morning place, it is anticipated that this option would not meet the needs of parents.
- As places would be allocated on a first come first serve basis, children who are not eligible for pre-school funding until later in the academic year would be disadvantaged. It is likely that the afternoon session would enrol mostly younger children thus causing segregation by age which the Comhairle tries to avoid within early education.

- Although the environment for the children in the Gaelic Nursery would improve there would not be the educational advantages associated with being accommodated within the school.
- There would be no extended care service for working parents.
- The current nursery rooms are not suitable for the installation of smart boards.
- As above, the building is run by a voluntary management committee and the Comhairle have a lease for the use of two nursery rooms, toilets and a small kitchen. The rent has become prohibitive making the cost of running a service from this building unviable. In addition to the cost of the rent, the Comhairle has additional running costs associated with occupying this building.

Option Four – Split Gaelic enrolments by age and operate both morning and afternoon.

- 9.6 A Gaelic session is run both morning and afternoon and children are split by age. Children in their pre-school year would attend in the morning and children in their ante pre-school year would attend in the afternoon. The English Nursery class would continue to operate in the morning. Parents requiring childcare would access the Gaelic ante pre-school class. This option is very similar to option three and is unviable for similar reasons. In addition, as parents requiring childcare would also be using the afternoon session the service could not be provided purely through the medium of Gaelic. A bilingual service would be in operation.
- 9.7 Due to the factors outlined above, the option of remaining within the community building is not considered to be viable. The only viable option would be for the nursery to relocate to within the school.

Likely Effects on the Local Community

- 9.8 As detailed in section 8 of this proposal document it is believed that there will be no significant effect on the local community. However, as detailed in 8.16, it is recognised that the Children's Centre management committee would face challenges in maintaining the building without income from the Comhairle.
- 9.9 The Outer Hebrides Migration Study 2008, identified key factors of sustainable communities which included sustainable employment, private sector led economic diversity, housing provision, self determination, clean energy. It is not believed that the relocation of Castlebay School Nursery from the community centre to the school would significantly impact on the identified key factors needed for sustainable communities.

OTHER FACTORS

Costs

- 10.1 Due to the Comhairle's commitment to, where possible, meet the needs of the community, the nursery provides pre-school education in both Gaelic and English, where spaces allow a childcare service for children aged 2.5 years and a wrap around care service in the afternoons. This service is expensive to operate. Running costs for the past financial year are detailed in Appendix 3. The additional running cost of operating from within the community centre will be in the region of £10,000 to £15,000 in the academic year 2011/12.

Staffing

10.2 Nursery Staff

Under the Regulation of Care Act, 2001 the Comhairle must adhere to the following adult child ratios within pre-school childcare provision:

Age	Adult child ratio
2 to under 3's	1:5
3* and over	1:8

- Where children aged 3 and over attend facilities providing day care for a session which is less than a continuous period of four hours in any day the adult: child ratio may be 1:10 providing individual children do not attend more than one session per day.

Four members of permanent staff are employed to work in the nursery.

All staff must be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council and as such have or be working towards a relevant qualification. This has led to issues with recruitment and over the past year there have been issues in relation to covering for long term absences. To resolve this issue the Comhairle has established an itinerant post to work in both the school and the nursery as required. This post has been advertised but to date the Comhairle has been unable to recruit in to this post.

Ancillary Support

- 10.3 The school has 10.5 clerical/auxiliary staff. Auxiliary staff have been deployed to work in the nursery as and when required. Cleaning staff are employed to clean the nursery within the community building. This generates an additional cost if the nursery remains within the community centre.

CONCLUSION

- 11.1 Based on the educational benefits, the ability to provide a service to meet demand and the increased viability of the service the Department of Education and Children's Services is persuaded that the proposal would best meet the needs of the children enrolling in pre-school education and has therefore agreed to proceed to statutory consultation.

APPENDIX 1 CONSULTEES

The consultation will be open to all relevant stakeholders. The groups that will be specifically consulted are:

- Parents of Castlebay School pupils (including nursery)
- Pupils of Castlebay School
- Staff (teaching and other)
- Parent Councils;
- Trade Unions,
- Bord na Gaidhlig.
- Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership
- Community Council
- Parents of a child under 3 years who may be attending the nursery in the next few years

Staff and pupils will be consulted separately.

APPENDIX 2 SCHOOL ROLLS

Area Summary

School Year	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total Roll
2002-03	10	13	19	21	23	17	12	18	26	22	18	13	20	232
2003-04	16	9	15	19	20	24	17	12	18	26	23	14	10	223
2004-05	16	16	9	15	22	22	23	20	11	19	28	21	8	230
2005-06	12	16	18	10	14	20	23	25	20	12	20	21	10	221
2006-07	10	13	16	17	9	14	21	21	25	19	12	17	15	209
2007-08	15	11	15	15	17	10	14	22	21	25	20	9	11	205
2008-09	10	14	11	15	17	17	10	13	22	21	26	17	4	197
2009-10	10	11	14	10	16	18	15	12	13	23	21	24	6	193
Overall Change	0%	-15.4%	-26.3%	-52.4%	-30.4%	+5.9%	+25%	-33.3%	-50%	+4.5%	+16.7%	+84.6%	-70%	-16.8%

Castlebay Community School

School Year	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total Roll
2002-03	8	7	15	14	15	8	9	18	26	22	18	13	20	193
2003-04	11	7	9	15	12	14	8	12	18	26	23	14	10	179
2004-05	11	11	7	9	18	14	14	20	11	19	28	21	8	191
2005-06	8	11	11	7	7	16	14	25	20	12	20	21	10	182
2006-07	6	10	11	10	7	7	17	21	25	19	12	17	15	177
2007-08	8	7	12	10	10	8	7	22	21	25	20	9	11	170
2008-09	7	10	7	12	11	11	9	13	22	21	26	17	4	170
2009-10	7	9	10	6	13	13	10	12	13	23	21	24	6	167

Overall percentage change over seven year period: **-13.5%**

Overall percentage change over one year period: **-1.8%**

Nursery census - June	3 Year Olds	4 Year Olds	Total Roll
2009	13	9	24
2010	17	14	31
2011	13	22	36

Community Health Index	Children Birth to 1.	Children aged 1 to under 2	Children aged 2 to under 3.
June 2011	9	6	19

APPENDIX 3 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The annual actual running cost for the nursery 2010/11 compared to the cost of running the nursery if it had been operating in the school building.

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

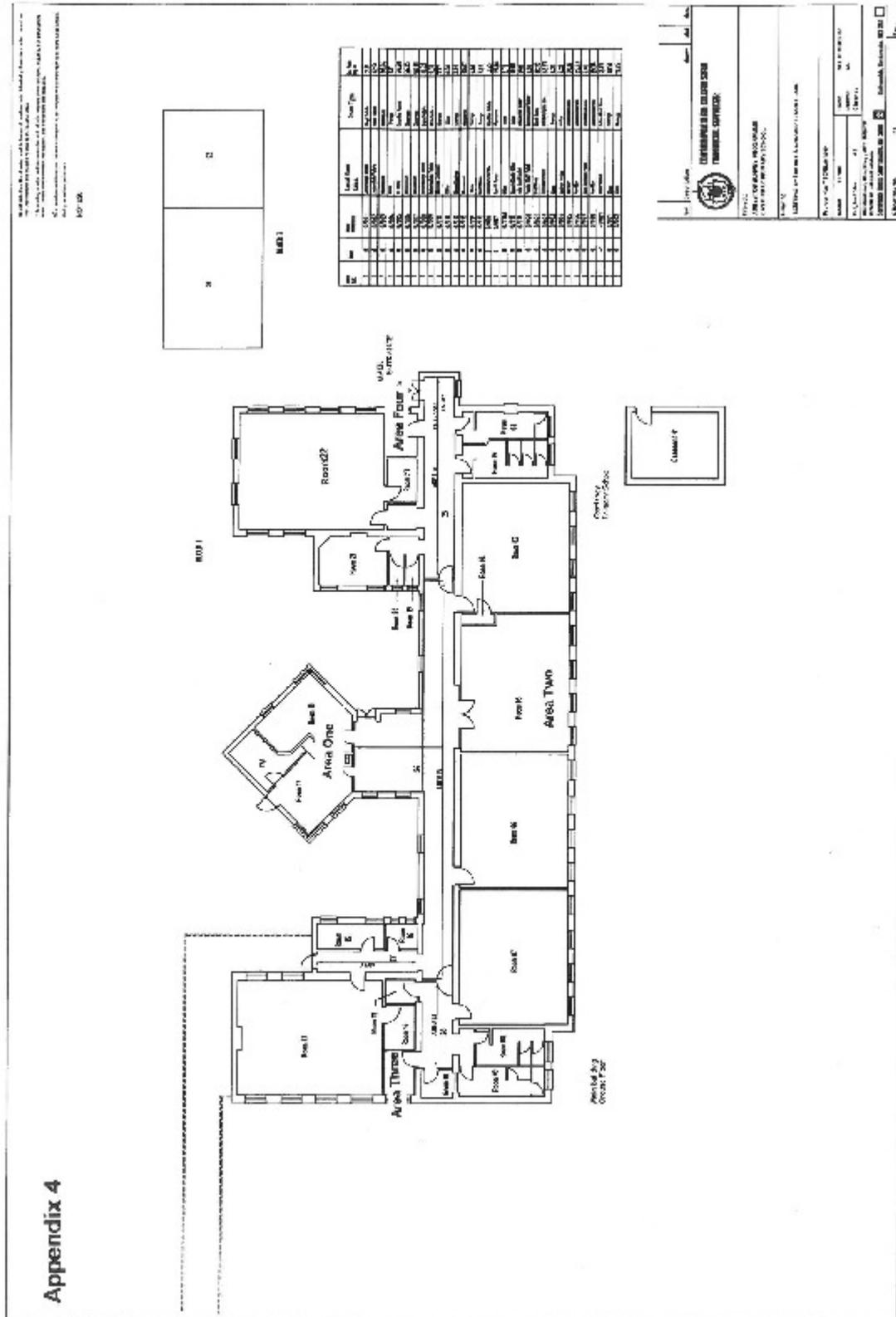
Education and Children's Services Department

FUTURE STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE WESTERN ISLES

Castlebay School Nursery running costs 2010/11		
DESCRIPTION	Actual Income and Expenditure of Nursery within Community Building.	Anticipated Income and Expenditure if Nursery had been operating from within the school.
Employee Expenses (Salaries, relief, travel and subsistence)	£81,447.13	£81,447.13
Premises Related Expenditure (rent cleaning and telephone)	£10,618.03	£1,000 (approx cleaning materials)
Equipment and Consumables	£1,977	£1,977
Catering	£1,831.37	£1,831.37
Net Expenditure	£95,873.53	£86,255.5
Income		
Parent fees	£18,729.27	£18,729.27
Pre-school Funding	£47,344.63	£47,344.63

As of August 2011, the rent increased to £8,200 excluding VAT and utilities. It is anticipated that the cost associated with remaining in the Children's Centre will now be in the region of £10,000 to £15,000 per annum.

APPENDIX 4 CASTLEBAY PRIMARY SCHOOL FLOOR PLAN



APPENDIX B - Note of Public Meeting

SCHOOL CONSULTATIONS BARRA – 1 FEBRUARY 2012

Cllr Morag Munro	<p>Good evening and welcome to this consultation meeting. My name is Morag Munro and I am Chair of Education and Children's Services Committee of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. With me tonight is Bernard Chisholm who is Head of Schools and Resources, Patricia White who is Early Years Service Manager and Gavin Lawson who is our Head of Legal Services. There are copies of the proposal document if some of you haven't to a copy and you wish a copy there are some spare copies here if anybody would like one. This meeting is part of the statutory consultation process into the proposal to move Castlebay Primary Nursery from the Children's Centre to the Primary Department of the school as from 25 October 2012. The Comhairle agreed at its meeting of 15 December 2011 to proceed to statutory consultation on this proposal. I would stress that this is a consultation. We are here to explain the proposal, answer questions and listen and note your views. The meeting is being recorded and a verbatim copy of the report of the meeting will be included in the report that goes to Education and Children's Services. Following the end of the consultation process which is 29 February the Officers will examine all the responses to the consultation that they receive and the HMle report that they will also have and they will then draw up a consultation report. Now all the information that we have for that consultation will have previously been sent to the HMle who will subsequently send us their views on the proposal. The consultation report, including as I say the verbatim report of this meeting, copies of all consultation responses, the HMle report will all go to the Education and Children's Services Committee in June. The recommendation from Education and Children's Services Committee will then go to full Council for approval. As I say the consultation report will take account of all the responses received and the proposal that will be in the consultation report may be different that the one that is before you tonight, that will depend on the consultation responses that are received and will be examined by the Officers whop are drawing up the consultation report. I am first of all then going to ask Gavin Lawson to take us through the procedure because this is a statutory procedure. After that I will ask Bernard Chisholm to go through the proposal document. After that I will open the meeting to questions and comments from yourselves. If we are not able to give you an answer to any of you questions tonight, Gavin will take a note of them and we will get back to you with an answer shortly, hopefully within the next week. I think it would be helpful I you would give us a contact number of a contact name that would maybe be the Parent Council but you can let us have the contact name that you wish the answers to go to, that would be helpful. I am now then going to ask Gavin to take us through the procedure.</p>
Gavin Lawson	<p>Thank you. As Mrs Munro has already said this meeting forms part of the statutory consultation process. That process is open for submissions until, again as Mrs Munro has said, 28 February.....</p>
Members of the public	<p>We can't hear you</p>
Gavin Lawson	<p>Is that better? I'll start again then. As Mrs Munro has already said this is part of a statutory consultation process. The statutory consultation process is open for submissions until the 29th of this month. A copy of this proposal document has already been sent to HMle. HMle will receive a copy of all of the written submissions which are made during this process; they will also receive a copy of all the oral submissions that are made. As Mrs Munro has said this meeting is being recorded. Now unfortunately this mic isn't the only technical problem we've had with sound tonight I'm afraid. There is a radio mic but the radio mic is not working, which means we are going to have to use these boom mics. Now the boom mics are sensitive enough to pick up all questions from either the front or the back of the hall but I think it would be helpful if everyone appreciates that these boom mics are quite sensitive and will pick up quite a lot of if there's discussion or talking going on just now or through the course of the meeting. It would therefore be helpful if, when someone is asking a question, or if one of the representatives here at the top table are providing an answer, if there's silence from the rest of us that will help the quality of the recording. It will help the</p>

	<p>accuracy of the note that will be prepared and that note of these discussions will form part of the submission which are sent of to HMle. Thereafter HMle will prepare their own report on the proposal which will come back to the Council. The Council Officers will consider that, they will consider the written representations, the oral representations, the questions and the points which you raise tonight in preparation of the consultation report and, as Mrs Munro has said, that will thereafter go to the Council in June. Now there are a couple of matters which I would like to raise with you just now. The first is that you will note on your chair there is a proposal from the Barra Children's Centre. That has been placed there for you by the Children's Centre and it will form part of the written submission which we have been accepting as part of this consultation process. In addition the Children's Centre have also asked that they be allowed to conduct a ballot of those present at tonight's consultation meeting. Of course that is perfectly permissible but what I would ask you to do is when this meeting concludes and we leave representatives of the Children's Centre are going to speak to you and are going to distribute ballot papers. No doubt they will explain that process to you then but if, when we are finished, if you could just remain in your seats for just a few minutes that would be greatly appreciated. As part of this consultation process it's necessary for the Council to consider whether or not there are any minor corrections which have to be noted on the proposal document itself. Do most of you have a copy of the proposal document? If any of you don't have a copy of the proposal document there are some copies here at the from because I would like to run through one or two very minor corrections. How I propose to do this is just refer you to the number paragraph and explain what that correction is. If everyone is ready? Can I refer you to paragraph 2.6. In, I think it's the fourth sentence of 2.6, there's a word missing on the 7th line of paragraph 2.6 after the date 2012. So between 2012 and the word "the", the word "after" should be inserted and then the next word along is Comhairle, the word "has" should be replaced with "having". Now could I just say that a corrected copy of this proposal document will be made online and will be made available to anyone who wants to get an amended copy after this meeting. These corrections, I would suggest, are merely typographical, they have no material effect on the proposals. If I could also ask you to turn to paragraph 4.2. I think round about the 12th or 13th line you will see there is a sentence reading "the nursery is registered" and within that sentence it refers to a lease agreement. There was a lease agreement between the Comhairle and the Children's Centre but that lease agreement has terminated. There is now a rental agreement so in this document where you see lease agreement it should be read as rental agreement. I know it's not particularly exciting as a correction but it's important that these things are correctly noted. In paragraph 4.9.1 if you would kindly delete the point 1. That should just be read as paragraph 4.9. In paragraph 5.5 you will see that there is a paragraph 5.5 (c) and then underneath it there is another point (c), the last point (c) on that paragraph that is noted as point (c) should be crossed out and should be made point (d). Yes, 5.5 it goes paragraph (a) "more efficient and effective deployment", paragraph 5.5 (b) "there is an opportunity for reinvestment"; paragraph 5.5 (c) "there will be greater opportunity" and then 5.5 again its referred to as (c) "there will be an increase in the number of gaelic medium".....well that's good that's been corrected already. Paragraph 8.2 underneath the heading school you will see there is a reference to "Castlebay Nursery School comprises of", could you please delete the word "nursery" that should of course read Castlebay School comprises a nursery, primary and secondary unit. And lastly in paragraph 9.3</p>
Unknown female	Sorry... Gavin do you know where the change in (unable to hear)
Gavin Lawson	Yeah, paragraph 8.2. The first sentence of paragraph 8.2 currently reads Castlebay Nursery School comprises of a nursery, primary and secondary unit. The second word of that sentence nursery should be deleted so that the sentence in fact reads Castlebay School.
Unknown Female	Sorry....that should be Castlebay Community School?
Gavin Lawson	I am happy to say replace the word nursery with Community. And lastly paragraph 9.3 in the second bullet point the sentence reads "the

	<p>services would not, please replace the word would with” may “so that the sentence reads” the service may not meet the demand”. And lastly on the 5th bullet, that’s the last bullet, again you’ll see that there is a reference to a lease, replace the reference to lease with a rental agreement. As I said a copy of that corrected proposal will be made available online as soon as possible and it will certainly be made available to the school should anyone wish to obtain another copy. I’d just like to emphasis again when we a re speaking tonight if we could please ensure that one person speaks and the rest of us listen just to ensure the quality of the recording and other than that I’ll hand you back to Mrs Munro.</p>
Mrs Munro	<p>Thank you very much Gavin. I’m now going to ask Bernard to take us through the proposal document.</p>
Bernard Chisholm	<p>Thank you very much. Can everybody hear me? Yes. Okay. The Education and children’s Services Department has worked over recent years to develop its early years and early intervention strategy and our aim on that has always been to be provide a quality service that is acceptable and affordable. Historically the majority of the groups that we work with in the Western Isles were run by one of the Management Committees but in more recent years, due to a number of professionals from these groups most of the groups have requested direct management by the Council which for us has meant incorporation within the local school and direct management of the Head Teacher. In Barra we have had a good service in Gaelic and English however, due to growth in numbers, particularly in Gaelic which is excellent; in recent years we don’t...we’ve not always had sufficient places within a provision. We have looked at various approaches that have been suggested and tried various solutions to address these challenges. At the same time education moves on and circumstances change and currently we are working in terms of implementation Curriculum for Excellence and progress and supporting children with various learning and IT opportunities. And as many of you will now know that first stage of learning at the pre-school years and primary 1’s referred to as the early level in the Curriculum for Excellence. On this basis we have developed a proposal outlined in your consultation document which we actually believe provides the necessary accommodation for any numbers we are likely to enrol in the near future. It includes all of our provision on the school campus incorporated within the primary provision. It supports the more integrated working of our staff and it’s consistent with our own evidence and we think that other evidence, and we think, other evidence of best practice. It also becomes an efficient and economic in terms of our resources and from our point of view we reduce some of the demands on the community for fund raising etc. At this stage, as explained by Mr Lawson and Councillor Munro, this is a proposal and depending on the information we have here tonight, the questions we may have to address and any other submissions made to us. The final made recommendations may be amended and the proposal accepted or rejected by elected Members. Castlebay Parent Council have raised a number of questions supported by Children’s Centre in relation to the proposal and they have submitted to me yesterday on route down so I’ve had a chance to look at these and I’m happy to identify those issues and share the response with you. You cover quite a number of issues.</p> <p>In relation to the proposal document they tend to have a standard structure as you will see and all of them require us to provide some data on the backgrounds numbers on enrolments etc. Look at the educational benefits that we consider would be denied from it and there is a requirement to look at particular factors affecting rural schools. The actual proposal is outlined in section 7 of the report which is that we propose that Castlebay Nursery relocates to Castlebay Primary School from the Children’s Centre and would be achieved by making the following arrangements here in the school. Under section 9 of the report there are a number of issues which we have particular requirement to address. Viable alternative options and for example for the purpose of the consultation here tonight there are options being proposed by the Children’s Centre which you have in front of you there. We’ve tried to outline various options that we understand we have been asked to look at and have looked at and hopefully that provides you with a basis to make further comment or suggestion. The other comment I as asked to emphasise was that when any comments you would have, amendments</p>

of suggestions even of those that we are differing about because they are recorded all of these will form part of the submission for consideration by the various bodies that look at it and I'll cover these and some of the questions I've been asked by the Parent Council and the Children's Committee. So I was provided a range of questions not everyone will have them but I will state the question and cover the kind of answers then you will be able to ask for any clarity on that or have any views noted for the record.

The first group of questions I was asked to look at were in relation to safety and the steps we have to take for that. Just to check for you to be aware that all schools and pre-schools are required to comply with fire regulations in order to obtain registration through the Care Inspectorate. The Comhairle itself has a fire Officer who will inspect our premises and ensure compliance of any final proposal that we make and officers prior to the consultation paper being finalised do seek advice from all the appropriate agencies. However, the onus is on us to demonstrate we are compliant with the regulations so in preparation of the proposal we have sought advice from a number of the agencies. The specific questions that I was asked were "where are the current fire escapes?" so I have actually drafted a plan that outlines where they are and I will leave them with the Parent Council this evening and you can use that whichever way you require but there is one there and we will also provide a copy of all the responses which will be written up in the next few days and have them typed to submit to anyone you wish to submit them to. "What are the current escape routes?" and they are detailed also in the plans so you can see where they are set out in the plan. "Will the changes effect access to the current fire escape?" Yes they will and therefore we have to make alterations to that. "Will the changes effect the current escape routes?" and the answer again is yes it will affect and any amendments which we make based on that we will have to be compliant with the fire regulations otherwise we can't get the registration. If changes are required along the various escape routes etc. "would there be any implication for the glass there to be fireproofed etc?" Any changes on that we would be compliant with the directions of the Fire Officer and the Fire Safety Regulations. "Will the fire escapes be alarmed to draw attention to the fact that they had been opened?" Yes there has been an actual spec for the security of this building and the type of doors going in will have had an alarm system put on them but in general in our schools the answer is "no" but in the new constructed schools then they do have them but they will have here. Just a couple of more on the safety. "Will there be a perimeter fence which encompasses the nursery so that no children can wonder off?" Again "yes" and we will detail out how the perimeters for the safe play and would the building would be on the plan. Again for those you will get in the next couple of days because this one was only for the fire but the answer is yes to that. It extends from basically from the corridor all the way up the rear gate in addition a gate would be installed in the playground across the back access to secure the playground area which doesn't have any security gate across at the moment and the small compartment at the back of the school will also have a fence repaired. By the way as a way aside to this in the consultation with the children the day was kind of interesting some of the observations they made on that and I did ask them for permission so if you want to know anything I am happy to share that and I'll make sure that all these are marked on the drawings so you can make appropriate comments. "Where is BLANK security doors?" Well the security door would be on where we would propose the nursery entrance with a buzzer system into each playroom and "will the security doors be of the fire escape type?" Again I have to say all of these would be to fire compliant requirements and we will indicate the specification of that in the written report. So, I'll just remind again, the reason I'm reading the question as well as the answer is so the mics pick it up so know you've got it but you will get it written. These were the general comments on safety if there would be any general other comments you would wish to make or views that you would wish to be recorded in the consultation then it would be good if you could identify yourself and we will get it recorded. Is there anything further on the safety? Question there.

Karen Maclean

Hi, Karen Maclean Castlebay Community Council. Access as in road safety, which entrance do you propose to use and where would the children be decanting onto.....where will the children go into the nursery from the road?

Bernard Chisholm	Our proposal is the children will come into the car park where currently children are able to come out and we are looking at the entry just on the boundary between the current secondary and the primary using that entry into the walkway there.
Karen Maclean	So the children have come across the road to the car park. You expect the children....so you want everybody to park across the road as opposed to double parking?
Bernard Chisholm	Well clearly one of the things here for us that may come out at our consultation is currently parents stop in car park and take their children in. In this case they would have to make that walk to that entry with their children and there are some parking bays there. One of the issues may be that out of the consultation folk would consider that there should be a designated drop off and if that were a view I would certainly look at it.
Karen Maclean	I think the.....we've actually had a child knocked down using that entrance as far as I am aware primary children actually come down into the secondary school to stop that actually happening so it looks like we are actually taking a step back by having the nursery children come out of that entrance. In the summer time there was no room to park with parentage, having visitors and parking you know is at premium. We find that double parking and there is people parking on the pavement on the other side of the road so that is a great concern because it's the busiest road in Barra.
Bernard Chisholm	Okay. Thank you.
Abigail Traffry	Could I ask how the designated drop off works?
Gavin Lawson	Sorry, just before you answer that Bernard. Sorry, just for the sake of the tape do you think that you could just state your name please?
	Sorry. Abigail (O'Brian?)
Bernard Chisholm	In a number of our nurseries we would be able to look at the area that we can seek to see if it can be used for drop off. Obviously we would have to consult on that and take it further forward its just that if out of here people had a concern we would certainly look at that.
Abigail Traffry	Sorry I'm not understanding, you park the car and just leave the child.....
Bernard Chisholm	And just drop the child yes.
Abigail Traffry	And just leave the child. So a member of staff collects the children from the car and takes them into the building.
Bernard Chisholm	Sorry, not necessarily a member of staff. I'm saying maybe some parking there to allow people to stop, take their children in and then move. I couldn't see us accommodating all of the provision that we don't use the car park that's the reason I mentioned that.
Denise Munro	Can I just say my name is Denise Munro and I've never dropped my daughter at nursery by a car, we've always walked and I think road safety is very important for children. Sorry it's just that you were making the assumption that every child would be going to nursery via being dropped off by car and I'd just like to say that that's not always the way it works. Yeah
Bernard Chisholm	Yes of course.
Marion MacNeil	I just wanted to ask about the safety for primary pupils because this consultation affects also the primary pupils. You spoke about security. There is no security in the primary school full stop. So children from P1 to P7 are equally affected by all this. Spoke about the security doors, you can access the school from both entrances so what is your proposal for the security and the safety of the additional pupils that are in that building?

Bernard Chisholm	The Council itself has a security programme for this school and it is that that I when I was asked to come down so I have full details of that and that does include security doors for the primary area. So I will include with the report that I gave the details of that but it has been BLANK in the school as it has been in a number of our other schools but there is currently a design work programme going on for the primary and a commitment to provision of secure entrance at the primary so our feeling is that we should be able to do that and I'll provide the details of that in the response, I just didn't have them on the travel down and I'm happy to provide them for you.
Cllr Donald Manford	The drop off point your talking about you will be impinging on the parking are for the heritage centre would you not?
Bernard Chisholm	The point I was making Councillor Manford is as understood since I have been down, there is an issue about if we park over there we have got a some safely walk and all I'm saying is that if it was a consideration of folk here to look at the drop off close to there it is something I could ask about but I accept that that is parking but I take it is public parking or is it all heritage? I wasn't aware it was all heritage parking I thought it was some public and some heritage.
Cllr Donald Manford	I'm not in a position to designate whether it is 1, 2 or 3 but you are talking about it just now in the context of the decision to do something...recommendation but it seems this issue hasn't been answered at all. There is either a lengthy walk from the existing park or in order to overcome that to create a drop off point at the gates which would effectively, I would understand, infringe greatly on an entirely different service. Surely that needs to be worked through.
Cllr Morag Munro	Yes and it would be worked. The whole point of taking these views is to be able to take them back and to examine them and explore what can be done. So from this meeting that issue will be examined and we will see if we can find solutions to it.
Sarah Maclean	I can see that you've got security entrances at both ends of the primary school but neither of these secure entries are overlooked by an office or a classroom so how would that work with somebody buzzing in? Would there be a member of staff allocated to open these closed door?
Patricia White	We usually have a video entry system for nursery classes so when you buzz in the nursery room would see the picture of who is at the door. There is a camera at the door.
Bernard Chisholm	And that system is in place at a significant number of the nurseries and operates quite well.
Claire Manford	My name is Claire Manford. I have stopped a few times up at the school just to pick up my daughter and I've been told to move on by the police that you're double parking, your blocking the roadway and for them that's not safe so I don't understand where you're going to get the drop off point from. I don't think it's going to work.
Cllr Morag Munro	Okay. Now we are ready to go onto the next section.
Bernard Chisholm	The next section was generated from the consultation document and what I'll do is I'll make reference to the aspect of the document that it was referred. The first couple of points were in relation to the introduction. The section on the introduction.....
Female	Excuse me is it possible for you when you speak to stand up?
Bernard Chisholm	Okay. Sure. Am I okay on the mic? The first one that I was asked to look at was in the introduction. What are the relevant bodies for inspecting and approving the changes, have we informed them and if not when would we inform them? There is a number of bodies that we require to inform and make decision in relation to any proposal. There is the Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland known as SCISWIS Care Inspectorate. There is HMle as we now find in the consultation document. We obviously have to put any proposals through the fire, building control etc. So Officers prior to and subsequent to this consultation so seek advice from the agencies. However, the onus on us is to make a proposal that is written from my end so at the

	<p>moment our proposal has been to Technical Services and others who look at the basic design. From the consultation we may need to amend it based on the feedback we get here tonight and other considerations we will look at. At that point it will go to a more deeper and more detailed specification and then that information will go as part of the actual documentation and once we've got that at that stage and before probably going to Committee in June these will go to the relevant agencies. HMle proposal goes in the consultation and in terms of the Care Inspectorate, Fire etc as we develop the proposal. The second question in relation to the introduction doesn't the inspections and the question was mean physical inspection in other words do people just check the paperwork? Well in reality both are done. People do look at the paperwork but physically the inspector will check against compliance and we invite BLANK in others that process goes through and generally means compliance on both sides and nothing that we can propose could be without as we deem a compliance on both BLANK and before we could set it up we would have to so these were the two main areas for production. Is that reasonable?</p> <p>Ok the next one is section 4.1 so one of my colleagues will keep me in the proposal BLANK and the questions that I was asked. In 4.1 I was asked of the sixteen nurseries which we directly manage I was asked whether questions in relation to shared spaces, same toilets or same entrances and of the sixteen all have access to shared spaces in corridors and classroom so the sixteen that we manage in an integrated campus in all sixteen shared spaces, corridors and classrooms four of the sixteen use the same toilets and five use the same entrances.</p>
Female Voice	Sorry Bernard with regards to your reply just while you are on that subject the ones that use the same entrances did they move from purpose built facilities with designated toilets etc to these buildings where they now share toilets?
Bernard Chisholm	All of our nurseries came from different buildings but the buildings themselves were all compliant with the same requirements that you require to make over BLANK they didn't come from and all of them came from buildings that had multiple use not just one sole use and I think BLANK sole use and I think I am right in multiple use and wherever from sole use it think I am right in multiple use and sole use of the nurseries.
Female Voice	Sorry I don't think
Bernard Chisholm	Sorry just in case there is any issues with anything and more detail
Female Voice	It was more just whether the nurseries had moved from places where there were dedicated toilet facilities that they weren't sharing with primary pupils to school buildings where they did have to share the same. Do you have figures on that? On the sixteen?
Patricia White	Are you wanting figures on the whole sixteen or just the one's that are
Female Voice	Or just of the four
Patricia White	Three had their own toilets before they moved and now are sharing toilets
Bernard Chisholm	<p>We can give you further details to identify the fact that we get it in the response and identified all the schools for you and identify all the BLANK and we will try to identify which ones were taken over and which were shared entrances. Again the purpose is to inform your own responses. The next section was 4.6. How could putting the nursery into a building passed as poor which is a commission c be seen as an improvement. Obviously as we are well the Council in general has an aspiration by 2018 to bring all the Council schools up into a commission b situation. However as we are planning refurbishment that doesn't mean to say that the refurbished areas that we put the children aren't refurbished to a good condition that would meet that condition for the whole school so we think that it would be refurbished to a good standard and be able to meet the needs of the children, care commission etc. Obviously the condition standards they applied Council buildings they don't apply to other formed buildings for example we haven't done the same assessment of your own although in terms of the children services we think it is a good building but we don't have a condition survey of these if you were looking for a comparison based on what we are going to refurbish.</p>

Donald Manford	While you are on that particular subject Bernard do you have an idea of the cost to bring this building up to a condition?
Bernard Chisholm	The total one I don't have no.
Donald Manford	Would it not be useful to have it at a situation like this? Surely it would be part of the decision making.
Morag Munro	The conditions are that it was carried out a number of years ago and did have a ball park figure in it but obviously we wouldn't know for certain how much it would cost until there is a proper plan. But at Castlebay school is very high on priority list for refurbishment and I think we were thinking about 2015 for the building.
Donald Manford	Yes Morag I accept that but I was trying to understand the cost. It would be useful to know the cost?
Bernard Chisholm	All I can say on that is when the school estate removal was being done that was a commitment of the Comhairle however we don't yet have costs for the refurbishment of all the buildings to the condition standard. I don't have it but note your point that that should be available for this decision.
Donald Manford	Well the obvious reason I raise this is if the refurbishment is going to cost in the region of 50% of the cost of a new build then it would seem a waste of money not to have a new build. It's important to have the figures.
Morag Munro	That is a decision that has been made and a discussion that we would have to have once the plans were looked at. It will not at that stage yet of having definite plans but it is now on our priority list and we are obliged to bring all our schools to standard to commission "b" at least commission "b" by 2018 by the Scottish Governments own Schools Estate Strategy that is the obligation that is on as an authority.
Male Voice	Do you have a plan at all for the building here? If you are talking about refurbishing a single part of it do you have a plan at all or an idea of what you actually are going to do. It would be ludicrous to refurbish the tiny wee bit then decide that we are going to actually have to refurbish the whole building. So is there a strategy? And this is part one of that strategy?
Morag Munro	There is a strategy and the strategy is to put all our schools to be up to condition b by 2018 which is the obligations of the authority but we are hoping that will be 2015 for Castlebay. We don't have plans in process yet. It will need to go through the same process that the schools that we have built and refurbished and our WISP and a number of the schools originally were going to be refurbished but as Councillor Manford said once the option appraisal is carried out it was agreed that if it was more cost effective to do a new build that happened with part of the Nicolson and it happened with Sir E Scott and it happened with so these option appraisals were carried out and the same option appraisal would have to be carried out for Castlebay but there is an obligation on this to bring it up to condition b standard by 2018 and arrange to have it by 2015.
Bernard Chisholm	Could I just add to that our situation is that there will be a Councillors requirement to operate to capital planning one on which stops at 2013 and a new one will start and I think the period is five years and they will look at the entire estate and make decisions in relation to the priority of building specification etc and within education in any one year we are concentrating on trying to improve the environment of the learning for our young people so we don't think the spending of this amount of money to do work there on a programme that is being developed over a couple of years when that actual programme of work is of a standard that it meets all of the compliance we need for the delivery we think
Female Voice	Sorry can I just ask when you decide that you are going to move the playgroup up to the primary then it is going to cost you too much then it would make more sense to knock down the building. Then we are going to have to move our playgroup children yet again somewhere else, upset there routine while you decide what you are going to do. Do you not think it makes more sense to leave them where they are where they are

	happy.
Bernard Chisholm	Well that is a matter that the elected members when we deliver this information back will take into consideration.
Gavin Lawson	Can I just come in at this point. Just for the interests of clarity here when we are talking about the refurbishment of the school Mrs Munro is talking about plans being developed as refurbishment of the school in due course. No one is suggesting at this point that there is any plan, that there is approach which could involve deciding to demolish the school and rebuild it. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to focus on the information which we do have in the plans which are or the proposals which have been developed and that relate to the primary. I understand that it may be a matter of some concern to parents that there may be a possibility that in the future that if following another consultation and if going through the process the Councillors at that time decide that the best course of action would be to have a rebuild. However that is a hypothetical situation which we are not in a position to comment on tonight and I would ask us to focus on the proposal here which is something which you actually do have information in front of you. You are not being asked to speculate on hypothesis.
Chris Denehy	My name is Chris Denehy I find this a very strange situation where in a consultation and yet we do not have the plan, we don't know where the security doors are so how as a community are we meant to take these plans seriously when I was at the pupil council meeting on Thursday we went up to pre-school, we looked around and stood for five minutes in the classroom because the senior management at the school don't seem to know as much as we do. So you are saying that you have plans but none of us here really know what the plans are. So you haven't got plans because we don't know the security doors we don't know anything so you are expecting us to make decisions on information we haven't got.
Gavin Lawson	What we are asking you to do tonight is to discuss the proposal document which is before you. It is also a matter of record that questions about security doors and things like that were put recently by the parent council and Mr Chisholm has already given an undertaking that he has a map available to you tonight and that map will be incorporated into the documentation. The purpose of tonight is to take any areas of concern that you may have to address them either tonight or very shortly thereafter to put you in a position where you are informed and where you can make an informed decision about what you are thinking about this proposal.
Donald Manford	Can I at 1.1 the very first sentence in your introduction "the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar aims to allocate resources in a way which will secure the best possible education experience for the pupils in the Western Isles". Surely all the questions that are being asked just now go to the very heart of that and not hypotheticals at all.
Morag Munro	Yes but that is not the proposal we are talking about we are talking about the proposal to move the nursery from its present building into the school that is the proposal we are talking about but that is a general objective of the Comhairle as you know Councillor Manford.
Female Voice	Excuse me can I just ask a question. I was a teacher in Daliburgh and I know that the new primary in Daliburgh came as a result of some money from the Scottish Office and that was why there wasn't going to be any provision or one of the reasons that there wasn't going to be now is the pre-school here if that moves into primary and therefore increases the provision to three year olds up to eleven in the primary does that then give the Comhairle access to more funding to refurbish the primary building to condition b you know as a BLANK to doing the whole lot. Is that one of the reasons why you want to do this?
Morag Munro	No that is not the reason but the thing at here is what we feel what the department feel is the best educational outcome for the children of the Western Isles. That is the main priority is what is best for the children. They spoke about Daliburgh and the funding the Scottish Government had a funding screen that they used to assist councils to build schools and in fact the Daliburgh I think there were £2 million but that the Comhairle had £6 million to put in themselves. We are not sure what will happen in the future but we do hope that in the future the Scottish Government will have a similar scheme and

	we have got a priority list of schools that we will bid for money from that fund provided that it is available and we would hope that that is the case particularly with the Governments own strategy on schools estate.
Female (Denehy)	Does it not make better sense to wait until the school has been refurbished. Does it not make more sense BLANK as you will be moving all of the children up there BLANK.
Morag Munro	That is a real point that we are taking onboard and it will be reported to the Committee.
Female Voice	I just want clarity on a number of points in the Report if I may?
Morag Munro	Is this on the particular issue? Or do you want Bernard to address the rest of the questions first?
Bernard Chisholm	Sorry we are dealing with those questions that were raised by the Committee and the Parent Council.
Female Voice	It was just on section 4.8 because I think you were talking about costs and a question had been asked about cost. So I was just really wanting to know at b and c you spoke about the costs associated with operating a separate building so you have obviously worked out what the costs are for the Comhairle but no where in this document and so far no one has mentioned it but what is the cost of the community of a building that is going to be left empty and I would like you to address that please.
Bernard Chisholm	In the actual consultation document you will see that when we were asked to word a consultation elected members of the Comhairle ask that part of the consultation should take on board any concerns the community had or views they had about the use of the building. Of course under rural schools issue we have got to look at the terms of community impact and one of the benefits of the proper strategy consultation as we know have is that the community in terms of the submissions made have the opportunity to indicate what they consider to be the costs we feel that what we are providing here is a benefit we feel there is a children's building there we have many uses for children and these are parts of the discussions that we entitled to have and we look to support you if you have uses of it. It may be that the proposals that you make yourself have been made to a school will be considered and we have support but from our point of view at the moment what we provided here is possible and the community may well have a BLANK.
Denise Munro	Can I just ask are all of the nursery provision in the Western Isles integrated with primary schools and is that a main agenda that is here that is moving this forward?
Bernard Chisholm	At the meeting of the Western Isles we have had quite a few move to an integrated within our schools but that is where our strategy started from what actually happened was that throughout the Western Isles there was a demand on us first of all to get over direct management secondly most of these cases had people wanted us to BLANK and of course thirdly we had buildings that staff and others wanted to support pre-school and it made sense to them that they were on the campus and working with it. We have continued to develop from our side of it is a positive movement what generated us on this discussion for that was that our rooms overby and you will see in the proposal I think there are views about developing and extending etc and we have been in situations where the numbers were greater than registration that is caused some challenge for us. This proposal was a means of trying to increase the registration for two rooms I think for three to five year olds we put up as many as twenty nine.
Female Voice	But surely if the agenda is not to integrate it completely then it would make more sense to provide more space in the existing custom built facility that we had and it is fairly integrated the children still use the main school facilities swimming pool, games hall etc and they are still coming in contact and they are just across the road but as a pedestrian when I was taking my daughter to school and to pre-school I would find it a lot safer rather than having all that traffic in the one area dropping them off at the primary so I think my main question is why does this make more sense why does it make more sense to have it all integrated where they are in the primary because I don't really understand the positives from that.

Bernard Chisholm	You will see in one of the questions they ask specifically what would be the advantage of that so if you don't mind when I come to that I will go through it. But I just don't want to lose track of things but it is a very specific one that the parent council asked what actually was the advantage in moving them.
Marion MacNeil	Just obviously going back to the actual question about the category "c" as you mentioned an options appraisal would have to be done at some point in the future obviously I think and I can probably clearly speak on behalf on the majority of the people here it would seem like a common sense approach to do this first before actually you know and then move on to what is required. What concerns me is we spoke about costs I have heard tonight you talking about basics the fact that you have no plans however you have mentioned that amendments may be required once you obviously consult these others agencies you had an estimated costing for the works that are required for just the nursery provision already I have noted down a few costings that already have to be included in this £62,000 or whatever has been estimated. What concerns me is that we are tax payers. We pay our council tax. We go to the Comhairle's consultations where there are budget cuts. We as a community are concerned but we support whatever cuts are necessary but we equally want best value and we have to look at the bigger picture. There is no point in throwing money away like I said its public money and therefore I feel that from listening tonight how, I don't know, wishy washy this whole consultation seems to be that is probably why there is so much concern because we just don't you know we don't know.
Helen	£63.000 you are going to spend but you will still be moving from good facilities to poor facilities and the building remains category c and think £63,000 is money well spent. It seems regressive when the facilities existing are more than adequate – they are good. It seems a waste of money.
Bernard Chisholm	The next question that was raised was at 4.8 in the report. How does having a split site challenge us for transition? The split is only 150 metres. It might only be 150 metres but what we look to see is that the children can easily move when they are in one corridor between the nursery and the classrooms easily without having to go outside, easier access to the classrooms and the nursery for children and staff. 150 metres from the school across the road to another building is an actual barrier to the ease of access in which children staff can work across rooms and we do get some flexibility when rooms are adjacent and close to each other for working with the children but 150 metres from our point is significant.
Abigail Traffry	I was a member of the parent council I was involved in the latest HMIe inspection, the transition from nursery to primary was praised in that report. There was no problem identified with the transition and as actually the parent council question also mentions Eoligarry school is also bid by the nursery and it's considerably further away and has a good transition in there.
Bernard Chisholm	I suppose that is the subsidiary question at 4.8 which was the parent council asked Eoligarry school which is also fed by the nursery considerably further away. All nurseries irrespective of distance clearly can make effective transitions without preparing a child from one learning situation to another and we have never said that Eoligarry does not have an effective transition and in fact that wouldn't change the terms of the transition from primary to Eoligarry.
Male Voice	Sorry I have to stop you there. In fact it will change as they will be streamed into Castlebay Primary and then they are going to be disrupted and move to a different primary school to save being streamed into one school is not going to effect them it has to effect them. It is a very vague thing just because they are going into one primary school it aint the end of world.
Bernard Chisholm	The situation at the moment is that all pre-school children in Barra come to the pre-school provision and we have here in Castlebay as managed by the school. They are transition into Eoligarry, they do have an integrated facilities within Castlebay they do have transition activities and we see that at Stornoway primary for example and a number of other schools children go to the nurseries but they have the integrated learning where they go to many other schools that aren't the one they go to the nursery from and usually parents make the decision about which school based on their locality

	and other factors so I don't see that what this allows for is opportunities for the children in both play and learning that in more easily facilities and doesn't impact on the transition.
Female Voice	Just another question about the learning stages because we are referring to transition, I know that elsewhere in the report it is mentioned that learning stage one of the curriculum is nursery and primary one. I couldn't find anywhere within the Curriculum for Excellence that actually mentioned these had to take place in the one location that nursery was grouped in with primary one and that this was part of the Curriculum for Excellence. They don't say that they are located within the primary one but they certainly all through the Curriculum for Excellence talks about the needs for working together and one of the questions have come to later ask me about could I identify some of the best practice and research that identified for that and I had done as BLANK and I will make reference to some of them but I will give you a bigger a more extensive report that the written one but I have checked it for you.
Paul MacGuire	I know one of the issues as a contractor you seem to be going on about the transition in your consultation as a major improvement but if it is praised by HMle its sitting on the same campus, its 150 metres there is a difference between the primary school and the secondary school maybe 150 metres whatever. It doesn't seem to make sense that this should be. There is no improvement. If the transition arrangements were great for the HMle apparently they were ok for the Care Commission from the feedback we had back and Eoligarry don't seem to have a problem with it there is no benefit so why would you be housing this as part of your argument for changing here to there from purpose built to spending money on this. It seems a bit wishy washy as well.
Bernard Chisholm	Let me assure you that I don't think HMle regulate on wishy washy terms so I will provide you with a couple of the HMle reports that looked at the integrated benefits of the children in an integrated setting. Transition is about the point about preparing children and a period of time from going from the nursery into the primary.
Paul MacGuire	Its not sufficient benefit here. You are talking again in round terms again. Surely there should be a benefit educationally but it has been highlighted as being good and it is working well and it works well being good and it is working well and it works well with other. What is the actual benefit? What is the significant benefit in £63,000 taking them from the purpose built 21 st Century building to the sticky plaster that you may be putting up the road.
Female Voice	Can I just back up Paul with the fact that our community is integrated anyway. That these finer degrees of 150 metres across the road, its not going to make a difference to our children because we are an integrated community.
Bernard Chisholm	The issue about the transition if I had finished that transition is about point of assisting a child prepare for the move from pre-school to the primary. The effect that we are talking about here isn't just about the transition and the evidence you will see, which is really HMle earlier and Curriculum for Excellence is that the benefit children get from the continuous interaction between each other for their activities and learning and 150 metres is significant in that. When we can have a nursery passed close to an infant stage and when those children can work together, can share, when the staff and very significant one that you will evidence is the relationship between the teacher and the nursery staff facilitated by the closer integration so to come back I don't see a problem in terms of saying transition is good but I am very clear that the evidence is good to show that when we can enhance the frequency and the quality of the contact between the nursery and the primary on a daily basis that does have a positive impact for the children.
Female Voice	Can I ask very quickly we seem to have moved away completely from the main purpose for this change for this proposal which was the successful increase in intake into Gaelic Medium pre-school education. Now I would like to say that it appears to me that the Council seems to have great difficulty within dealing with his successful school seems to deal with declining those far better than it is coping with an increasing role. I want to ask a question which is relevant to accommodation in the primary school. How many children by August 2012 will be in the classroom P1-P3 in Gaelic Medium Education? How many children will be in that school this August? In that room?

Bernard Chisholm	I don't have that.....
Female Voice	And if there are more than 30 children in that room by August 2012 should the argument not be that there should be a second primary teacher for P1-P3 and a second classroom for P1-P3? Because you not only have a successful pre-school croilegean intake you have a very successful Gaelic medium intake that you are not coping with and you are using all kinds of excuses and moving from a purpose built building to a building where even the primary school should probably be looking at the accommodation in needs and the secondary school should be looking at the accommodation in needs because there needs to be a whole school review of accommodation requirements for this school.
Bernard Chisholm	A couple of points. First of all in relation to our approach to the growth undoubtedly I am reasonably confident this year because of the Comhairle's strategy and our partnerships we are seeing a significant growth throughout the Western Isles this year and that is built on some of the growth last year and some very effective partnerships that were developing. Secondly I have a forum last week, this week, with the head teachers over the staffing of the that increase in gaelic and in the work. The allocation of teaching staff nationally is governed by a formula and we will all staff to that composite classes etc we have to live with. They are a factor that we deal with. The situation is.....
Female Voice	How many children should be in P1-P3 gaelic medium for one teacher?
Bernard Chisholm	Our composite figure for that is 25.
Female Voice	And how many will you have in that classroom August?
Bernard Chisholm	I don't have the enrolment figures for August at this point.
Female Voice	Will it not be in the region of 30 to 31? In that case should it not be that one of these primary classrooms should be allocated and a second primary teacher be recruited? On the back of the success.....
Bernard Chisholm	No sorry.....it wasn't the classroom....
Morag Munro	We just wanted to say that the Comhairle have an obligation to provide education for the children on demand and the ratio of teachers to pupils is a legal requirement so if there are going to be 31 pupils we will need to provide the required staff for that as it is a legal obligation.
Female Voice	Is that part of this consultation?
Morag Munro	No that is not part of the consultation.
Abigail Traffry	Can you just clarify how many classrooms are needed? Would they still be in the same classroom with two teachers?
Bernard Chisholm	Yes we have for that number of enrolments and one of the factors about enrolment for Castlebay is the numbers are being fairly stable like maybe over the next few years a slight drop and it may change after that but in the next couple of years the change that could most significantly be raised between Gaelic and English you could see that however in terms of the nursery we have piloted a situation so that if as the moment the Gaelic needs to grow or the English provision were to drop then there is actually capacity for us with experience we have elsewhere to run a split nursery with different numbers so for example in Carloway and other places when the English numbers fell below 8 I think we operate the staffing can drop for that and the rooms we have up there were 32 coming in for nursery would easily manage any split 29 in P3-P5 easily manage because we are looking at about 32 next year. In terms of primary we have sufficient classes for the population that we are looking at and we are not seeing that change in the composite numbers that we suggest multiple classes without significant growth in the population.

Morag Munro	Does this take BLANK through these questions.
Coleen Logan	Can I just come back to the transition point when I read the document I read nothing about transition for children going to Eoligarry school. Can I ask what you have done to look at the effects that it is going to have on pre-school children if they have their pre-school education in Castlebay primary and/or then moved to another primary school because not every child will go to Castlebay primary.
Bernard Chisholm	Two things on that. We have many of our primary schools that have children within the primary stages working on the integrated setting within that primary that regularly go to their local primary school. The transition with Eoligarry will continue on the same way as it has always done in the past for transition. We have made no assumptions in here that children from Eoligarry would be remaining here or any of the work being moved could in any way effect the experiences learning and teaching in the infant stages in Eoligarry are so consistent with what we are operating in this primary school so I am not seeing any because we haven't seen it in any of other settings where that is proven difficult for them.
Female Voice	Can I just ask the £63,000 that is disclosed in here is it not viable to spend that on the primary without moving the preschool. What is this one off funding, can you explain this one off funding that has been secured to me please?
Bernard Chisholm	Since we have been implementing the early years strategy and trying to develop the service across the islands. Councillors ask that we had to have the strategy written. We have published two of these the integrated early years and then more recently the early years and early years intervention. What councillors ask is as we progress the strategy that we should carry forward money that the government have given us for investment within early years provision and may be able to carry money of that forward.
Female Voice	So that is specifically for pre-school not for primary so that only way that we can use this money for the primary is basically to move our pre-school children? Is that what you are saying?
Bernard Chisholm	No not at all.
Morag Munro	It is to be used for the nursery.
Female Voice	The money you said it is for nursery so could we not just give that money to Barra pre-school to do?
Bernard Chisholm	If the Council should choose to do that then you could chose to request it and that would form your statement without form of what goes through to HMle and in fact you could use that to represent that in the further submission for the proposal that you have here. It just seems that your proposal that you have here.
Female Voice	It just seems that the proposals are very, when you read through it is very much that the loom is going to go to Castlebay school and you haven't given the option of giving the money to the pre-school for them to put added resources in to make the space bigger and to accommodate more children.
Bernard Chisholm	Part of the reason for that is that in the consultation proposal we require to put a proposal generally the consultation does invite these views so consequently there are some things I expect you have a different view on at this present moment and time we have to go away and look at the information but remember elected members, HMle and others get the opportunity to examine and a decision will be made and one of the things they will have to consider is that for the Castlebay campus would it be better to invest that money or any others were we are doing in our children or would it be best to use it this way.
Female Voice	Can I just say Bernard I am absolutely delighted to have heard you say that because £63,000 to be spent on the children's centre would bring that building not just to a good facility but to an excellent facility. £63,000 for the primary well I hate to disappoint you but double that if you want to achieve to even take that to a good a facility.

Bernard Chisholm	Well it is really good to hear that but I have also tried the suggestion that is genuinely the information that will be forwarded out to the members and one of the reasons I did suggest that we answer these and give you this information as soon as possible is that you have the opportunity to use that with your document to make a proposal and that will be the example and it will be very transparent and an opportunity and it may well be but I can not say at this time what the decision will be.
Sandra Maclean	Its actually to do more with the security its just something I thought when you are talking about this money that you have invested is there any change also going to be made to the access for pre-school children to come down via the walkway?
Bernard Chisholm	One of the questions I was asked here was would we install a hand rail and other safety.....
Sandra Maclean	Its just those stairs are....
Bernard Chisholm	Yes we accept that. Its one of those areas that in terms of care commission and other what we have done or whatever adjustments we make we would have to
Sandra Maclean	So that is in your proposal?
Bernard Chisholm	Yes.
Male Voice	Can I just ask another question? You seem to be fixed on transition but what we don't seem to be focusing on is giving education to pre-school children in a sub-standard building might be able to transition the nursery into the primary but are they actually going to get better education in that building which is an old fashion design building, high windows, no outside garden nothing like that so ok BLANK will be going to primary but maybe at a lower educational standard. Could you answer what is the benefit of moving into an older building? Apart from the transition?
Bernard Chisholm	Well you have many old buildings but we are talking about the refurbishment and therefore meeting their educational needs and I am very confident the children will do educational learning teaching and their experiences every bit as well and equally confident that there is no detriment in that that you can have a different view but you know I cant see because we have evidence the remaining children in the provision or similar to what we are doing and doing very well. I do accept what you say that there is a difference in the building, that's one of the factors that will have to be considered.
Female voice	Can I just ask what impact will this have on the children, the older children in school when you've got aged 2 and a half and you've got 12 year olds and the older ones are being prohibited to going to certain areas or will they be restricted in anything because nobody seems to be talking about these kids?
Bernard Chisholm	Well. Sorry. Two things on that. Some of the questions to be raised and as I go through them I can pick them up as they've asked. I've also asked the children today and if people wanted to get some idea of what the children thought I asked them, I anticipated that someone might want to know that so I asked them if its okay if I shared some of the things, depends if you wish to do that later I'm happy to do it. Okay. The next question was how high are the costs as they relate to any enrolment numbers? What's the cost per enrolment? They've asked what the cost is. When we talk about the enrolment cost the way we look at it across our nursery are take the operating cost divided by the number of children and on that basis the subsidised cost over the period of 10/11 which was the ones we looked at was about £980 per child per year. Now just bear in mind when I say that all our nurseries in the Western Isles have a subsidised cost and clearly there is variability depending on the costs. That is the figure for here. The next question I had was why will there there be a more efficient and effective deployment of staff? What is so difficult about a 300m round trip between the primary nursery and the primary or nursery primary and back? The areas that we would consider making a difference but I'll look at the ones we considered. Groups of children in the adjacent situation can go with 1 member of staff into the infant class to work. With children in the infant class in project very easy to do that across a corridor. 1 member of staff can remain working in the play room with a small group of children

	as they are within easy reach of the teaching staff different over the movement down to the nursery. Children from the infant class can go through to the nursery in groups to work with the nursery children. As many of you know having looked at the early level that is one of the things encouraged and movement back is giving some more of the nursery experiences into the infant stage and there is an opportunity for nursery staff to work with the teacher in the class room and for the class room auxiliary assistants and teachers to work together so we see it giving flexibility around opportunities working together and staff collaboration much greater in an integrated setting when there is that proximity and that isn't just here, we have seen that develop in the locations that we are already working on so that's the area that we say as the benefit and you obviously may see disadvantages to that but these are the ones we saw.
Al Friend Parent Council	You said that 1 member of staff could be left with a group of children in the classroom while the other one goes off. Presumably that would be for a period time for a planned activity. Is that even allowed?
Patricia White	You could actually have 1 member of staff for a group of 8 children on their own as long as everything was in access to another member of staff.
Bernard Chisholm	And it operates in our nurseries.
Abigail Traffry	Presumably the group left behind not with the P1's would be the nursery class of 3year olds so when one of those urgently needs the toilet, because they always leave it as long as possible, who supervises them going to the toilet if there is only one member of staff with the group and the toilets at the other end of the hall?
Patricia White	That's why they have to be within close proximity to other staff so that another member of staff would be called to help.
Bernard Chisholm	And all I can say to you is overall of integrated settings that works very well with no problems.
Female voice	So teaching time is going to be spent taking children to the toilet.
Bernard Chisholm	No
	If you are calling in another member of staff to supervise while a teacher takes a child to the toilet.
Bernard Chisholm	That's assuming that the teacher would be the on.....
Bernard Chisholm	<p>Okay? How will the extra member of staff 5.5 (d), how will the extra member of staff for the Gaelic class be funding 24 children equals 3 members of staff. The situation for that is that for staffing in our schools and our pre-schools as I said before is based on a formula basis and that just has to be met if the numbers are in it. In this model the room can accommodate up to 29 3-5year olds and we meet the staffing that is required to do that.</p> <p>8.1 (a) What is the available evidence to substantiate the claim made that when a nursery is incorporated within a school there is a seamless early level education resulting in significant advantages to learning and teaching of both pre-school and primary 1 children? We have looked at some of that evidence and I will give you the references you can obviously have them and I'll copy the actual, some of the documents if you want it. But just to say there are a number of key documents these include articles from the Learning and Teaching Scotland Task Group on pre-school in the primary transition. HMle looked at a number of the school reports that have looked at these integrated experiences and I've also looked at the EIS Nursery Education Research Review 2010 which actually looked at the research across a number of factors supporting the kind of integrated approach and as I say I will give you that hopefully that will give you the basis if you wish to challenge some of that in another way and I'll also give you the other references within it that might draw you in other directions. So that's...it's from that type of work. 8.5 was "is the class in a box conditional on this programme being taken forward" is its cost included in the 63? No its not. In fact throughout the primary situation and our settings we are trying, and</p>

	there is a number of classes of boxes here, so we are investing in all our primary schools including the new build and the reason we do that is there portable, greater flexibility in use and we fund that from our IT resources so its not.....
Male voice	How is that relevant to this consultation if they've been rolled out everywhere else? Surely that's irrelevant then.
Bernard Chisholm	No. It's just the question I was asked. Was it coming from a dedicated or was it being brought.....
Male Voice	It's highlighted in your proposal almost phrased as if its conditional on this proposal but there will be an upgrade to IT facilities within the primary school so it's not relevant. Why is it in the proposal?
Patricia White	It's in the proposal document because we were talking about replacing the IT room with the class in a box.
Male voice	But the phrasing of it seems to suggest that and I've heard a few people saying it that it almost seems as if you're saying this is a condition on the move. That's good that you've cleared that up.
Bernard Chisholm	No no no. Okay. Where would the primary depute head Teachers office be located? It will be in area 3. What we are looking at is that the primary Depute Head Teachers office will be in area 3 which is room 11 and again we looked at the drawn plan and identifying that but it's a small office as you come into the primary on the right-hand side beside the infant toilets. Okay? 8.9 Are interactive white boards necessary in a nursery environment? Goes back to the point we were making there about doesn't matter if they are there or if they're not. They are not something that is necessarily a requirement however, interactive whiteboards just seem to have enhanced the learning experience available to children and they are provided now in almost all our Comhairle nurseries and are regarded as a desirable resource and some of them are capable of that kind of facilities. Now that's not something we've driven, that's something we've been asked for through the staff and the early years so we think that it's a good tool a good resources and worth having.
Female voice	The Comhairle nurseries, this is in relation to the Comhairle the points you are making. You run the English and the Gaelic playgroups over there. They have Croileagan space so why aren't you considering, if white boards are a good tool, why aren't you considering putting them in there? Is it just because they are in a separate building? And if ICT is important in a classroom in a box they are portable, they would be provided over there as well. So why are you drawing a line between what you provide in another building and what you would provide in your own building (unable to hear remainder of sentence due to background noise).
Patricia White	It is educational benefits..... The building at the Children's Centre doesn't have a wall space ...
Female voice	They are mobile
Patricia White	Partition to mount a smart board.
Female Voice	But that would be part of alterations that could be made to accommodate it if you thought that was so important.
Female Voice	Smart Boards are portable as well. They don't need a wall.
Bernard Chisholm	An again as a comment that is easily taken up in this and will again go forward for consideration in any amendments.
	Sorry that's not really very clear what you are saying there about the walls. Its not....walls available in the nursery to accommodate a white board which is not the case, there is walls that are available in the nursery to accommodate a whiteboard and they are portable so I think that's quite confusing for people reading this proposal.

Bernard Chisholm	<p>Okay. 8.9 Does area 1 currently have an interactive whiteboard, if not is this included in the 63" White board has not been included in the £63,000 because its just in our role out of our own stock and we have such whiteboards. So we have them. How much would it cost to install the IP telephone system in the current nursery? These new systems we have in the Council at the moment. I don't actually have the cost for the installation in the nursery but I did phone today to ask if we could get that costed so we will get that one back to you I just don't have it. How, 8.1.8 how long and for what will the nursery and primary pupils be mixed classes? Well clearly that will vary depend on projects, activity, time of year etc. so I don't have anything fixed on that it's just the flexibility and the planning the staff would do themselves. 8.1.8 How would there be improved access to management support if the primary DH is located in the secondary and as I was saying the situation is that while Depute Heads at the moment shared with the Depute Head based in the secondary there will be a designated place for the staff, the Depute Head Teacher in the primary.</p>
Alf (Parent Council)	<p>Sorry Bernard. One of the, and this will be on the background of that is that it was mistakenly believed that Deputy Head for the primary was the line manager but in actual fact it's the Head Teacher so the management structure will be....that should be further away in the future because at the moment its 30m or so.</p>
Bernard Chisholm	<p>Okay the Depute Head.....The Head Teacher is always in all our schools however, in our schools usually one of the senior management sometimes one of the other teachers has the responsibility for the support of the early stages so that's not an issue.</p>
Al Friend (Parent Council)	<p>How does having the head teacher further away improve the management support?</p>
Bernard Chisholm	<p>Even although the Head Teacher is the overall Head she still delegates responsibility to the Depute Head of Primary and that support is directly on the campus.</p> <p>8.20 Was the same question in a way raised previously? How can a building classed as poor claim to be better designed for the delivery of 21 century curriculum? and again my answer just has to be while the classification for this whole building it isn't something that remains permanent and all the works that we do to improve the provision has to be considered and therefore if we do refurbish areas then those areas the children access have an improvement but this question relates to the ones you were saying before about whether we should invest no, later or whenever and, like I say, the council will represent your views to them in that.</p> <p>You ask us at 10.3 Are all the auxiliary staff registered with the Scottish Social Service Council and how many are and how many are not registered? 1 out of 6 is, an auxiliary is currently in the process of registering and auxiliaries only require to be registered if they are working with the nursery however, just if I can take in 10.3 with that. Do all auxiliary staff registered with the council hold a relevant qualification registered with the Scottish Social Service council how many do and how many do not? 1 has a qualification 5-0, all staff have 3 years to obtain a qualification that meets the requirement and the Comhairle will fund these qualifications and this training opportunity is available to al auxiliary relief staff working in nurseries throughout the Western Isles but again we will get the detail.</p>
Cllr Morag Munro	<p>I'm conscious that time is passing and that this is taking quite a long time there are another 31 general questions that the Parent council have put. Are you happy for us to proceed and for Bernard to continue answering these question? Are you happy with that? (numerous people say yes) Okay.</p>
Bernard Chisholm	<p>You may wish me to get through them and then maybe we'll see how much you want to look at each one but if I carry on through. That was the questions on the consultation document. The following questions were more general questions that people felt they wanted more information on okay. So these aren't necessarily directed to the consultation document. Where would the nursery toilets be? How far would they be from each of the nursery classroom? How would toilet trips be managed? Again all questions that affect all of our integrated provision. The nursery can use the infant toilets. Toilet trips in all our schools in those settings are managed by staff. Children whether they get taken to the toilet by staff individually or in groups dependant</p>

	on their stage and development a child may go on their own. This would be risk assessed which is standard and control measures are always put in place in the policy and procedures etc. so that's how we would deal with that.
Al Friend (Parent Council)	As far as I can tell from what you've said the play rooms are at one end of the building and the toilets are at the other end of the building. There will be times when some children have accidents and they will be needed to be taken down. one of the things you mentioned first of was best practice, with privacy and dignity in mind is it best practice to take them through the whole school, perhaps past the older children, their brothers and sisters, their neighbours in that state?
Patricia White	We had looked to see changing facilities within the school today and that is something we haven't put in the proposal document so that's something we will have to look at.
Bernard Chisholm	Where would the nursery entrance be? We mentioned that previously, next to room13 and mentioned we would put out all the entrances etc. in the plan. Where would snacks be prepared? Within the classroom which is normal practice in out nursery classrooms that operates where we are. What are the projected nursery numbers for 2012/13? What we are looking at at the moment is approximately 32.
Abigail Traffry	Will there be proper cooking facilities in the classroom then or will there be microwaves available for snacks? I understand as part of the Curriculum for Excellence children are encouraged to understand learning about their environment and meal preparation. They do an awful lot of that over there. It really enriches their experience. How will that be dealt with here?
Patricia White	There is a small cooking area within the nursery but there will be within the nursery room. It can be a microwave or a small, sort of portable, cooking unit.
Abigail Traffry	Can I just make the point at this stage then. Would it be more appropriate to come to parents with a consultation that actually included a plan drawn out where this kitchen will be where the toilets will be? You're taking things onto this. You've already got a figure of £63,000. Does this £63,000 include the kitchen? If it does why don't parents have access to this plan that exists that you all know about? You know we are not being fully informed about this at all.
Patricia White	We are talking about a kitchen; we are really talking about a length of worktop space with proper sinks and a space for a microwave or a portable cooking unit.
Male voice	Is that in both areas then?
Patricia White	Yes it's in both areas and we have it in other nurseries.
Female voice	And is that being taken into consideration in the floor space that you have already planned out?
Patricia White	Yes
Male voice	Why is it not in the plan then?
Patricia White	We have the costings for it but it isn't shown in the drawings.
Male voice	Why not? If you have the costing and you have the plan why not share it with us all?
Bernard Chisholm	We are happy to.
Male voice	You ask for us to make informed representation to you but you have not come up with a plan so it's a half hearted consultation. You have to have a plan to come to us so we can make a decision.
Bernard Chisholm	Okay. I can only accept your.....

Male voice	Do you have plan you were able to send out first thing tomorrow morning so everybody can get access to it?
Bernard Chisholm	As I've said in relation to the questions laid out here I tried in the period since I got them to put as much information as I could for it and we would happily get back.....
Male voice	It's a yes or a no. Is there a plan that you can.....
Bernard Chisholm	The plan is as we've described it.
Male voice	That people can see.
Patricia White	There is a draft drawing from Technical Services but it needs amending.
Male voice	You are talking about we are able to amend our input into this so therefore it would be better if you had the plan to work on that people could then have representation to so could you send that down and make it accessible to the Children's Centre and to the school and to the staff in the school and to the local Councillors? Tomorrow?
Bernard Chisholm	No problem and that gives you.....that plan can be given and it still gives you the time to give your response.
Male voice	We've got till 29 February so we've got 28 days. Times ticking away so if it comes down tomorrow that would be helpful. I'm sure Councillor Munro would see that as helpful as well.
Bernard Chisholm	<p>Okay. We were asked what the cost of each nursery department built up in the new school project was. Now I don't have a cost for the nursery. I have asked the WISP project if they could do an estimate and they've undertaken they 'I have a look at that and give us something. Obviously it may be difficult to get exactly but they'll give us an indication of the cost of the new one under the new schools.</p> <p>What are the implications of a primary break on nursery? The primary children have 15 minute break during the play session and this session would.... can be timetabled so its not necessary that they are at the same time and risk assessments will always be completed and control measures in place and again Care Commission and other Care Inspectorate look at these things in approving anything that we are doing there.</p>
Female Voice	Sorry, does that mean that the primary children will not be allowed out at the same time as the playgroup children. Is this what your idea is? Where as down the road there we have access to the outdoor area all day long. We can sit out there and play with them all. The older children as well are also worried about when they are out in the play ground will they be bumping into the little ones. Both area kids aren't they?
Bernard Chisholm	<p>Yeah, I appreciate what you say and as you say if you wish I can give you an idea of some of the pros and cons that the children themselves have lodged and it includes reference to that. Okay.</p> <p>Has Eoiligarry School been part of drawing up the proposal? No this was as I mentioned earlier on in the statutory consultation this is one in relation to a change of use of something within the Castlebay school area so there isn't one that is required in terms of Eoiligarry. There was a question about the cost of rehousing a BLANK from the proposed area which is £2000. We were asked about the window friendly height not all of them are of that letter some are and some aren't and we are not adjusting other windows down to the children friendly height.</p>
Female Voice	In one of the nursery classrooms there isn't a single window this toddler height.
Bernard Chisholm	What are the detailed costs of the build. There is an entrance ramp and hand rails, £6000 again you will get all these in writing just like the accommodation including all resizing of the accommodation including office, playrooms, door, cupboards, cleaner etc.

Male Voice	Can I just ask all these figures you are spouting off are these included in the £63,000?
Bernard Chisholm	These are included. Decoration £2000, reflooring that's lifting and replacing etc £11,000, outside areas fencing, railing, barrier safety, roadside £7000 coming to the total of 63.5 so these aren't but again you will get these in the next couple of days listed out in detail.
Female Voice	Sorry Bernard did I understand the last point, is there no windows in one of the nurseries?
Bernard Chisholm,	No there are windows in them all its are the window sills of the child's height.
Female Voice	Are they high or are they low?
Bernard Chisholm	They are of average adult room they are not toddler located close to the. Will this pillar be removed in the middle of the room area one be moved? No the pillar will remain. What alternative space will be created for primary pupils with removal of the activity area? Children currently using classrooms on wet days children will be able to access this from within the classroom and main library and we are not seeing that as a significant withdrawal of a resource. How many years would it take to cover any proposed spend if it were at £64,000. We anticipate probably four and a half year to recover anything. What is the nursery transition time line for schools and the rest of the island? Individual schools have autonomy to arrange this so there is quite a variation and I don't have them off hand for every school but it's a variation over periods of time. Distance from primary to secondary assembly obviously 150 metres. Has the current learning provisions been criticised by the Care Commission. No I wasn't just sure about that one but I have no record of anything like that. Is the phone system used in any other CNES rent facilities – no. Where would parent access be? I have mentioned that. Will Eoligarry staff be consulted as a party consultation – no. And I mentioned that earlier. Will Castlebay Nursery staff be consulted – we had a meeting today with all staff invited to and that was done already today. What educational explanation is there for streaming Eoligarry pre-school children into the Castlebay Primary School system – again I tried to mention there that we are not seeing this as a stream and its not uncommon in our other schools. What are the educational benefits in reducing the general purpose based or reducing corridor space? We think the shared use of space provides no detriment and we also think that children in the infant department will benefit from pre-school resources and nursery space. These cover most of the questions and will find out those summary responses to you in the next few days with any BLANK. Sorry if I rushed a bit at the end but I am aware of people
Al Friend	Sorry Bernard could I just take you back to question 23. We feel that we actually know the answer to this and it's the opposite to what you said. The phone system being in rented.....
Bernard Chisholm	The IPT?
Al Friend	The void system that you have got. The telephone system that is not over the pre-school at the moment we believe it is in some rented properties.
Gavin Lawson	Do you know which properties and we can check and get back to you?
Bernard Chisholm	Sorry I was just meaning in nursery facilities I wasn't meaning all council facilities.
Gavin Lawson	Is that the only property you are interested in?
Male Voice	Well I need to know that it is in one don't I.
Gavin Lawson	If it had been in other properties I would have had a list.
Male Voice	Well if there is one there is probably two.
Abigail Traffry	You have glossed over the removal of this corridor space from the use of the primary pupils yet it is the only kind of open plan area of the primary school where children are free to go and read of their own belition it seems to be that that is quite a positive thing,

	quite in line with our attitudes to modern learning. Is there a replacement space being considered for this kind of activity and how quickly you have glossed over of returning this school from a very sort of light nice area into a corridor you know a very old fashioned corridor space for the children.
Bernard Chisholm	No there is no proposal for opening that area space in any other area.
Female Voice	So there is no proposal for providing an additional area for wet play time?
Bernard Chisholm	Wet play time is currently done within the classrooms that is not an area for wet playroom it is an area for the children to take their books and do reading.
Female Voice	So there will be no non classroom space for reading?
Bernard Chisholm	Not for that size of area no.
Female Voice	Ok that seems very regressive in terms of education.
Female Voice	Would that not be a health and safety issue having children at their break time using up a corridor area?
Bernard Chisholm	That is why in wet play times they would use the classrooms etc but like I say for all of the schools and for the nursery none of the proposals we do could operate if we were at risk of any health and safety. We are not the breach of any health and safety regulations.
Female (Maclsaac)	Just wanted to know if there is an actual timescale for the work that is to be carried out and if it would have an impact on the primary children would it be carried out BLANK
Bernard Chisholm	I think our outline we would be looking at it based on all the information we take in, prepare a consultation document it would go to Committee in June. We have a date which we would have been looking for in October and therefore we would be looking for the works to be done during the holiday period and obviously that would be what we are looking for and where we could achieve what we have outlined.
Female (Maclsaac)	Would the holiday period, if it was to go ahead be from then until they start back? Why October?
Bernard Chisholm	Well October for use was more about the fact that one of the previous questions asked me about the inspection process that goes through. When we have the direction from the council which way we go we have to start at that point we have the proposal approved work for various registrations etc so we wanted to be clear that in talking to the inspectorate they inspect us to give about three months from the time we get approval to allow them to do what they need to do in their final part so it was just giving ourselves safety.
Chris Denehy	If the works take longer than planned where will the pre-school education take place?
Bernard Chisholm	I would hope that
Chris Denehy	Are we going to be flexible and say stay a bit longer.
Bernard Chisholm	Well I would hope that they would be flexible in the same way I think part of this consultation and knowing where we are going from February up until June the building group have also, the children's services building committee have also asked that we would look sympathetically at any period of notice so I think
Chris Denehy	Because obviously the community would have to find someone we are not going to say sorry you cant come in. We could end up with the situation where we don't have any pre-school provision.
Female Voice	Can I raise two points in regard to your document? In 2.6 it was said in the beginning that HMle will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations that are a summary of them. It says in the document it says of if HMle agree a summary or

	written representations can be assured that HMle will get a copy of all written representation and not just a summary?
Gavin Lawson	Absolutely, all written representations will be submitted in their entirety to HMle.
Morag Munro	What that document is the legal requirement we have always gone beyond that and given the full submissions plus an BLANK of the meeting.
Female Voice	Two points relating to cost 4.2 and 9.3. So if you look at 4.2 it says that the rent of the 10 July 2011 was £6399.96 per annum now I think that included all costs? That was electricity everything was included in that? The district valuer now I know that the ongoing committees of pre-school have tried to negotiate with the council for years and finally I think that the district valuer this year and has agreed £3200 and but that is purely a district valuers agreement for the rental property so over and above that you have the ongoing like electricity, the basic cost like we all have to pay. Can I also refer you to 9.3 and I hope this is BLANK when we are referring to the horrific 9.3 final point the rent has given prohibitive so in effect you are saying that the rent set by the district valuer is considered by the council to be prohibited. Is that the case? Because giver that the district valuer sets the rents on a lot of council properties does the council chance prohibitive events in all its properties and objects to pay the district valuer of rent of the building that is rented? I think that sentence needs to checked and corrected.
Abigail Traffry	Can I ask about Gaelic places because it seems from your plan that the refurbishment will only provide an additional for places in Gaelic. I know you have figures that show a decline in birth rate after 2012/13 but the Comhairle's own Gaelic language policy would support growth up to 70% of the population in terms of nursery provision. What will happen when demands exceeds these 24 places? Will you look at putting on afternoon sessions or will there simply be no availability?
Patricia White	The room can actually take 29 children aged 3-5. We have lowered the number because we are hoping that they would be able to take two and half year olds but like we had over the road we have a statutory obligation to provide pre-school education and we would prioritise the 29 pre-school children.
Female Voice	Can I ask why this isn't included in the proposal? Was it just speaking as voluntary direction for children centre. We have actually been looking into this in some detail and in terms of you know what you are offering that is not stated anywhere in the proposal that there is actually 29 places. We were actually refused permission to measure the room you know we could have learned this information for ourselves we know the space standards. You have been withholding information from the community.
Bernard Chisholm	The space standards I don't believe we have ever withheld space standards on nursery. What these figures relate to is that almost all of our communities have had discussions with us or asked us in terms of their registration would we accommodate two and a half year olds now. We have developed a policy that says that only if space and otherwise is available and occurs. In looking at the figure of 24 we allow that some recognition of the fact that there had been two and a half year old and anticipated that that might still require the theory requested of us so in relation to the question we cant register to that we have tried to operate on the basis of reflecting both what the community make use of and our look at the numbers. We feel that 29 would cover any projected figure but we feel that there probably would be a demand for two and a half year olds.
Female Voice	Can I ask what the benefits are going to be for BLANK when they have started their school day and parents and children are going to be walking through the school passed every single classroom to get to where they are going BLANK.
Bernard Chisholm	Again we can only go on the experience we have got on all the other integrated settings we have. It doesn't disrupt it and we don't have that experience although we have quite a number that operate in this way.
Female Voice	Every other place is the same as this when you go right through the whole school to get to a designated area or will they have separate entrances to get to it?

Patricia White	We have got five that use the same entrances and they are all slightly different to three of them walk passed another classroom.
Female Voice	Every single classroom?
Patricia White	Not every single classroom, one does but the others don't.
Female Voice	What about the parents meeting within the school standing about chatting? It is inevitable, it's going to happen.
Patricia White	We haven't found that to be an issue yet.
Female Voice	Can I ask was there a re-submission made to afternoon sessions in the centre which would double the capacity or would we just have to scrape through moving over to the primary school?
Morag Munro	I think that is one of the options that was looked at in the proposal document.
Patricia White	The options be at 9.5.
Bernard Chisholm	Just in case I know someone mentioned there if people are mentioning about what the other children and that like I say if anybody wishes to know what the children have said then some of what they thought or all of
Male Voice	Just a question about the £64,000 or whatever it is you said the payback was four years? What do you mean by payback?
Bernard Chisholm	Well what I mean is that by spending that money for us to make any saving of what we currently spend in addition to the children's centre
Male Voice	If the children's centre is £9000 I think roughly once a year I am not very good at maths but 9x4 is certainly not £64,000. So I am a bit confused can you just clarify that?
Patricia White	The rent is £8200 we also have our own costs. We also have the electric costs all the sort of heating and running and we have agreed the service charge for that with the children's centre we also have a cleaning contract that we have with the Comhairle to clean that building for the nursery which costs us money to share and we have the BLANK so the actual total running costs for us to be there including the rent and the cleaning costs of £14,490.
Female Voice	I don't understand the cleaning contract when it's on campus with the school what are the extra expenses associated with cleaning? We have to pay the time for the cleaners to go over and clean the building.
Male Voice	This only recently has when did you agree the new lease agreement on the rent agreement?
Patricia White	The district valuer set the rate from the first of August so
Male Voice	So up until that point this community has been paying your electricity bill.
Patricia White	Yes that is correct
Male Voice	So that isn't particularly from today but up until that point this community here has been fundraising and doing other things to pay your electricity bills that you didn't let on within that you have paid in other communities up and down the islands.
Female Voice	This community was fundraising to provide statutory service. Is that correct?
Bernard Chisholm	No statutory services are 12.5 hours for provision we have a rent or a lease agreement with the building that's the agreement that we are in one of the things that we are looking at here is a situation where because we have been in this situation and many of the providers before we take all the responsibilities for the running of the service and

	the cost of.
William Douglas	So it's not to improve education like we would expect in the last couple of hours its finance. At the end of the day you are going to be saving money by putting children who are in a purpose built building into a school that was built 70 years ago. So it's like you are just going to slap some lipstick on an old dog! Plus if this is going in front of Council and when we are listening and hearing it sounds like a done deal that you council and the members already that it is BLANK October.
Bernard Chisholm	Could I mention maybe to the first part and Councillor Munro will speak about the Councillors in relation to the first part the reason why we are talking about the fines there is because they are in the second question and it's a requirement for us to provide it just from an officers point of view I can only speak from the point of view that I feel when I go to the chamber with any of these proposals Members I think challenge me quite significantly however Councillor Munro.....
Morag Munro	With regard to the educational benefit I think you will find this in 8.1 of the document and I certainly feel that it is very important for pre-school to be integrated with the primary particularly with primary one because with the curriculum for excellence the earlier level is now pre-school and primary one and the other thing is with curriculum for excellence it gives the opportunity for pupils to progress at their own level so if they are integrated with the primary it is much easier for them to progress at their own level. It gives far more flexibility as far as being a done deal is concerned I am sure Bernard would be glad if he had the Councillors in his pocket, he would be delighted if that was the case.
Female Voice	Well you have made your decision without even any final report being
Gavin Lawson	Sorry can I just ask everyone to identify themselves if they are going to speak and do it one at a time please.
Morag Munro	There has been no decision this is a consultation process the all the consultation responses will be taken into account plus all the views raised at this meeting and the HMle report these will be produced in a consultation report which will go the council in June and as you know there is going to be an election in May so in fact it wont be the present councillors who are making a decision on this so there is no way that this can be a done deal.
Male Voice	Bernard my friend when you supply the answers could you put in the costings for the rent, electric the cleaning etc and also what you envisage basically the heating, electric cleaning costs will be because there will still be a cost associated with that.
Female Voice	There is going to be a new council elected in June any Councillor that hasn't previously visited the children's centre will be seriously misled by the impression it has been given in this paper. It is not fairly represented. Can I have your assurance in fact the newly elected councillors will visit the facilities before they vote on it?
Morag Munro	Well that is assurance that I can not give you as I don't know where they are. I don't have the power to tell people what they visit and what they don't visit what I can assure you about is that any councillor who is going to be involved in this decision will have all the information in front of them and have all the views that have been stated.
Female Voice	This is quite misleading
Morag Munro	But that is not the only document that they will have. They will have that document, they will have all the consultation responses, all the views that you have raised this evening, the HMle Report and the consultation report that will be drawn up as a result of all the consultation responses.
Janice Ross	I do have to apologise Councillor Munro because I was under the impression when you did speak you told the audience that you had already made up your mind before you had actually seen any final documents which had been produced by the HMle so I do apologise for getting that wrong.

Morag Munro	Excuse me I am very sorry if I misled you all by saying that I had already made up my mind I won't actually be party to the decision at the end of the day.
Janice Ross	Well can I just come back because I hadn't actually finished what I was going to say. I just came along to this meeting with a very open mind as a member of the community and I have to say I am seriously disappointed in the proposal because I feel it lacks any effect of research and it doesn't take of the very real human and community cost that the move will cost to this community and Bernard you mentioned one or two points they lacked any serious effect of answer and I want to say and I want it noted by the people in this community that I would be advising the children's centre on what I consider to be the human and community cost of the move should it go ahead to the primary school.
Female Voice	Can I bring back the timescale question am I am just a wee bit puzzled if the councillors vote on this in June and presumably the building work has to go out to tender and then they have to order material a mix start, the school holidays are only six weeks you know how is the work going to be completed in the summer holidays?
Morag Munro	Well it may be that I can be included in the council contract as the council have a contract for maintenance and works to school. It's an ongoing contract so it may well be included within that which means that it may go out to contract.
Sarah Maclean	I just want to come back to the point where you know this primary one going into the pre-school vice versa seems to be so important to you. Are you going to have over 20 children in one room and 30 children in another?
Morag Munro	Well you won't have 30 children in another
Female Voice	But the primary 1-3 there is going to be about 30 children in that classroom.
Morag Munro	We can have 29.
Female Voice	So are you sure you have enough space?
Morag Munro	I mean composite classes the maximum level in primary is 25.
Bernard Chisholm	For shared we have enough space almost in each of the classrooms. The issue about children working between classes is well covered. There is no issue there.
Female Voice	It just would be quite crowded wouldn't it?
Donald Manford	Bernard you seem to be in the answers jumping from what is best practise and what can be done. If we go back to 8.1 please again since you raised it the close proximity of the nursery class to the infant class enhances staff and children can work together in joint projects etc. You will have evidence to support where that were infants are as is stated here have better results that if they are on a part of the campus or technically not in the same campus but the entire footprint of Castlebay including the pre-school I think is half the size of the Nicolson Institute. Where is the evidence do you have evidence to back up that statement?
Bernard Chisholm	That was one of the stated areas I was asked for by the parent council and I have got documents from HMIE learning and teaching Scotland, EIS that has looked at the situation of integrated provision and I would hope it will make an interesting read for you but it does comment on the benefits outwith what is an integrated and a joined up approach in the early stage to the P1 and I will make those references and if necessary a copy of the document. I haven't looked yet to make more than about half a dozen but there are plenty of references within it and I have to say in terms of our integrated ones across our other schools I think we have seen positive examples out of that however just for the purposes of those making a submission on the children's centre its not to say that An Cotan and all these other nurseries that operate independently do not have significantly good evaluations. It is evidence to the fact that these things have added value and are effective.
Donald Manford	That is the point I was making they want separated and disadvantaged.

Female Voice	Can I just ask are there any nurseries left in the Western Isles who operate independently who aren't linked in with the primary school in there area. Are there any left? And how are they operating in comparison to the one's that have been integrated with the primary?
Bernard Chisholm	In terms of their operation I very positively never suggested there was anything different. What I am saying is there is added value in having the provision and we are talking about it and that is being demonstrated across a number of the schools that we enjoy that with so its not saying and I am not suggesting in any way that people don't have that the same way about Eoligarry and I am talking about transitions I am not saying that transitions stop I am saying that there are benefits in what we are proposing and these are clear in the document.
Jeanie Grant	The shared projects and the flexibility of pupils working at their own level as you have mentioned is that an ideal or is that a set objective that would be monitored by a designated person in the school?
Bernard Chisholm	Well in fact both pre-school and primary are covered by both the early levels outcomes and experience of curriculum for excellence and by quality indicators for what we do. The planning is currently jointly across so absolutely these things can schedule etc. What I am relating to is the convenience of something that gives the added value in a way we think supports learning.
Male Voice	Just from the aspect of toddlers. The community has a sort of transition if you want to call it in terms of a mother and toddlers group or whatever it gets kids used to the building and social aspect who then go on in to the other side of the building. You would be taking that away so there would be a big step from the social aspect that the children's centre has at the moment taken them from there to there. There is also the aspect that the children's centre is made up in such a way that if parents need to sit and stare out if the child is not settling in with them there is facilities there for parents to sit around but not be actually without a classroom so the kid is gradually settled in. You won't get that sort of treatment up the road there. You won't have that sort of facility where parents can sit around and be on call or your mother and toddlers will be through this so there is a transition there as well which is in a dedicated facility for pre-schoolers. It seems ludicrous to withdraw that to take them in there.
Bernard Chisholm	You are right the proposal document doesn't seek to replicate the mother and toddlers group for the facilities of the parents.
Chris Denehy	I missed the start - did we answer question is the move going to be made just based purely on the educational reasons?
Bernard Chisholm	What we are proposing we are suggesting it is on education and accommodation and it is on us believing that we are providing added value for....
Chris Denehy	Because at present we have got 30 pre-school places in a purpose built building and have absolutely 0 places in a primary school. So for my mind we only have 30 places if we have none up here and the pre-school committee come up with perfectly good plans to enhance our at no public costs.
Bernard Chisholm	I think one of the submissions we are going at I think we recognised earlier on that they may well be a proposal coming that we should address that in terms of supporting the proposal that the children committee hasn't that will go to all the respective agencies and elected members who will consider it.
Abigail Traffry	Can I ask a question returning to this loss of the open plan space in the primary? We are talking about quite young children here especially when we have the nursery over there in the primary but the primary children themselves are young they become ill at school to have no non-classroom space in that building, no where that you wait for your mum to get you if you are not feeling well and as I understand it there is no sick bay in the secondary school either. It seems like we are squeezing everything we possibly can out of this building to the detriment of the pupils because education is about their holistic welfare it is not just about joining things up and surely that is also reflected in

	the curriculum for excellence that there should be space for the children space for them to feel comfortable in class for any reason. There won't be an ASM room to go to. Should they feel uncomfortable in class for any reason. There is a current ASM needs being met within the classroom and that is a move to differentiate within the classroom yet we have no idea what needs might be coming up and if there is a primary pupil or a nursery pupil for that matter with more sever support needs will they have to make the walk down to the intimidating secondary unit to have their needs met? It just seems so regressive.
Bernard Chisholm	I suppose that goes along with Mr Denehy and the proposals of the children centre that we would consider when the proposals are looked at.
Abigail Traffry	But I am talking about the detriment to the primary as it exists just now and to the primary pupils and there experiences of their learning environment.
Bernard Chisholm	Sure but what I am saying is that should the proposal not be accepted these are the type of things that will be considered amended or rejected. That's all I can say that the information is clearly presented and all of that detail including everything you have said tonight will be there.
Female Voice	We just seem to be talking about patching and mending the whole building, I am just wondering whose responsibility is it to actually start the consultation process for a new building for the primary and secondary is there a timescale for that?
Bernard Chisholm	I think Councillor Manford raised something like that earlier do we wait to look at a capital plan and any possibility I mean I take it from a question that people are aware that have been government initiatives they have supported us and the likes of Daliburgh etc but that could go on at council level and led by the Scottish Government and funds they make available.
Male Voice	Do you feel that would be beneficial if the council had a statutory consultation?
Bernard Chisholm	For a new school?
Male Voice	Yes
Bernard Chisholm	In order to do that as I understand my colleagues in council would
Male Voice	As an education department or as an official do you feel that it would be of benefit to you to start that consultation in order that a plan would come about?
Gavin Lawson	I think it would be inappropriate to proceed to a consultation until such point that the capital fund had been identified and that the monies which are intended to be spent on any potential project had been established it would be irresponsible to seek a consultation with the community about a proposal which was not planned or funded.
Male Voice	I will re-phrase it then. Would it be beneficial for the councillors to ask for the education department to bring forward a plan for education on Barra that would have a long term strategy so that you could build as you got the money forward as in how you would build a house, you would build the foundations and then you would build the rest of it. Build it in stages to identify stages that would link together rather than sticking bits and bobs on old schools if you did get the funding you could what we need is a nursery lets do this and knock it down and build a nursery there and then onto that as they have in Balivanich where it is nursery, primary school whatever you build on that on a plan but you have a long term plan. Would that not be beneficial instead of this nonsense?
Morag Munro	As I said before we have a strategy but there is a process to go through because any new build has to be funded so there is a process to go through and we will start with the next council when they are setting out their capital programme.
Male Voice	But if you had a plan then you could work towards the plan you would have an aspiration or something. You have no aspiration. You have nothing for
Morag Munro	Well there is a strategy which is to provide the best educational facilities for all children

	in the Western Isles and to bring all the buildings up to good condition by 2018 that is the strategy.
Male Voice	So the strategy is to stick on the old building.
Morag Munro	Not necessarily. In some places there has been refurbishment of buildings and the main ones being new build.
Male Voice	It just strikes me that you are talking about all this but in places where you amalgamated everything together in Balivanich and these places you gave people a benefit you gave people something real to work towards and something was 21 Century. There is nothing you are not offering a 21 Century deal. The 21 Century building on this island was built by this community and it is across there.
Donald Manford	The strategy has already begun it's simply the key elements of it the information has not been made available. The strategy surely began when you acknowledged to HMIE that the building isn't fit for purpose and it needs to be brought up to a b standard from what it has been designated to be. The next step in the strategy is that it was targeted to be done before 2018 that was the requirement. You have said earlier on tonight that the aspiration is to bring that forward to 2015. That's excellent. In order to bring it to a b whatever that is and to be done 2015 surely somebody somewhere has put some sort of thing and that.
Morag Munro	I think as I said before there was a condition survey as you know carried out of all our schools and that condition has survey has the elements that need to be improved and brought up to standard and there is a ball park figure there but that is looking years out of date.
Donald Manford	And that ball park figure is likely to be in the region of £3-£4 million is it not? It is isn't it?
Bernard Chisholm	I honestly can't tell you what that cost is going to be but I just want to be clear on the strategy for the school. There has been a strategy for a number of years now otherwise five new WISP schools and the refurbishment of others wouldn't have taken place. That takes place within a capital plan. All of the schools in the Western Isles were within that and these were the schools that were done were prioritised based on the need. The next capital plan will be required to look at the remaining estate. As I understand it members will not need to consider that next planning funding and as Mr Lawson said until the capital funding and the capital programme is agreed but it is not the case that we haven't been moving on a strategy that did various schools so the issue for the future when it is time to look at the next capital plan I am very confident that the members will look at the schools that are available, look at the proposals that are out and as in the previous one there will be priorities for a dictation remodernisation or build of a new school if the funding is there for it or should in any circumstance the Scottish Government come forward and suggest that there is any capital investment additional to what they are telling us and the council does have an asset management group that reports the changes to executive members and I know that work is going on for that forward planning but in the Western Isles the rate at which we have put new schools into and the upgrade of the one's that we have got that is being considerable over the life of this last council and the members that are in at next council will set the next plan.
Male Voice	Would it not be more advantageous then to wait to see what the next council are planning and what the next capital budget is going to be and postpone the move from there to there until you see is it actually going to work into your new strategy for the 21 Century or are you just going to £63,000 out of the window up there? Would that not make sense?
Bernard Chisholm	I think it is a legitimate view and it may be one that that will get supported by council.
Female Voice	I think that is the view that quite a lot of people have. We are living in times of hosterity and the Comhairle doesn't have money to through at buildings and it has been clear from sitting here and listening to this that that is exactly what is going to if this perceives as in the consultation document and you throw £63,000 at the school you

	<p>move the children over here very soon you end up in an overcrowded situation in a school that isn't up to standard and you are going to have to spend a vast amount of money move the children all over the place because there is no where to put them so you are shuffling the children around while you are rebuilding or repatching the school when in actual fact you should have sat tight, leave the children where they are and when the strategy is in place and people have said we need to do this to this building then spend money and put the £63,000 towards that. Why waste it as a BLANK which I feel is what people think you are throwing money not that we have a problem with change it's the problem that you just seem to come up with this idea out of know where because the rent is too much so you think its quick we will just do this so it will shut them up. It's not good enough, I think that is why people feel.</p>
Female Voice	Who instigated this consultation at this time?
Bernard Chisholm	The council.
Female Voice	The council so the councillors?
Bernard Chisholm	The councillors make the decision.
Female Voice	The councillors made the decision that they wanted this consultation done? They wanted this move?
Gavin Lawson	<p>Can I just come in. Just to be very clear because there an inference which may be tempting to draw by the fact that because the councillors have asked for a statutory consultation the council as a body has some how made up its mind about the proposal. That is quite an important fact and it's not something that should be left unaddressed. The council made the decision following a report made by the department of Education and Children's Services to go out to consultation on this proposal document. That is all the council has approved. The council has instructed that this consultation these meetings take place and that the rest of the statutory consultation procedure be followed. The council has at not time asked or made any decision as to whether or not it approved this proposal. Any suggestions that has done would I am afraid be completely incorrect.</p>
Female Voice	Can I just ask in terms of statutory obligations because I am not sure about how the consultation works. If parents do come out or express the opinion unanimously that they want nursery provision to remain where it is, I presume that that is still possible that it goes to council and where do we go from there.
Gavin Lawson	<p>Again I am glad you raised that point because it is important that everyone here understands that all of the views that have been expressed here tonight, every question, every answer, every statement will be typed up into a transcript of this meeting. That verbatim transcript in addition to the written submissions will not only be sent to HMle but will also be put before the council when it comes to consider this decision. Therefore in a way this consultation process as we have said is not concluded. There is an opportunity for any person who has an alternative suggestion or proposal like your children's building committee to put together a detailed proposal admittedly in a fairly limited timescale but from this helpful document which you have submitted I can see that plans have been drawn up and you have detailed submissions. It is possible for you know to formulate that put in front of the council and HMle any information which you consider to be relevant for example if you wanted to go round and take a lot of coloured pictures of the quality of your building and put them in together in some kind o documentation do it that would then be put to HMle and the council. I understand that some people may have views about the quality of consultations or public meetings but genuinely the purpose here is to seek your views and you will have the chance when you see these documents which go to HMle or go to the council you will see that all of the views which you have expressed here are in fact put before the council.</p>
Donald Manford	Can I ask there are three different points that have come out through the night the quality of the different buildings, one versus the other, the delivery of the education together as opposed to be a little bit remote and the cost of the rent its perfectly reasonable that the three be looked at. What is waiting our evaluation is given to the

	three different elements in coming to a conclusion.
Morag Munro	For education the educational benefit is priority.
Donald Manford	Thank you.
Male Voice	Sorry just again the £63,000 is that going to bring nursery facilities from a c grade up or are we still going to be stuck on c grade classrooms.
Bernard Chisholm	The c grade provision survey is for the entire school building and not just for the rooms. What it does mean is the refurbished rooms that the children in the nursery have up to a standard that if the whole building were of that then the conditions may be adjusted or reflected. We won't change the condition of the survey in level with the building until significant refurbishment is undertaken.
Male Voice	It is just a request for information again. Can you provide the calculations of how you have got to the number of children you can accommodate in the two rooms and also the calculation to show you have enough toilets for all the primary and nursery children?
Bernard Chisholm	Yes we double checked the list and we have done some figures on that and you will get that.
Male Voice	As chair of education can you make a recommendation that the councillors in the next council after May time make their way down here to see both facilities and see what they are actually talking about.
Morag Munro	I don't think they would take very kindly to me making that suggestion to council when I am no longer a councillor or a chair of the committee.
Male Voice	But you will at the next Committee.
Morag Munro	This proposal will not come up until June.
Male Voice	It would be nice of whoever was going to be the next chair of the Education Committee to make that sort. In the spirit of the council that they come down and actually visit both facilities because unless you come down and visit both facilities you do not get a feel for what is going to happen and to be able to vote from that the councillors who have that ability to go and make that decision and finances on the children's future should actually come down and see what it is because I went for a tour in both facilities it is very hard there is no comparison. You cant imagine it at the moment and it would be imperative that they come down and actually see what it is they have opened up and to have the chair of the current committee who has brought the consultation forward and is sitting their just now to recommend that would be quite nice. Would be a good guidance.
Gavin Lawson	I think if I can help answer this question. There isn't the facility in terms of a formal recommendation which Mrs Munro could make. It is of course perfectly appropriate for your suggestion which is already been noted and will be part of the submission for you to write to the council or for anyone else here to write to the council or to your councillor and indeed to the new chair of education and children's services whoever that might be and draw attention to the importance which you place on the need for a site visit before any road is taken on this proposal. I think that that would be, I am only speaking personally but if a councillor or the council receives one letter, ten letters or twenty letters or more suggesting a site visit then that is something that the councillors would take very seriously and if the feeling of this meeting is with you on that matter than I think it would be a reasonable step for you to take and I think that would actually deal with the issue. I understand that you are saying that a recommendation made by the outgoing Chair of Education and Children's Services would have strength. My own personal opinion is that if there twenty or thirty or more letters from individual concerned parents then that would have just as much if not more strength.
Donald Manford	If you take it as a solid view of tonight I think that would be a desire because whoever I take the point Morag because the other element that will be soundly in there will be the

	very same people will be assessing the capital programme and we are talking about June so it would seem ridiculous that if they are talking about future capital programme of investing in what needs to be done here that they talk about this in isolation if it is surely imperative that is all spoken about at once and it would be entirely reasonable for that to have got across tonight.
Gavin Lawson	Its not often I interrupt you Mr Manford but I think the feeling of the meeting tonight is that you would not want any vote to take place unless or until there has been a site visit by the persons who are taking the bore. Would it be of assistance if the Council undertook to include in the report which would go up to as we have heard the June series that we include a specific reference not in the body of the documentation but in the terms of the report itself we include a specific reference to this public meeting and we say that it was the overwhelming or unanimous view of the people who are attending the public meeting that no vote is taken on the recommendations until the committee had made site visits to both sites. Would that satisfy? I think we would all be happy to undertake to make sure that that is included in that report.
Morag Munro	In that case Gavin was saying that a decision will not be made in June.
Gavin Lawson	No I am saying that what we are doing is make it clear in the report that the people who were at this public meeting wished there to be people taking the vote would have made a site visit and would then be for the council it would then be for the members of the committee to determine whether or not they wished to make a site visitor note but it would draw attention to the strong views expressed here tonight. I am certainly not saying because I have no idea what the councillors would do in reaction to that they may decide that they wish a site visit, they may decide that they do not.
Morag Munro	The one thing that I was remembering was the last council was elected they actually went through the whole islands and they spent time in Barra, a night in Barra, all the councillors they were doing their induction so if that is the situation next time there will be an opportunity for them to have this on their itinerary to visit Barra, that could be a way round it.
Female Voice	I would just like to request that that is not left as an if I think we would want them to come down.
Gavin Lawson	I am afraid I do not know whether or not that that is planned but it certainly did take place with the last council and was a great success. I will be in a position to confirm that to yourselves in the children building committee by the end of this week.
Morag Munro	Whatever the situation the request will be as part of the consultation response.
Female Voice	We keep referring to this building as a grade c but perhaps it would be useful if somebody did a comparison and they actually knew what the difference were then we could compare that might be useful for incoming councillors as well if it was compared like that.
Morag Munro	Thank you. That would be considered. Is there any more questions. I am glad to bring the meeting to a close and to thank you all very much indeed for your contributions of which we have said a number of times will go to the meeting where a decision will be made. What will happen there is that the consultation will close by 5pm on 29 February 2012 and you can all send any other written submissions that you want to send by emailing them to the schoolsconsultation@cne-siar.gov.uk or in writing to the Chief Executive at the Council Offices, Sandwick Road, Stornoway and if you have the proposal document the email address is in paragraph 3.5. Meantime thank you very much indeed for your courtesy this evening and for all your contributions and I assure you that a count will be taken of all your views.
Gavin Lawson	If you could all just stay where you are because I think the children's building committee would like to specifically address you on the matter of the ballot but I just prefer we formally close this meeting before there are any other procedural issues.



Equality and Diversity

Initial Impact Assessment

Castlebay School Nursery

Title of policy/Service	Castlebay School Nursery
Department/Section	Education and Children's Services
Lead Officer	Patricia White
Date of Initial Assessment	30 April 2012

Is this a new or existing policy? (please tick as appropriate)	<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing	√
What is the purpose of the proposed policy (or changes to be made to the policy)?	The purpose of the proposal is to relocate the nursery within Barra Children's Centre to Castlebay Community School, Primary Department. This will provide a seamless early level education and increase the number of pre-school places available for children aged 2.5 to 5 years.			
Who is affected by the policy or who is intended to benefit from the proposed policy and how?	Parents and children living in Barra accessing pre-school nursery education. Some of the benefits identified are as follows: Incorporating the nursery provision within the school provides the opportunity for the nursery class and infant class to work jointly on projects which will aid the transition from nursery to school. Potential to increase capacity and offer additional nursery places which are in demand. Larger playrooms and a wider range of facilities are available within the school accommodation which children no longer have to cross the road access facilities. Better ICT facilities are available in the school which will give an enhanced learning experience.			
How have you, or will you, put the policy into practice, and who is or will be responsible for delivering it?	Existing service provision will remain the same, the service will be delivered from a new location which is approximately 150m from the existing service provision therefore there should be no impact in accessing the new service provision			
What consultation has been carried out?	There is a requirement under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 to undertake statutory consultation with parents, staff, pupils and other interested parties affected by the proposal regarding the moving of pre-school provision from the children's centre into Castlebay Primary Department.			

Identified Impacts

Age – Could the policy have a differential impact due to age?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	Parents and children will be offered the same service from a location that is within 150metres of the existing service. There will be an increase in the number of pre-school places available through the medium of Gaelic so more children will benefit.
Disability - Could the policy have a differential impact due to disability?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	Adaptations will be made to the building to ensure disabled access. Education and Children’s Services have a referral system whereby any individual can be referred in to the service for support. Various grants and practical support can be offered to any family having difficulty accessing services.
Gender - Could the policy have a differential impact due to gender?	No
	As above
Race - Could the policy have a differential impact due to race?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	All nurseries have an equal opportunities policy and would not discriminate against families due to their race.
Religion or belief - Could the policy have a differential impact due to religion of belief?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	All nurseries have an equal opportunities policy and would not discriminate against families due to their religion or belief.
Sexual orientation - Could the policy have a differential impact due to sexual orientation?	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	All nurseries have an equal opportunities policy and would not discriminate against families due to their sexual orientation.
Are there any other groups whom the policy may have a differential impact on? (e.g. employees, poverty, pregnant women, persons with caring responsibilities, gypsy/travellers)	No
What evidence do you have for that decision?	It is anticipated that this relocation will provide educational advantages and more access to pre-school education places through the medium of Gaelic which are in demand. Education and Children’s Services has a referral system whereby any individual can be referred in to the service for support. Various grants and practical support can be offered to any family having difficulty accessing services. This system is in place throughout the whole of the Western Isles.
What gaps are there in our knowledge?	
What plans are in place to monitor and review for any potential future impacts?	Service provision will continue to be monitored by Education and Children’s Services Staff.

Based upon your initial screening:	No	Yes	To some extent	On what grounds?	
<p>Is there potential for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unlawful discrimination? 2. People to be treated differently/unfairly? 3. Certain groups to be disadvantaged? 4. Community relations to be damaged? <p>And to what extent? (e.g. numbers of people affected/extent of negative impact)</p>	√ √ √	Carry out a Full Impact Assessment	√		Age
					Disability
					Gender
					Race/Ethnicity
					Religion/Belief
					Sexuality
					Other
<p>Where the anticipated adverse effect is minor, can you identify any means to minimise the impact? (If yes and measures can be put in place to minimise impact, a full EQIA may not be required).</p> <p>Please specify how:</p>	<p>No impacts have been identified on equality grounds however following the consultation process opposition to the proposal from the community has been identified. This is mainly due to the perception that the accommodation at the school will be inferior and that the children will be disadvantaged. An initial investment of £63K will be made available to convert the existing accommodation to an acceptable standard and as part of the 'Schools Estate Management Plan' the school will be remodelled to improve its status from category c (poor) to category b (satisfactory) by 2015. All nursery accommodation is subject to inspection from the Care Inspectorate. The Comhairle must adhere to all health and safety requirements when adapting accommodation for nurseries. The nursery accommodation will therefore meet all necessary requirements. This proposal will have advantages to the learning and teaching of children within the early level of the curriculum and will provide additional pre-school education places.</p>				

Initial Impact Assessment completed and a full EQIA is required:

Signed:

Date:

If no further Impact Assessment is required, please sign below.

<p>This policy/function will have no impact on people from any of the equality groups and an EQIA is not required.</p>	<p>Signed:</p> <p>Position: Early Years Manager</p> <p>Date: 14 May 2012</p>
<p>Authorisation by Head of Service or Director.</p>	<p>Signed:</p> <p>Position: Director of Education and Children's Services</p> <p>Date: 14 May 2012</p>
<p>Date of next review:</p>	

Consultation proposal by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Report by Education Scotland, addressing educational aspects of the proposal to relocate Castlebay Community School Nursery Class within Castlebay Community School

1. Introduction

1.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar proposes to relocate Castlebay Community School Nursery Class from its existing accommodation within the Children's Centre to the primary department of Castlebay Community School.

1.2 The report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act.

1.3 HM Inspectors undertook the following activities in considering the educational aspects of the proposal:

- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the Comhairle in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others;
- consideration of further representations made directly to Education Scotland on relevant educational aspects of the proposal;
- visits to the site of the Nursery Class and Castlebay Community School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

1.4 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children and young people of the nursery class and school; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the Comhairle area;
- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the Comhairle intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- benefits which the Comhairle believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the Comhairle's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.5 As the proposal will lead to the relocation of a rural school as defined in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, HM Inspectors also took account of the Comhairle's consideration of:

- viable alternatives to the relocation of Castlebay Community School Nursery Class;

- the likely effect on the local community with regard to sustainability and on the community's access to the buildings, grounds and facilities if the school were to close, and
- the likely effect of different travelling arrangements on the environment and on children and young people and other school users occasioned by the closure.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar undertook the initial consultation on its proposals with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*. The consultation included an invitation for written submissions and a public meeting held on 1 February 2012. Following a request from the Parent Council, the consultation was extended by two weeks.

2.2 Parents were strongly opposed to the proposal. They felt that the Comhairle's proposals had not been sufficiently well considered. They felt that the quality of the learning environment in the proposed accommodation would be inferior to the existing facilities at the Children's Centre. In particular, they were concerned about the proposed arrangements for toilet facilities for their children, the quality of the outdoor environment, arrangements for dropping off their children and security.

2.3 Parents recognised that the capacity of the existing accommodation did not meet the demand for Gaelic medium provision, as the roll increased. They felt that alternative options should be considered more fully by the Comhairle. Most parents were not opposed to relocation of the nursery, if the proposals provided an equal or better learning environment for their children. They recognised the benefits of effective links between nursery and primary but felt that these benefits could still be realised within the existing provision. They were concerned that the cost of the rental for the nursery accommodation was a key reason for relocation of the nursery.

2.4 Parents of children at Castlebay Community School were concerned about the potential impact of the proposed adaptations in the primary department on the learning experience of their children. For example, they felt that there would be less space for activities.

2.5 Staff held differing views about the proposal. School staff recognised the potential benefits of relocating the nursery class, including the opportunities for collegiate working. Whilst a few school staff felt that the adaptations would not have a negative affect on pupils in the primary department, others felt that loss of a classroom and open area would impact on the activities which they provided. Staff in the nursery class were positive about working with colleagues in the primary department. However, they felt that these important links were already established and could continue to be achieved through remaining in the existing accommodation. They felt that children were already familiar with the school building, for example through their regular visits to the swimming pool and gym hall.

2.6 Children at the primary school were aware of the proposal and had been consulted by the Comhairle's officers. They felt that it would be helpful for nursery children if they could be in the same building as their older brothers and sisters. As P7 children were buddies for P1, there would be more opportunities for them to get to know the nursery children when they were in P6. They had differing views about how the proposal might impact on their learning experiences.

2.7 The Board of Directors at Barra Children's Centre had made a joint submission with the Castlebay Community School Parent Council to the Comhairle. The submission made the case that the relocation of the nursery would not bring educational benefits and that the adaptations to the accommodation would result in a reduction in the quality of the learning environment for both nursery and primary children. A planning application for an extension to the Children's Centre was also submitted to the Comhairle.

3. Educational aspects of the proposal

3.1 Castlebay Community School comprises a nursery, primary and secondary. The nursery is registered to accommodate 36 children aged two and a half to five years. It is located in Barra Children's Centre which is approximately 150 metres from Castlebay Community School. The Children's Centre is used by a parent and toddler group and includes a public café. The Comhairle has a rental agreement for the use of the nursery accommodation. Accommodation for the nursery includes two purpose built playrooms, toilets and a small kitchen. Parents access the nursery through a secure entry system. Children regularly use the outdoor play area and garden. As a result of the rise in the number of parents requesting Gaelic medium provision, a partition in the Gaelic medium playroom has been removed to increase capacity. The Comhairle contend that as the service has now outgrown the available space, it has become increasingly difficult to meet the demands of parents for Gaelic medium provision.

3.2 Two pre-school sessions are in operation each morning, one through the medium of Gaelic and one through the medium of English. In addition, the Comhairle runs an afternoon childcare session. This service is subject to demand. In 2012/2013, the Comhairle anticipate that the roll of the English medium nursery class will increase from 16 to 20 places and from 20 to 24 in the Gaelic medium nursery class. The Gaelic medium class will therefore be over capacity during this year. It is anticipated that the projected roll in 2013/2014 will be less.

3.3 The Comhairle propose that the accommodation within the primary department of the school be adapted to provide: two Gaelic medium classrooms, two English medium classrooms, one general purpose room that could be converted to a classroom should school rolls increase, one Gaelic medium nursery room and one English medium Nursery room.

3.4 In September 2011 the primary department had a roll of 70 pupils, 38 of whom are taught through the medium of Gaelic. The capacity of the primary school is 125 pupils. Both rooms can accommodate up to 29 children aged between three and five. The Comhairle believe that the proposed accommodation would allow for growth in Gaelic provision. It is proposed that adaptations are made during the school holidays to be ready for entry in October 2012.

3.5 In April 2010, as part of the asset management planning of the Comhairle, Castlebay Community School was identified as a school of high priority for remodelling. This school is considered to be a category C (Poor) building and the Comhairle aim to improve it to category B (Satisfactory) by 2015. Issues relating to the security of the building which were raised by HM Inspectors in the inspection report of January 2008 have not yet been addressed by the Comhairle. Whilst the primary department is accessible, the building does not meet statutory requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2006.

3.6 In the follow-through report of May 2011, HM Inspectors noted better planned transitions from nursery to P1. The proposal to locate the nursery within the primary department of the school would assist staff further in strengthening the current working arrangements to build upon children's prior learning at the early level. Staff would have more opportunities to share practice and expertise and plan the curriculum together at the early level. A few children from the nursery class transfer to P1 at Eoligarry Primary School. It is proposed that these arrangements would continue. As both nursery rooms would not be in operation all day, the nursery accommodation could be used by groups of children from the primary department as and when required. There would still be an additional general purpose room available to primary-aged children.

3.7 There would be potential for the headteacher to develop further approaches to monitoring and evaluating the quality of education in the nursery. Currently, access to the nursery is through a shared entrance with other users of the building. There would be greater scope for the nursery staff to work with primary staff in self-evaluation across the nursery class and primary school.

3.8 The Children's Centre would be affected by the loss of rent from the nursery. The management committee of this building would require support to identify alternative uses for the space and sources of funding. The Comhairle has stated its commitment to supporting the voluntary committee through this process.

3.9 The proposed accommodation in the primary department is used after school for activities that include music and dance tuition. If the proposal were to be taken forward, it would be important for alternative accommodation to be allocated for these users of the service.

3.10 As the proposal involves relocation of rural provision as defined in the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, HM Inspectors also took account of the Comhairle's consideration of viable alternatives. The Comhairle needs to consider these alternatives more fully including the possibility of operating morning and afternoon sessions in the existing accommodation.

4. Summary

4.1 The Comhairle's proposal sets out the educational benefits of relocating the nursery class within the primary department which will meet the demand for nursery places in both English and Gaelic medium. There would be potential for strengthening the working arrangements between staff through building more effectively upon children's prior learning and for sharing expertise and resources. There would be greater scope to develop approaches to self-evaluation. However, there is significant opposition to the proposal, particularly from parents and the community. The current proposals for the accommodation do not provide sufficient clarity about how the quality of the environment will be better for children. In its final report, the Comhairle needs to ensure that these strong concerns are addressed. The Comhairle needs to consult parents and staff about the design of plans for the proposed accommodation of the nursery.

4.2 Whilst there is potential to make more effective use of the existing accommodation in the primary department, the impact of the proposed adaptations and the increased roll within the primary department need to be considered further.

4.3 The Comhairle faces challenges in relation to the timescale in implementing the proposal by October 2012. The proposals are designed to address current issues of accommodation. However, the Comhairle plan to review and update the accommodation in Castlebay Community School by 2015. The proposal needs to be considered strategically within this context, taking into account roll projections in the nursery and in the primary department.

4.4 In its final report, the Comhairle needs to ensure that the viable alternative options have been fully explored.

4.5 As the school is located close to the existing accommodation at the Children's Centre, there would be no impact on the environment of different travelling arrangements.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
March 2012**