



**Education and Families Committee
Special Shetland Islands Council**

**11 September 2013
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Blueprint for Education: The Next Steps – A Strategy for Secondary Education in Shetland	
CS-43-13-F	
Report Presented by Director of Children's Services	Children's Services

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report, and the accompanying Appendix 1, is to present the proposed next steps for Shetland Islands Council's Blueprint for Education, a strategy for secondary education in Shetland.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 I recommend that Education and Families Committee RECOMMEND that Shetland Islands Council RESOLVE to approve the proposed revisions to the Education Blueprint regarding Whalsay School Secondary Department, Mid Yell Junior High School Secondary Department and Baltasound Junior High School Secondary Department.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The basis of the strategic approach in this report is that, on educational grounds, pupils should not have to move schools during their secondary education. If a transition is absolutely necessary, for geographical reasons, it should take place before the Senior Phase and must be managed very carefully.
- 3.2 On 20 September 2012 Shetland Islands Council agreed a re-refresh of the Blueprint which had been undertaken as follows:
- “to undertake a refresh of the Education Blueprint using existing information, taking account of the outcome of the Commission on Rural Education deliberations and guidance when available, considering the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, the Senior Phase, the National Qualifications range and links with further education/other learning settings and based on the underpinning principles of the

Education Blueprint project of equality, quality and value for money and taking account of all new learning methods and IT links and facilities”.

- 3.3 At the meeting of 20 September 2012 an amendment to the Blueprint for Education recommendations was approved (Minute Ref: 74/12). The amendment included the following statement: “that further reports will be brought forward to the Education and Families Committee in the first instance if a material change in circumstances has occurred, such as (a) the Council decides to prioritise its spend such that the level of savings is not required from the school estate and/or (b) alternative proposals for a scheme or schemes of educational provision come forward which demonstrate educational benefit and meet the Council requirements for savings;....”. This report pertains to educational benefit.
- 3.4 The key decisions taken in relation to the school estate at that time are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 This report proposes changes to the Blueprint for Education which have emerged as the implications of implementing Curriculum for Excellence Senior Phase have become clearer. The report has been developed on the basis that a transition between schools during secondary education should be avoided if at all possible, and if it cannot be avoided must be carefully managed.
- 3.6 This report has been developed from an educational perspective with the financial implications of these proposals subsequently assessed. An accompanying report on the financial aspects of the Blueprint will be presented at today’s meeting.
- 3.7 A detailed re-refresh of the Blueprint for Education was undertaken in 2012 at which point Shetland Islands Council approved a statement for Education 2012-2017; commitments for education 2012-2017; plan for delivering education 2012-2017 and proposed savings of £3,249,000 to be met by 2016.
- 3.8 The details of the revised proposals are attached at Appendix 1. There are no proposed changes to the statement for education or the commitments for education which together set out the overall strategic approach of local education services.
- 3.9 The attached Next Steps report was discussed with Secondary Head Teachers just prior to the summer holidays and was distributed to all school staff, including local teaching union staff, and Parent Councils on 12 July 2013. To date a few written responses have been received.
- 3.10 Anderson High School senior staff welcomed the principle of ‘no transitions’, however they would be concerned if a large number of pupils were being transferred to Anderson High School at the end of Secondary 3. They confirm it would be possible to have tailored programmes to support transitions at the end of secondary 3 for a small number of pupils.
- 3.11 The Whalsay School secondary department staff have submitted a written report expressing concerns about a Secondary 1 to Secondary 3

model setting out a detailed comparison between the current arrangements and the proposals which describe the status quo as much more favourable.

- 3.12 The limited feedback received from individuals and one Community Council from the North Isles indicates a strong desire to retain the status quo. In the feedback it was generally felt that Secondary 1 to Secondary 3 Junior High Schools were not favourable for young people as they would be obliged to complete their education at the Anderson High School. For teachers, the main concerns were that they would no longer be teaching National Qualification courses and staff would be travelling between schools so much it would make recruitment difficult.
- 3.13 Any further feedback received prior to the Committee meeting will be provided verbally at the meeting.
- 3.14 Feedback from teaching staff is being collated by union officials and a verbal update will be provided at the Committee meeting.
- 3.15 Feedback from young people is being sought through meetings with pupils and a verbal update will be provided at the Committee meeting.

4.0 Implications

Strategic

- 4.1 Delivery On Corporate Priorities – this report helps to achieve the aims of the:

Shetland Islands Council Corporate Plan

- All children and young people deserve the best life chances and we are determined that all our young people will have the best chance to be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- This year we will continue to examine the educational estate and conduct a series of consultations on primary and secondary schools in line with the blueprint for education.
- We will have robust financial management arrangements that ensure we can make the transition to financial sustainability.
- This year we will meet our budget targets set out in the medium term financial plan.

Shetland Single Outcome Agreement 2012/15

- Area 5.1 – To support schools in their development towards a Curriculum for Excellence;
- Area 5.2 – The strategy provides a framework for developing childcare provision 2012/15;

Children's Services Directorate Plan

- To deliver the best possible service we can which balances access, opportunities and resources.

- 4.2 Community /Stakeholder Issues – in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Children's Services will consult with all relevant stakeholders/consultees. A full community and stakeholder

consultation will be held in line with relevant legal requirements when any closure proposal is taken forward.

- 4.3 Policy And/Or Delegated Authority – in accordance with Section 2.3.1 of the Council's Scheme of Administration and Delegations, the Education and Families Committee has responsibility and delegated authority for decision making on matters within its remit which includes school education. However, as the decision required would be an alteration to the agreed consultation timetable, a decision of the Council is required. This report is related to the function of an education authority.
- 4.4 Risk Management – The outcome of the Appeal in the Court of Session and the report from the Commission on Rural Education are both now available. There may be changes in legislation but these are not to be passed until at least Spring 2014. In the meantime the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 is the legislation to be followed. Failure to reduce the net ongoing running costs of the Council carries a significant risk of the Council's financial policies not being adhered to and will require a further draw from Reserves.
- 4.5 Equalities, Health And Human Rights – An Equality Impact Assessment has been done in respect of all closure proposals and at this early stage in the process, there are no equalities, health and human rights impacts. This will be kept under close review as the project develops and decisions are taken.
- 4.6 Environmental – An Environmental Impact Assessment has been done, and there are no environmental implications at this stage. However, the environmental impact of any travelling arrangements considered in relation to any closure proposal will be fully addressed in the statutory consultation process.

Resources

- 4.7 Financial – The approved 2013-18 Medium Term Financial Plan includes a savings target of £3.268m on Blueprint for Education. The remaining Blueprint for Education proposals, plus the Next Steps revisions, if agreed, result in a savings shortfall of £1.018m. This shortfall would require to be met from within Children's Services (Schools/Quality Improvement).
- Failure to address the shortfall would result in an additional cost pressure of £84,833 per month. A decision to defer the proposals in their entirety would lead to an additional cost pressure of £187,500 per month.
- 4.8 Legal – A proposal to close a school is a "relevant proposal" in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Shetland Islands Council must comply with the requirements as set out in that Act.
- 4.9 Human Resources – Shetland Islands Council has Human Resource policies which may be utilised should the proposed closures go ahead. Children's Services will ensure that consultation with all staff affected and with Trade Unions will be held following any decisions taken.

- 4.10 Assets And Property – Within our commitments there are implications for assets and property regarding the use of buildings. We will ensure that the future use of school buildings will be part of any statutory consultation process.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 This report proposes changes to the Blueprint for Education which have emerged as the implications of implementing Curriculum for Excellence Senior Phase have become clearer. The basis of the strategic approach in this report is that, on educational grounds, pupils should not have to move schools during their secondary education. If a transition is absolutely necessary, for geographical reasons, it should take place before the Senior Phase and must be managed very carefully.

For further information please contact:
Helen Budge, Director of Children's Service
Tel: 01595 74 4064. E-mail: helen.budge@shetland.gov.uk
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List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Blueprint for Education: The Next Steps

Background documents:

Blueprint for Education 2012 – 2017 CS-19-F, Education and Families 14 September 2012

<http://www.shetland.gov.uk/coins/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=13620>

END

BLUEPRINT FOR EDUCATION: THE NEXT STEPS

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out a rationale for revisiting the Shetland Islands Council's Education Blueprint in the light of emerging information and planning associated with Curriculum for Excellence. It also makes recommendations for change and sets out a suggested process and timeline to consider and consult on changes.
- 1.2 The basis of the strategic approach in this report is that, on educational grounds, pupils should not have to move schools during their secondary education. If a transition is absolutely necessary, for geographical reasons, it should take place before the Senior Phase and must be managed very carefully.
- 1.3 The report aims to set out an overall vision for secondary education as requested in the Parent Council report of January 2013 (The Blueprint for Education 2012-17 supplementary Information and Issues).

2. Background

- 2.1 In September 2012, Shetland Islands Council approved a report detailing a refresh of the Education Blueprint which was commissioned on 9 February 2012 when Children's Services were tasked:

“to undertake a refresh of the Education Blueprint using existing information, taking account of the outcome of the Commission on Rural Education deliberations and guidance when available, considering the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, the Senior Phase, the National Qualifications range and links with further education/other learning settings and based on the underpinning principles of the Education Blueprint project of equality, quality and value for money and taking account of all new learning methods and IT links and facilities”.

- 2.2 The refreshed plan presented a plan for delivering school education in Shetland for the next five years.
- 2.3 The agreed Shetland Island's Council Statement for Education 2012-2017 states:

We will ensure the best quality education for all our pupils to enable them to become successful learners, who are confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens. We will achieve this through the highest standard of teaching and learning delivered in modern, well equipped school buildings which are financially sustainable.

- 2.4 The agreed Shetland Islands Council's Commitments for Education for 2012-2017 are as follows:

- **Primary education**
We will provide primary education in all our remote isles with pre-school provision as and when required. We will organise primary education in establishments/schools which are viable both educationally and financially.
- **Secondary education**
We will organise secondary education to provide the breadth of curriculum to best develop a young person's skills and particular interests in establishments/schools which are viable both educationally and financially.
- **Childcare**
Childcare provision will be developed in line with the Childcare Strategy. In the Sustainability section of the Childcare Strategy 2012-2015 it states that, where appropriate, Shetland Islands Council will make council owned premises (predominantly schools) available to out of school clubs and 'wrap around' childcare. We will work with voluntary and private sector providers to secure more integrated and flexible services that meet local need. In doing so, we will take account of best value principles for all.
- **Youth Strategy**
Provision of youth services in the Strategy will take account of any changes to the provision of school education which comes from the implementation of the Blueprint for Education 2012- 2017.
- **Catchment areas**
We will consult on any change to a school's catchment area as part of any future statutory consultation process.
- **Travel times**
We will organise transport to ensure that, as far as possible, pupils will not travel for longer than the current maximum single journey time in 2011/12:
 - 40 minutes for a primary pupil
 - 65 minutes for a secondary pupil.
- **Transport**
We will ensure that school transport is given high priority.
- **Community involvement in schools**
We will work to ensure that:
 - Children's community identity is protected;
 - Opportunities are put in place for them to participate in any new school community they are part of; and
 - The Youth Strategy is developed to enhance young people's participation in communities they are part of.
- **Use of buildings**
We will ensure that the potential future use of school buildings will be part of the statutory consultation process.

2.5 The recommendations in the Blueprint re-fresh report last September proposed the closure of five junior-high school secondary departments and five primary schools including one nursery class. It was confirmed that the proposals would

generate the required financial savings, whilst also protecting the capacity of the school estate to deliver Curriculum for Excellence.

2.6 At the time, Elected Members approved the report and the proposed closures with the exception of Baltasound Junior High School secondary department which they agreed should remain open. The timetable for consultation on closures was revised at the instigation of Sandwich Parent Council who asked for the consultation on Sandwich to be brought forward from 2015 to 2013 to end the ongoing uncertainty. It was also confirmed last September that the North Mainland Community could have the opportunity to consider which primary schools should be put forward for consultation on closure.

2.7 At the meeting of 20 September 2012, an amendment to the Blueprint recommendations was approved (Min Ref: SIC 74/12). The amendment included the following statement:

“...that further reports will be brought forward to the Education and Families Committee in the first instance if a material change in circumstances has occurred, such as (a) the Council decides to prioritise its spend such that the level of savings is not required from the school estate and/or (b) alternative proposals for a scheme or schemes of educational provision come forward which demonstrate educational benefit and meet the Council requirements for savings;....”.

2.8 This report relates to educational benefit.

2.9 The planned closures to be consulted upon are as follows:

Phase 1:

- Aith Junior High School secondary department, 2013, with a proposed transfer date of pupils to Anderson High School (AHS) in August 2014;
- Skerries School secondary department, 2013 (currently out for consultation), with a proposed transfer date of pupils to AHS in August 2014;
- Sandwich Junior High School secondary department, 2013, with a proposed transfer date of pupils to AHS in August 2016;
- Olnafirth Primary School, 2013, (currently out for consultation) with a proposed transfer date of pupils to Brae High School in August 2014.

Phase 2:

- Burravoe Primary School, 2014, with a proposed transfer date of pupils to Mid Yell High School primary department in August 2015;
- *North Roe Primary School, 2014, with a proposed transfer date of pupils to Ollaberry Primary School in August 2015;
- *Urafirth Primary School, 2014, with a proposed transfer date of pupils to Ollaberry Primary School in August 2015;
- *Urafirth Primary School, Nursery Class, 2014, with a proposed transfer date of pupils to Ollaberry Primary School in August 2015;

* As detailed above, it is still to be finally determined which of the Northmavine Primary Schools should be included for consultation on closure.

Phase 3:

- Whalsay School secondary department, 2015, with a proposed transfer date of pupils to AHS in August 2016.
- Sandness Primary School, 2015, with a proposed transfer date of pupils to Happyhansel Primary School in August 2016.

3. Why Change?

3.1 Curriculum for Excellence.

The principal reason for seeking to revisit the Blueprint for Education so soon is that as Curriculum for Education Senior Phase plans are being finalised it is increasingly clear that the current model of secondary education in Shetland does not match the requirements of the new secondary curriculum. It is recommended on an educational basis that pupils should not move schools during their secondary education. If a transition is absolutely necessary, for geographical reasons, it should take place before the Senior Phase and must be managed very carefully.

Education Scotland recently published their Inspection Advice Note for 2013-2014 in which they state that the main change to inspections is a greater emphasis on planning for progression, coherence and improving curriculum transitions.

Curriculum for Excellence represents a significant change for education. Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for children and young people aged 3 to 18.

3.1.1 Capacities.

Curriculum for Excellence sets out four capacities. The purpose of the curriculum is that it aims for all children to become:

- Successful learners;
- Confident individuals;
- Responsible citizens; and
- Effective contributors.

3.1.2 Principles.

Curriculum for Excellence details seven principles for curriculum design. All learning must take account of the following principles:

- Challenge and enjoyment;
- Breadth;
- Progression;
- Depth;
- Personalisation and choice;
- Coherence; and
- Relevance.

3.1.3 Contexts for Learning.

Curriculum for Excellence is the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people, wherever they are being educated. These contexts are:

- Ethos and life of the school as a community (this includes building a climate of respect and trust based upon shared values, with children and young people feeling supported and contributing to the school);
- Curriculum areas and subjects (organising learning experiences and outcomes to meet the needs of young people. Subjects are an essential part of the curriculum especially for secondary schools);
- Interdisciplinary learning (learning beyond subject boundaries so that pupils can make connections between different areas of learning);
- Opportunities for personal achievement (opportunities to provide young people with a sense of satisfaction and helps to build motivation, resilience and confidence through a range of achievements in the classroom and beyond).

3.1.4 Curriculum Areas.

The eight curriculum areas, containing a range of subjects, are:

- Expressive arts;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Languages;
- Mathematics;
- Religious and moral education;
- Sciences;
- Social studies; and
- Technologies.

3.1.5 Curriculum Levels.

There are national levels to describe the different stages of learning and progress. It is important to note that pupils will be working at a level according to their needs and should not be unnecessarily restricted by the descriptions below:

- Early level: pre-school to the end of Primary 1;
- First level: to the end of Primary 4;
- Second level: to the end of Primary 7;
- Third and fourth level: Secondary 1 to Secondary 3 at which point the Broad General Education will typically be completed; and
- Senior phase: Secondary 4 to Secondary 6, the qualifications phase.

3.1.6 Purpose of the Senior Phase.

The purposes of the Senior Phase are to provide all learners, whatever their individual needs, with:

- An experience which builds on their learning in Secondary 1 to Secondary 3 with scope to develop their individual potential;

- A broad preparation for adult life, whether their own next step is further/higher education or employment or volunteering and for participation in wider society;
- Opportunities to extend their own abilities and interests;
- Opportunities to study at as advanced levels as possible, to a high degree of rigour;
- Opportunities for a range of personal achievements, in or out of school;
- Recognition of achievement, both attainment of qualifications and wider achievements; and
- Continued emphasis on literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and the development of a wide range of skills for life and skills for work.

3.1.7 Qualifications.

The Broad General Education (BGE) is delivered from age 3 to the end of Secondary 3. Secondary 3 is recognised as a critical year for learners when they are completing their BGE and paving the way to qualifications in the Senior Phase.

Education Scotland state that, from Secondary 1 to Secondary 3, young people must receive their entitlement to the BGE with breadth and depth in learning and ability to apply learning confidently in different contexts to provide a firm foundation for the Senior Phase. Choices made in Secondary 1 to Secondary 3 should not narrow options for qualifications in the Senior Phase.

It is therefore important that the BGE is not compromised. By the end of Secondary 3, each pupil will have compiled a Personal Profile which contains information about their individual strengths and achievements up to that time. The content of the Profile will be used to help guide a learner's choice of subjects for further study towards qualifications.

National Qualification courses, studied in the Senior Phase, are constructed on a notional 160 hours of delivery per subject (120 taught hours and up to 40 hours gained through prior learning or learning activities covering more than one subject). Based on seven subjects at 4 x 50 minute periods per subject per week, this equates to 48 weeks of study. If up to seven subjects are offered in Secondary 4, prior learning will be required in Secondary 3 and Secondary 4 will need to commence at the end of May as is currently the case. The necessity of minimising transitions is essential if more than six subjects are offered in secondary 4. It is accepted that for many learners some of the content of the 160 hours is likely to be covered within the later stages of the BGE, as they work through the Level 4 Learning Outcomes and Experiences. The Scottish Qualifications Authority has noted that they will accept up to 40 hours attributed to prior learning/learning activities covering more than one subject.

The Senior Phase aims to prepare young people for qualifications and develop skills for future learning, life and work. The Senior Phase commences in Secondary 4. National guidance relating to the Senior Phase leaves the decision up to local areas to decide if young people are offered 5, 6, 7 or 8 subject options in Secondary 4. National 4 and National 5

qualifications have replaced Standard Grades. They should however not be seen as direct replacements, as Standard Grades were typically studied over two years (Secondary 3 and Secondary 4) and National 4/National 5 qualifications can be studied over one year prior to Highers. Alternatively, young people may choose to study for one or more Highers over two years. National 4/National 5 qualifications are typically gained by the end of Secondary 4, although pupils can study further National qualifications in Secondary 5 and Secondary 6 if they choose to do so. Revised Highers and Advanced Highers will continue as recognised qualifications and will typically be gained in Secondary 5 and Secondary 6. Young people usually study up to 5 Highers in Secondary 5.

It is recognised, therefore, that Curriculum for Excellence aims to offer a flexible programme whereby qualifications can be studied for over varying lengths of time depending on the specific needs of the learner.

Curriculum for Excellence encourages a partnership approach to learning in the Senior Phase with local further and higher education providers, voluntary services and employers being involved as well as schools.

3.1.8 Curriculum for Excellence Entitlements

Curriculum for Excellence sets out a number of entitlements for all children and young people:

- Every child and young person is entitled to experience a curriculum which is coherent from 3 to 18;
- Every child and young person is entitled to experience a broad general education;
- Every young person is entitled to a senior phase where he or she can continue to develop the four capacities and also obtain qualifications;
- Every child and young person is entitled to develop skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work, with a continuous focus on literacy and numeracy and health and wellbeing;
- Every child and young person is entitled to personal support to enable them to gain as much as possible from the opportunities which Curriculum for Excellence can provide;
- Every young person is entitled to support in moving into a positive and sustained destination.

The entitlement that is of concern under the current model of education is: “every young person is entitled to a senior phase where he or she can continue to develop the four capacities and also obtain qualifications”, as many of them would experience a transition between schools in the midst of their senior phase.

Changes proposed in this report relate to the current inevitable transition requirement in the midst of the Senior Phase for a significant number of young people in Shetland under the model of Junior High Schools. Ideally transitions should be avoided in secondary education. If however a transition is unavoidable it should take place before the Senior Phase commences. This is so that the Senior Phase can be planned as a three-year experience from Secondary 4 to Secondary 6, rather than planning each year separately.

The current system of pupils making a transition at the end of Secondary 4 will, in future, disrupt pupils whilst studying for qualifications during their Senior Phase. It will also potentially affect their opportunities to study for Highers (as one or more of their chosen subjects) over a two-year period in Secondary 4 and Secondary 5. Equally it would affect opportunities for very able pupils to study at a higher level earlier. It also potentially reduces the ability for schools to plan for the needs of each individual learner.

Under Curriculum for Excellence, it is envisaged that, by the end of Secondary 4, learners may be in school; college; with training providers; in the work place; or in programmes offered by the community and youth groups, either full or part time. This fundamental change in learner opportunities will require considerable logistical planning. For some pupils, having to make a transition in the midst of such planning means they may not be able to access all the available opportunities.

Revisiting the Blueprint therefore aims to avoid transitions wherever possible and, where they are inevitable, ensure they happen at the least disruptive time and are as smooth as possible. This revision of the Blueprint has been developed on educational grounds rather than on the requirement for financial balance.

3.2 New Anderson High School.

Recent planning and funding arrangements have indicated the new Anderson High School will be a reality by 2016 rather than a long-held aspiration. This means we can now realistically plan to accommodate additional pupils there in line with their education needs.

4. Proposals for Change

4.1 The Curriculum for Excellence Senior Phase will be introduced locally in 2014. Taking account of the aforementioned aim to avoid transitions between schools if at all possible and, where they are inevitable, manage them, the following proposals are made to revise the Blueprint:

- Skerries School secondary closure consultation (currently ongoing) should progress as planned with the aim of transferring pupils in August 2014 depending on the outcome of the consultation;
- Sandwich Junior High School Secondary Department closure consultation should progress as planned with the aim of transferring pupils to Anderson High School in August 2016 depending on the outcome of the consultation. If AHS can accommodate the additional pupils from Sandwich earlier than 2016 that should be supported.
- Aith Junior High School secondary department closure consultation should progress as planned with the aim of transferring pupils in August 2014 depending on the outcome of the consultation.
- The proposal to discontinue Secondary provision at Whalsay School should be revised. Whalsay School secondary department should provide Secondary 1 to Secondary 3 education with pupils transferring to AHS at the beginning of Secondary 4. Similarly, provision of Secondary 4 education

should be discontinued at Mid Yell Junior High School and Baltasound Junior High School, with pupils transferring to Anderson High School at the start of the Senior Phase. Consultations on the proposed changes should take place during 2014 with the aim of enacting the changes from August 2015. The timescale of transferring pupils to AHS could be amended to 2016 if it proves possible to absorb the Sandwick Junior High School secondary department pupils earlier depending on the outcome of the consultation on Sandwick Junior High School secondary department. Pupils who could realistically travel daily to Brae High School from Yell should be offered the opportunity to do so and further work will be undertaken to ascertain the viability of this option.

- The inevitable transition required for the pupils from Whalsay, Mid Yell and Baltasound would comprise sufficiently small numbers. This means that individual transition arrangements could be developed to assure progression pathways were achieved. It would not be possible to do that for a large number of pupils. The current projected numbers in Secondary 4 from Whalsay, Yell and Unst average 12, 11 and 5 respectively over the next three years. Given the educational imperative to minimise transitions, pupils from Whalsay, Yell, Unst and Westside (outwith travelling distance) for whom placing requests to AHS are successfully made prior to Secondary 4, will in future, have their Hall of Residence fees waived.
- It is not possible under statutory consultation guidelines to consult on more than one option for a school at one time.
- The principle of secondary pupils not having to travel more than 65 minutes for a single journey will be adhered to. Pupils from Yell who can travel to Brae within that timescale will be given the option to either travel daily to Brae High School or attend AHS and be accommodated in the Hall of Residence. Options to offer pupils who reside in the Hall of Residence more opportunities to go home will be explored. For example, it should be possible to ensure that all Westside pupils who are outwith the 65 minute travel distance leave home on Monday mornings, travel home for one night mid-week (e.g. Wednesday night) and return home again on Friday evenings. They would therefore be away from home three nights per week rather than the anticipated five.

- 4.2 It is very important that those pupils living in Whalsay, Yell and Unst who have to make a secondary school transition due to geographical reasons are not disadvantaged. This requires work to ensure the remaining Junior High Schools are adequately resourced with appropriate opportunities for teaching staff to retain skills in order to promote recruitment and retention. Critically, Shetland-wide clarity on prior learning is required to avoid transition difficulties. The use of technology to link Junior High Schools with High Schools will also continue to be explored further as suggested in the Parent Council report of January 2013 (The Blueprint for Education 2012-17 supplementary Information and Issues).
- 4.3 As indicated earlier, it will be possible for the Anderson High School to develop individual transition arrangements for the relatively small numbers of pupils transferring from Whalsay, Yell and Unst (approximately 28 pupils per annum).

- It is recognised that some of the Primary School consultations may need revised timescales to accommodate the above recommendations.

5. Impact on the Janet Courtney Halls of Residence

- 5.1 The Janet Courtney Hall of Residence is funded on a proportionate basis nationally as part of the Grant Aided Expenditure (GAE). It is currently used by pupils in Secondary 1 to Secondary 4 from Foula, Fair Isle and Fetlar and by pupils in Secondary 5 and 6 from Foula, Fair Isle, Fetlar, Unst, Yell, Whalsay, Skerries and the Westside. In August 2013, there will be 63 pupils staying in the Janet Courtney Hostel Hall of Residence. This is broken down as follows: Secondary 1 - Secondary 6 pupils from Fair Isle (4), Fetlar (6) and Foula (2); Secondary 5 and Secondary 6 pupils from Whalsay (22), Baltasound (10), Yell (14) and Sandness and Westside area (5). This is an increase from August 2012, when there were 48 pupils. If we assume that Aith and Skerries secondary departments close, then in 2014 there will be a requirement for approximately 66 places.
- 5.2 If we assume that the Secondary 4 stage of education from Baltasound, Mid-Yell and Whalsay finishes, then there will be a requirement in August 2015 for approximately 85 spaces.
- 5.3 These figures take into account the current staying on rates for pupils moving to Secondary 5 and Secondary 6, but there will be fluctuations.
- 5.4 The hostel has a maximum capacity of 91 plus 4 pupils with Additional Support Needs. However, that capacity is difficult to achieve taking into account that there always needs to be separate accommodation blocks/floors for male and female. Because of staying on rate assumptions it is difficult to definitively state that the required accommodation would be within the current capacity of the Hall of Residence.
- 5.5 If this revision of the Blueprint is approved, this is an issue that will require further consideration. It can be considered in terms of the capacity of the new Hall of Residence being built as part of the new AHS development. It may mean that Isles pupils cannot realistically transfer before August 2016.

6. Likely Effects on the Local Community

- 6.1 A significant amount of work was undertaken in 2012 to set out the likely effects on the local communities of the Blueprint recommendations. These likely effects are largely unchanged, although the effects will be somewhat different in Whalsay, Yell and Unst. In summary, it was confirmed that the closure of secondary departments would still leave schools open to provide education for pre-school and primary pupils. In relation to Whalsay, Mid Yell and Unst, the schools would remain open for pupils up to the end of Secondary 3. The additional space would potentially release more accommodation for the remaining pupils. Other community users of the school would continue to have access, again with the potential of additional space being available.

- 6.2 Previous consultations have identified community concerns that the closure of a school, or any part of a school, will have a detrimental effect on the local community. Therefore, in the event of any proposal being agreed, Children's Services will, as previously committed, work with Community Planning and Economic Development to assess the potential impact and to ensure that a local development plan is in place for the area.
- 6.3 Another prime concern is the loss of employment opportunities in an area. The Council will support staff to move on according to their needs and within the Council's policies.

7. Likely effects on the Wider Community

- 7.1 The wider strategic driver for the Blueprint for Education is Shetland Islands Council's current context and the context of Curriculum for Excellence within which education has to be delivered. School rolls have fallen over recent years and there is a significant surplus of vacant school places. Shetland Islands Council has a serious financial deficit and while this report has not been written from a financial perspective the consequences of it cannot be ignored. Fewer schools with more resources is considered preferable from an educational perspective than more schools with limited resources for all.

8. Transport

- 8.1 During previous consultations, the travel implications for children of closing a school and moving to another has been one of the main concerns for parents. The main issues that have been raised have been the travel times for children which would result from proposed closures and the quality of roads over which they would travel.
- 8.2 The report agreed in September 2012 set out that transport will be organised, as far as possible, so that pupils will not travel for longer than the (then) current maximum single journey of 65 minutes for a secondary pupil. This report adheres to that agreement, in that it proposes offering accommodation for pupils who exceed that time.

9. Financial Impact

- 9.1 In summary, the financial impact of the recommendations in this report, when set against the recommendations agreed last September, is that an additional £122,000 would need to be saved within Children's Services.

10. Staffing Implications

- 10.1 In total, across Baltasound, Mid Yell and Whalsay Junior High School Secondary Departments, we anticipate that approximately 12 Full Time

Equivalent (FTE) (33 in number) teaching staff would be affected, insofar as a proportion of their time would no longer be required. This is based on staffing models in future replicating current models, further work will be undertaken to assess the most effective staffing models for the future including taking account of the Parent Council report of January 2013 (The Blueprint for Education 2012-17 supplementary Information and Issues).

- 10.2 We expect the number of those teaching staff requesting early retirement to be in the region of 3.5 FTE staff; therefore we would expect to have to identify transfer options for approximately 8.5 FTE staff. Thus far, we have identified possible transfer options for 5.14 FTE staff.
- 10.3 Based on the number of teaching staff who were employed at Scalloway Junior High School, and for whom we expected to have to find transfer options, 17% elected to take voluntary severance as an alternative. If we were to apply the same percentage to the staff affected by this plan that would equate to 0.8 FTE staff. That would then reduce the number of transfer options we would require to find to 2.56 FTE.
- 10.4 More detailed work would be required in respect of the above however, as some of the staff affected are peripatetic staff and their time is split between primary and secondary classes.

11. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 11.1 An overall Integrated Impact Assessment has been completed. The impact assessment considered the overall impact of this report and included a rural proofing toolkit which is a checklist that ascertains the impact on rural communities of proposed school closures.
The positive impacts were mainly in relation to increased educational opportunities for young people. The negative impacts centred around young people from Yell and Unst being away from home during the week, for educational purposes, a year earlier than at present. The financial shortfall for the Council is also a negative impact.
Detailed specific impact studies such as socio economic assessments will be undertaken as required for specific consultations as has been the previous practice.

12. Communications

- 12.1 At the request of the Committee members, the revised Blueprint Plan will be the subject of a report to the Education and Families Committee on 7 August 2013. The report will then be presented to Shetland Islands Council on 28 August 2013. An earlier draft of the report has been discussed with Secondary Head Teachers and Union Representatives.
- 12.2 The timing means that it is not possible to discuss the final draft of the report with Head Teachers, Teachers, Teaching Union representatives or Parent Councils prior to release of the Committee report due to the summer holidays.

However the report has now been sent to all of the above and they have been invited to submit their views.

13. Timeline

- Education and Families Committee report: 11 September 2013;
- Report to Council September 2013;
- Discussions with Parent Councils of affected areas, Teachers and teaching Unions: August- September 2013;
- Sandwick and Aith consultations: commence September 2013
- Whalsay, Mid Yell and Baltasound consultations: 2014.
- August 2014: Skerries pupils move to Anderson High School subject to outcome of consultation;
- August 2015: Whalsay, Mid Yell and Baltasound pupils move to Anderson High School (some Mid Yell pupils may go to Brae) subject to outcome of consultation (dependent on Sandwick timeline and Hall of Residence capacity Isles pupils move could be delayed until August 2016);
- August 2016: Sandwick pupils move to AHS subject to outcome of consultation (earlier dependent on AHS capacity);
- Primary School consultations timeline revisions will be finalised depending on the decisions regarding the proposals in this report.

14. Conclusions

- 14.1 Curriculum for Excellence represents a key change in education for the children and young people of Scotland including Shetland. The current model of secondary education locally does not support Curriculum for Excellence well. Changes to the Blueprint should be made to accommodate Curriculum for Excellence. The rationalisation of the school estate has to support educational requirements first. Savings have to be made; but these proposed changes are fundamentally about ensuring the best possible educational opportunities for the young people of Shetland.

15. Recommendations

- Skerries School secondary closure consultation (currently ongoing) should progress as planned with the aim of transferring pupils in August 2014 depending on the outcome of the consultation;
- Sandwick Junior High School Secondary Department closure consultation should progress as planned with the aim of transferring pupils to Anderson High School in August 2016 depending on the outcome of the consultation. If AHS can accommodate the additional pupils from Sandwick earlier than 2016 that should be supported.
- Aith Junior High School secondary department closure consultation should progress as planned with the aim of transferring pupils in August 2014 depending on the outcome of the consultation.

- Whalsay School secondary department, Mid Yell Junior High School secondary department and Baltasound Junior High school secondary department should provide Secondary 1 to Secondary 3 education with pupils transferring to AHS at the beginning of Secondary 4. Consultations on the proposed changes should take place during 2014 with the aim of implementing the changes from August 2015, the timescale of transferring pupils to AHS should be amended to 2016 if it proves possible to absorb the Sandwich Junior High School secondary department pupils earlier into AHS depending on the outcome of the consultation on Sandwich Junior High School secondary department. The timing of transferring pupils may be delayed until 2016 if the Hall of Residence cannot accommodate all the pupils. Pupils who could realistically travel daily to Brae High School from Yell should be offered the opportunity to do so and further work will be undertaken to ascertain the viability of this option.
- It should be agreed that some of the Primary School consultations are likely to need revised timescales to accommodate the above recommendations.
- Options to offer pupils who reside in the Hall of Residence more opportunities to go home will be explored, for example it should be possible to facilitate all Westside pupils who are out with the 65 minute travel distance to leave home on Monday mornings, travel home for one night mid-week and return home again on Friday evenings thus being away from home three nights per week rather than the anticipated five.
- Given the educational imperative to minimise transitions, pupils from Whalsay, Yell, Unst and Westside (outwith travelling distance) for whom placing requests to AHS are successfully made prior to Secondary 4, will in future, have their Hall of Residence fees waived.
- The estimated financial implications will be required to be addressed within the Children's Services Directorate in line with the 2012-2017 Medium Term Financial Plan.



**Education and Families Committee
Shetland Islands Council**

**11 September 2013
11 September 2013**

Blueprint for Education: The Next Steps – Financial Aspects	
CS-44-13-F2	
Report Presented by Director of Children's Services	Children's Services

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the estimated financial position relating to Shetland Islands Council's Blueprint for Education including the implications of the Blueprint for Education, The Next Steps, being presented today in a separate report.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 I recommend that, if approval is given to the Blueprint Next Steps Proposals presented today, that Education and Families Committee RECOMMEND that Shetland Islands Council RESOLVE to:
- note that the required savings from the Blueprint for Education remain at £3.268 million, to be achieved by the end of the financial year 2016/17;
 - note that the estimated savings achievable from the Blueprint for Education, including The Next Steps proposals are approximately £2.250 million; and
 - note that therefore there is a shortfall of approximately £1.018 million in the target savings required from Children's Services (Schools/Quality Improvement) to meet the terms of the Medium Term Financial Plan.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 On 20 September 2012 Shetland Island's Council agreed a re-fresh of the Blueprint which had been undertaken as follows:
- “to undertake a refresh of the Education Blueprint using existing information, taking account of the outcome of the Commission on Rural Education deliberations and guidance when available, considering the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence, the Senior Phase, the National Qualifications range and links with further education/other learning settings and based on the underpinning principles of the Education Blueprint project of equality, quality and value for money and taking account of all new learning methods and IT links and facilities”.
- 3.2 The original set of proposals in the Blueprint for Education 2012-2017 presented on 20 September 2012, provided an estimated total saving of £3.558 million for Children's Services over a three-year period from 2013-2016. These proposals, if realised in their entirety, would secure the target budget set for Children's Services in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 3.3 At the meeting of 20 September 2012 an amendment to the Blueprint for Education recommendations was approved (Minute Ref: 74/12), which removal the proposed closure of Baltasound Junior High School Secondary Department from the proposals. This reduced the estimated available savings by £520,000. No decision was taken at that time as to how this shortfall in savings was to be found.
- 3.4 The amendment also included the following statement: “that further reports will be brought forward to the Education and Families Committee in the first instance if a material change in circumstances has occurred, such as (a) the Council decides to prioritise its spend such that the level of savings is not required from the school estate and/or (b) alternative proposals for a scheme or schemes of educational provision come forward which demonstrate educational benefit and meet the Council requirements for savings;...”.
- 3.5 The Blueprint for Education: The Next Steps report presented today relates to educational benefit. This report sets out the overall financial position pertaining to the Blueprint for Education as a whole.
- 3.6 The key decisions taken to date include statutory consultations on the proposed closure of Olnafirth Primary School and Skerries School Secondary Department which are currently being progressed.
- 3.7 Table A below summarises the financial position of the work being progressed at present to implement the Blueprint for Education 2012-2017. In addition it adds in the estimated available savings from the Blueprint for Education: The Next Steps report which is presented to you today.

Table A

Blueprint for Education	
	£
2013-18 Medium Term Financial Plan Blueprint Savings Required	3,268,000
Blueprint - Including The Next Steps - Proposed Savings*	
Skerries School Secondary Department	(76,000)
Olnafirth Primary School	(91,000)
Aith Junior High School Secondary Department	(504,000)
Sandwick Junior High School Secondary Department	(656,000)
Baltasound Secondary 1 - 3	(138,000)
Mid Yell Secondary 1 - 3	(161,000)
Whalsay Secondary 1 - 3	(163,000)
Burravoe Primary School**	(78,000)
North Roe Primary School/ Urafirth Primary and Nursery Class**	(260,000)
Sandness Primary School**	(123,000)
	(2,250,000)
Shortfall	1,018,000
<p>The shortfall has arisen as a result of the proposal to close Baltasound Secondary not being approved; additional cost pressure from the Next Steps Report; increased costs in areas such as transport; and the impact of ongoing reviews and efficiencies.</p> <p>* The savings identified in this report are correct as of 11 September 2013, and would be updated as required.</p> <p>** The savings pertain to financial calculations done in 2012. These figures will be updated prior to formal consultation proposals being prepared.</p>	

- 3.8 The Blueprint for Education, including the Next Steps proposals leaves a shortfall in required savings for Children's Services (Schools/Quality Improvement) of approximately £1.018 million. If the Next Steps proposals are agreed today, then Children's Services (Schools/Quality Improvement) will have to identify alternative ways to achieve the overall required target savings and secure these by the end of the financial year 2016/2017.
- 3.9 Since April 2012, Children's Services (Schools/Quality Improvement) have identified recurring savings of approximately £5 million, through its Review work and agreed efficiencies and without implementing any changes to the school estate. This figure represents a significant reduction in the total spend across all areas of service provision. To identify the aforementioned shortfall of £1.018 million is challenging.

4.0 Implications

Strategic

- 4.1 Delivery On Corporate Priorities – this report helps to achieve the aims of the:

Shetland Islands Council Corporate Plan

- All children and young people deserve the best life chances and we are determined that all our young people will have the best chance to be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- This year we will continue to examine the educational estate and conduct a series of consultations on primary and secondary schools in line with the blueprint for education.
- We will have robust financial management arrangements that ensure we can make the transition to financial sustainability.
- This year we will meet our budget targets set out in the medium term financial plan.

Shetland Single Outcome Agreement 2012/15

- Area 5.1 – To support schools in their development towards a Curriculum for Excellence;
- Area 5.2 – The strategy provides a framework for developing childcare provision 2012/15;

Children's Services Directorate Plan

- To deliver the best possible service we can which balances access, opportunities and resources.

- 4.2 Community /Stakeholder Issues – in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Children's Services will consult with all relevant stakeholders/consultees. A full community and stakeholder consultation will be held in line with relevant legal requirements when any closure proposal is taken forward.

- 4.3 Policy And/Or Delegated Authority – in accordance with Section 2.3.1 of the Council's Scheme of Administration and Delegations, the Education and Families Committee has responsibility and delegated authority for decision making on matters within its remit which includes school education. This report is related to the function of an education authority.

- 4.4 Risk Management – The outcome of the Appeal in the Court of Session and the report from the Commission on Rural Education are both now available. There may be resulting changes to legislation but these will not be passed until at least Spring 2014. In the meantime the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 is the legislation to be followed with respect to any closure proposals.

Failure to reduce the net ongoing running costs of the Council carries a significant risk of the Council's financial policies not being adhered to and may require a further draw from Reserves.

- 4.5 Equalities, Health And Human Rights – An Equality Impact Assessment has been done in respect of all revised closure proposals and at this early stage in the process, there are no equalities, health and human rights impacts. This will be kept under close review as the project develops and decisions are taken.
- 4.6 Environmental – An Environmental Impact Assessment has been done, and there are no environmental implications at this stage.

Resources

- 4.7 Financial – The approved 2013-18 Medium Term Financial Plan includes a savings target of £3.268 million on Blueprint for Education. There is a shortfall of £1.018 million. This shortfall will require to be met from Children's Services (Schools/Quality Improvement).
- Failure to address the shortfall would result in an additional cost pressure of £84,833 per month. A decision to defer the proposals in their entirety would lead to an additional cost pressure of £187,500 per month.
- 4.8 Legal – A proposal to close a school is a “relevant proposal” in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Shetland Islands Council must comply with the requirements as set out in that Act.
- 4.9 Human Resources – Shetland Islands Council has Human Resource policies which may be utilised should the proposed closures go ahead. Children's Services will ensure that consultation with all staff affected and with Trade Unions will be held following any decisions taken.
- 4.10 Assets And Property – Within our commitments there are implications for assets and property regarding the use of buildings. We will ensure that the future use of school buildings will be part of any statutory consultation process.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 This report presents the financial position relating to Shetland Islands Council's Blueprint for Education including the implications proposed in the Next Steps report. The revised savings are estimated to be approximately £2.250 million, leaving Children's Services (Schools/Quality Improvement) with a shortfall of £1.018 million in the savings required by the Medium Term Financial Plan. If the proposals in the Next Steps report are agreed then this shortfall will have to be found.

For further information please contact:
Helen Budge, Director of Children's Service
Tel: 01595 74 4064. E-mail: helen.budge@shetland.gov.uk
Report finalised: 30 August 2013

Appendices

None

Background documents:

Blueprint for Education 2012 – 2017 CS-19-F, Education and Families 14 September 2012

<http://www.shetland.gov.uk/coins/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=13620>

END



**Education and Families Committee
Special Shetland Islands Council**

**11 September 2013
11 September 2013**

Proposed Statutory Consultation for Bressay Primary School and Nursery Department

CS-46-13-F

Report Presented by Director of Children's Services

Children's Services

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend that statutory consultation on the proposed closure of Bressay Primary School and Nursery Department should commence on 23 September 2013.
- 1.2 There are 15 primary aged children who live in Bressay and therefore could attend the island's primary school in session 2013/14. Placing requests have been received from parents in respect of 11 of these children to attend schools elsewhere in Shetland. This leaves 4 children attending Bressay Primary School for the session 2013/14.
- 1.3 Children's Services do not believe that this is the best educational experience for these children.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 That the Education and Families Committee recommend that Shetland Islands Council RESOLVE to approve that statutory consultation on the proposed closure of Bressay Primary School and Nursery Department commences on 23 September 2013.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Placing requests have been received for a number of years from some parents resident on Bressay asking that their children attend other schools, mainly in Lerwick.

- 3.2 The role of primary aged children in Bressay Primary School has steadily fallen over the past 10 years from 40 pupils in 2003/04 down to 10 pupils in 2012/13. The current position is that 4 pupils are attending the school.
- 3.3 There is an agreement that Shetland Islands Council will provide primary education on its isles. The situation is that a growing number of parents are choosing schools on the Mainland of Shetland for their children's primary education.
- 3.4 All parents with pre-school children have opted to place them outwith Bressay too, so there is no nursery provision this session.
- 3.5 The detail of the proposal would be that education provision at Bressay Primary School and Nursery Department be discontinued with effect from 4 July 2014.
- 3.6 The proposal would be that pupils of Bressay Primary School would continue their education at Bells Brae Primary School from 18 August 2014.
- 3.7 There would be budget savings from this proposal and they would be included in the statutory proposal paper. However, it should be noted that this proposal has not been influenced in any way by financial considerations.
- 3.8 A Public Meeting was held on Monday, 29 July at 6.30pm in the Bressay Public Hall. The minute from this meeting is attached as Appendix A. There were a number of points from this meeting which Children's Services were asked to carry out before a report came to Committee.
- 3.9 The placing requests which had been received were looked at and those relevant parents who had not submitted a reason for moving their children were contacted. The analysis of this is included as Appendix B.
- 3.10 The request that parents of pupils attending Lerwick primary schools were contacted and asked why they were not considering Bressay for their primary education was discussed within Children's Services. It was decided to highlight the work around the Admissions Policy which was undertaken last year and the subsequent public notices. A letter has been sent to the parents of pupils in Bressay Primary School including these documents. This information is attached as Appendix C.
- 3.11 A meeting was organised with parents, Community Work Officer, and some Councillors to discuss Bressay Primary School on Thursday 8 August 2013. A note of this meeting is attached as Appendix D.

- 3.12 The current primary class sizes for Bells Brae Primary School and Sound Primary School are included as Appendix E as the meeting on 8 August asked for this information.
- 3.13 There has been a meeting of the Vice Chair of Bressay Community Council, Community Work Officer and the Quality Improvement Officer for Bressay Primary School on 27 August 2013. This meeting discussed the Community Council leading a workshop on considering innovative ways to assist the community move forward with the current situation involving all appropriate services and stakeholders.
- 3.14 Where a school roll drops to zero a school can be 'mothballed'. Mothballing is a term that is used to describe a school which is no longer operational but is maintained in a condition that it can be re-opened should a pupil roll emerge. Children's Services considered this as a possible option for Bressay Primary School. However, this has not proved to be suitable as the roll of the school is not zero.
- 3.15 Having taken advice from Legal Services and the Scottish Government who both have confirmed that there is no legislation attached to mothballing, only guidance that the roll should be zero. Furthermore, there should be no undue pressure on parents to move children and that mothballing could be construed as a precursor to moving to statutory closure. This was not the intention of Children's Services.
- 3.16 It has been decided, therefore, that statutory consultation be commenced in relation to a proposal to close Bressay Primary School.

4.0 Implications

Strategic

- 4.1 Delivery On Corporate Priorities – this report helps to achieve the aims of the:

Shetland Islands Council Corporate Plan

- All children and young people deserve the best life chances and we are determined that all our young people will have the best chance to be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- This year we will continue to examine the educational estate and conduct a series of consultations on primary and secondary schools in line with the blueprint for education.
- We will have robust financial management arrangements that ensure we can make the transition to financial sustainability.
- This year we will meet our budget targets set out in the medium term financial plan.

Shetland Single Outcome Agreement 2012/15

- Area 5.1 – To support schools in their development towards a Curriculum for Excellence.
- Area 5.2 – The strategy provides a framework for developing childcare provision 2012/15.

Children's Services Directorate Plan

- To deliver the best possible service we can which balances access, opportunities and resources.

- 4.2 Community /Stakeholder Issues – in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Children's Services will consult with all relevant stakeholders/consultees. A full community and stakeholder consultation will be held in line with relevant legal requirements when any closure proposal is taken forward.
- 4.3 Policy And/Or Delegated Authority – in accordance with Section 2.3.1 of the Council's Scheme of Administration and Delegations, the Education and Families Committee has responsibility and delegated authority for decision making on matters within its remit which includes school education. This report is related to the function of an education authority. However, a decision of Shetland Islands Council is required.
- 4.4 Risk Management – Any risks associated with this proposal will be explored during the statutory consultation process.
- 4.5 Equalities, Health And Human Rights – An Equality Impact Assessment has been done.
- 4.6 Environmental – The environmental impact of any travelling arrangements considered in relation to this closure proposal will be fully addressed in the statutory consultation process.

Resources

- 4.7 Financial – There will be financial savings from this proposal and these will be detailed in the proposal paper.
- 4.8 Legal – A proposal to close a school is a "relevant proposal" in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Shetland Islands Council must comply with the requirements as set out in that Act.
- 4.9 Human Resources – Shetland Islands Council has Human Resource policies which may be utilised should the proposed closures go ahead. Children's Services will ensure that consultation with all staff affected and with Trade Unions will be held following any decisions taken.
- 4.10 Assets And Property – Within our commitments there are implications for assets and property regarding the use of buildings. We will ensure that the future use of school buildings will be part of any statutory consultation process.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The number of parents who are choosing to place their children in other schools instead of Bressay Primary School has been growing over the years. At this time 73% of pupils who could attend Bressay Primary School, are placed in other schools.
- 5.2 Children's Services believe that the children remaining at Bressay Primary School are not getting the best educational experience to enable them to reach their full potential.
- 5.3 As there are no children in the nursery department it is proposed that statutory consultation is undertaken for that too.

For further information please contact:
Helen Budge, Director of Children's Service
Tel: 01595 74 4064. E-mail: helen.budge@shetland.gov.uk
Report Finalised: 30 August 2013

Appendices

Appendix A – Minute of Public Meeting held on 29 July 2013
Appendix B – Analysis of Placing Requests
Appendix C – Letter to parents with information
Appendix D – Note of meeting held on 8 August 2013
Appendix E – Table of Current Class Sizes in Bell's Brae and Sound Primary Schools

Background Documents

None

END

Meeting Held on 29 July 2013 at 6:30 pm**Bressay Public Hall**

- Chairperson – Councillor Vaila Wishart, Education and Families Committee Chair
- Councillors in attendance – Councillor Alan Wishart, Councillor Jonathan Wills and Councillor Michael Stout
- Officers in attendance: Helen Budge, Director of Children's Services and Jerry Edwards, Quality Improvement Officer
- Public attendees – 33 + 2 Press Representatives
- Apologies: Councillor Malcolm Bell
- Note Taker – Katie Kent

Councillor Vaila Wishart opened the meeting, welcomed those present and introduced the panel. Councillor Wishart then handed over to Helen Budge.

Helen Budge	<p>As an authority we find ourselves in a position which is difficult, in that we have a school where there could be fifteen primary age pupils attending after the summer holidays but actually there will only be six attending primary 1 to primary 7. There are nine primary pupils who will attend other schools in Lerwick who could attend Bressay. Regarding pre-school – nursery there are a number of children who could come to the pre-school, however parents are choosing not to put these children to the Bressay school and place them in other establishments where pre-school education is provided. After the summer holidays there will be no nursery in Bressay because there will be no young people to attend. There will be six primary pupils which is approximately 40%. When it comes to these kinds of numbers, we need to consider how much educational experience we can provide. This is the reason why we have had some conversations with parents. We feel that six young people ranging from primary 1 to primary 7 is not the best educational experience. A draft report will be submitted to Committee which will look at statutory consultation on closure.</p> <p>The purpose of this meeting is to gather your thoughts on this. There is one other school in a similar position and we are doing the same there. Bressay school is slightly different in that it is situated on an island and parents are choosing to put their children to school off the island. We feel that it would be a better educational experience for those children left in Bressay to come to another school.</p>
	What do you mean by parents putting their children to other places in Shetland? What places?
Helen Budge	They are choosing to ask the education authority to place their children in other schools. In the past when Bressay parents have put in a placing request it has been for a place in Bell's Brae or Sound Primary Schools. There is the situation where parents are choosing to put their children to schools outwith Lerwick.
	There is a big feeling here that Bressay is being slowly integrated into Lerwick. Also the Chairperson's remark at the beginning that she really

	doesn't have any close interest here is shocking. You surely have an interest in the needs of children and education in an archipelago made up of islands. Most of these other islands have financial and social provisions made for them because of their positions. Bressay is told to rely on Lerwick. Are we a suburb now? Are we to be integrated totally? If you are talking about lack of quality in the Bressay school, I would like to challenge that.
Cllr. V. Wishart	I am not talking about a lack of quality. Also I meant that I am impartial as the Chair of this meeting.
	As part of the consultation process will you be asking parents why they are choosing not to put their children to Bressay? Personally I always had difficulties with childcare, as I worked in Lerwick and I wonder if this could be one of the issues.
Helen Budge	Anyone will be able to respond to the statutory consultation. A public meeting will take place to gather comments and views and a written response form can be submitted by any member of the public. Parents of the children who are in the school now will receive a Proposal Paper and a written response form as will those parents in the receiving school. Response forms will be accessible from the SIC website, during the public meetings or by request.
	There was mention in the media of mothballing the school. What does that entail?
Helen Budge	This has happened in other local authorities: Orkney and Highland have both mothballed schools in the past. In order for this to happen the school roll has to be at zero. No statutory consultation would be necessary. Papa Stour is an example of a mothballed school and Fetlar has been mothballed in the past. Should children return to the island there is the opportunity to re-open the school. The reason for not looking at mothballing just now is that the primary school is not currently at zero.
	If you close the school mothballing is not an option.
Helen Budge	That is correct. We have checked the guidance and spoken with Orkney and Highland councils who confirmed that the roll has to be at zero for mothballing to happen.
	If you get the children to move to school in Lerwick, you will then close the Bressay school
Helen Budge	That is correct.
	Won't happen. We have young children at Bressay school so there will be no mothballing. We are not prepared to send our children on the ferry at five years old.
Helen Budge	Thank you for your honesty and obviously this is one reason why mothballing is not an option.
	Surely you cannot push for closure if you have local people presenting

	<p>children to attend their local school. You have to provide education. It is a matter of semantics to say that a small roll makes for a poor width of education.</p>
Helen Budge	<p>I am not saying the width of education is poor. For six children we feel the educational experience would be better in a bigger school. There are a number of young folk who are already moving to another school. In this situation statutory consultation on closure would be the route as there are children at the school.</p>
	<p>Does this basically mean that you can force through closure by just saying there are not enough children and they would be better educated at a bigger school.</p>
Helen Budge	<p>It would be for Councillors to make that decision. The statutory consultation process would have to be followed. A recommendation would go to Committee and then on to Shetland Islands Council. Councillors would make a decision at Committee and again at Full Council. The Scottish Minister would then have the opportunity to call-in this decision.</p>
	<p>It is a far wider question than education which has led to this problem. Both mother and father are at work and it seems to be too difficult to provide pre-school and after-school care here on Bressay. As most people work in Lerwick, parents take their children with them on their way to work.</p> <p>There are less young families on Bressay. Part of the reason for this is that contracts are predominately temporary. No married man with a family could come to Bressay and get a mortgage on a temporary contract.</p>
Helen Budge	<p>I appreciate that. When we looked at the school roll for 2003/04 there were forty children in the school and it had two teachers. There are certainly fewer children of primary school age on Bressay today.</p>
Cllr. J. Wills	<p>In 1996/97 there were fifty-three children in Bressay school. A lot has changed and the staffing was better. On his visit last year the Education Minister was extremely impressed and was horrified to learn that the school may close. When the ferry arrived in 1974, Bressay did become a kind of suburb. This seemed to be the understanding at the time as it would not be getting the leisure centres which all the other isles did. Services for Bressay would be in Lerwick. I am concerned that the Lerwick schools may become overcrowded as is the case with Sound where classrooms are designed for twenty-four pupils, not thirty-three. In the greater Lerwick area we have three schools with Bressay school capable of accommodating sixty pupils. We are piling them all into two. Has any thought been given to offering parents the choice of a place in Bressay? When the school had forty or fifty pupils it was a very good educational experience. I think we should make an effort to keep it open if we can. Breakfast and after school clubs can help where both parents are working. I keep hearing about our Childcare Policy and I'm afraid we don't have one. What would the school roll be if we had proper childcare available on Bressay. I regard it as one of the three schools for the</p>

	Lerwick and Bressay area and there will need to be a very good reason for closing it. We need a new Lerwick primary school more than we need a new secondary school. These are my thoughts. I would hope that the Minister for Education will call in any decision to close. This would allow for an independent and impartial decision.
	I would like to address the safety issue surrounding small children taking the ferry to attend the Lerwick schools. They will need to be put on a bus and I don't think this would be a good experience for a five year old unaccompanied by a parent. I don't think you will find many parents who would want to put young children on the bus.
Helen Budge	60% of pupils who could be here in Bressay from primary 1 to primary 7 are currently taken by their parents across to Lerwick schools and back. If there is a situation where a child is sick, those parents are dealing with that.
	Those parents are in Lerwick to pick them up, not Bressay.
	The ferries are being cut back. If a parent on Bressay gets the call that a child is ill, what happens if they have to wait for up to an hour for the next ferry? We don't know what is happening with the ferries, but we will have a reduced service. What does a Bressay parent do to get to the school if their child is ill or has had an accident and is hurt?
Helen Budge	I appreciate that and we are here to get your views. All of these points will have to be considered when we come to draft a proposal paper.
Cllr. A. Wishart	I would like to follow on from what Jonathan was saying. The question is really what has changed within the community? Childcare provision seems to be one of the main issues. As Councillors we are eager to hear what the feeling is in Bressay. We are a long way from a Committee decision and a following process during which the school has to remain open and functional.
Helen Budge	Regarding timescales, when we put a report to Committee (06 August), it would be to look to moving to statutory consultation. This would need to be approved by Full Council on 28 August and we would be proposing a closure date of next June 2014 – the end of the school year. If approved then the statutory consultation would begin in September for six weeks, Education Scotland will have a three week period during which it will write a report, a further three week period will follow when a consultation paper will be published and available to the public. This consultation paper and report will then go to Committee and to Full Council for a decision. If the decision is to proceed with closure the Scottish Minister will have the option of calling this in, and under the Schools Consultation Act he has a six week period during which he can decide to review it or not. The Minister then has an indefinite period to consider the report and can decide to go ahead with closure, closure with conditions or for the school to remain open. Once this decision is taken the timescale will need to be considered again and may need to be extended depending on how long it has taken the Minister to make his decision. If we start the process in September we should know before next June what the process will be.

	<p>Surely the process and what it will be is simply a technicality. The problem we are facing is where we are now and how to turn that around. There is no point in saying lets switch the lights off and let it drift away. You have got to find some way of attracting families to come and live on the island. For whatever reason, whether it is ferry fares, access or sheer perception that Bressay isn't the place to come and live with a young family, seems to be having an effect. Traditionally there has always been a flow of families on and off the island which has changed to a flow off but not back on. Retired older folk are the only people coming to Bressay. The situation has to be addressed as a whole. We are only discussing education in isolation. We need to be discussing everything.</p>
	<p>Can we not bring Community Development in to look at Bressay as a whole? And to look at what the needs and issues are, rather than just look at education in isolation. If an issue does turn out to be childcare then we can address this.</p>
Cllr. V. Wishart	<p>If there were a Breakfast and After-School Club, would these make a big difference?</p>
	<p>I don't know why you and Cllr. A Wishart think that children are not attending Bressay primary school because of childcare issues. I don't believe that this is the case and I don't know any parents who have taken their children out of Bressay school because of this. This is an assumption you have made without asking those parents.</p>
Helen Budge	<p>Thank you for this. We have also heard that the reason is not childcare.</p>
Cllr. M. Stout	<p>In terms of keeping it simple I think we do need to speak about principles here and what I would like to hear from people is: What do folk actually feel about the prospect of Bressay not having a school for the foreseeable future. I can understand that Bressay, as a community has changed significantly. This is an opportunity to understand where we want to go as a community. The immediate problem with the school does not help, however I am interested in hearing your views on developing Bressay in broader terms.</p>
	<p>Parents have the right to send their children to the school of their choice. In this situation you must be very careful not to disadvantage the parents who wish to put their children to the Bressay school. That is their choice, regardless of whether (perhaps) a broader education can be achieved in a bigger setting. Our choice is to say that it is important to be here in the place where we live.</p>
Helen Budge	<p>I take your point. There is a Parental Act which means that parents can choose to put their children to another school of their choosing as long as there is space. Parents would have to cover the transport costs. This is what some parents have chosen to do. You are correct in that we have a duty to provide education. For those who don't want the school to go down that route it is important for us to meet with you and have the opportunity to hear your views.</p>
	<p>Parents who are sending their children to the Bressay school must feel as</p>

	though the rug is being pulled out from under their feet. How are we going to attract families to a place without a school? This is a real concern for the future. Where will the carers for our ageing population come from? Not locally because all our young people will be gone. It makes a very depressing place without a school.
Helen Budge	I can understand that and that is why we are here – to hear your views. As part of our statutory consultations in the past we have also undertaken socio-economic studies on the immediate community. This could add further information on the community situation.
Cllr. M. Stout	I am a bit sceptical of socio-economic studies. Situations are not necessarily defined by socio-economics. It is defined by a sense of what people want their community to be and this is difficult to pick up.
	Is the socio-economic study a study of where the island is at now?
Helen Budge	Yes.
	Michael is talking about looking forward. Would the socio-economic study form the basis of development?
Helen Budge	Yes.
MSP Tavish Scott	<p>The fundamental to an island is how you get in and out of it. The problem we have at the moment is that Shetland Islands Council ferry policy is a mess. You are cutting services, fares are going up and until you sort out what your ferry policy is, how do you plan to attract people to come and live on this island? None of this is new. We have been speaking about this since 1994. Your transport policy needs to be sorted out. People will not move here until you do. There has been more than one fare increase each year for the past three years. The uncertainty of the ferry situation, difficulty selling houses and the other economic effects are all manifesting themselves into why we are sitting here tonight.</p> <p>I don't buy the mothballing line. This is guidance. No one is going to take the Council to court for deciding to mothball a school. I'm afraid I don't buy the zero number of children in a school before it can be mothballed. There is no law I know of in the Scottish Government, that I know of which says that. You could take that on – if you wanted to and I suggest that you go back and take a harder look at this as an option and keep it on the table. You are down the road of statutory consultation on closure, you are not giving this island the option of mothballing which is guidance not law and fundamentally sort your ferries out. Until there is a proper discount policy which helps people to live on this island, economically we will just drift away. Why were there fifty three pupils at Bressay primary when my children went to school there compared with six now? It was a commuter island then so it is not as simple to say we have changed. To you the Elected Members you need to sort out the ferries.</p>
	It is fundamental to the reason why young families have left Bressay. It adds £2,500 to a family budget annually. It is cheaper to live elsewhere.

Cllr. J. Wills	<p>I make no apologies for the ferry increases. In short, we had to start bringing in more money. It is regrettable, however the cost of commuting from Bressay compares quite favourably with the cost of commuting from the west side or the north. The service is being reduced a little and the crew also and I hope there will not be any further increases to fares. The ferry is the key. Parents cannot just drive to another community or school. If the school were to close, would there be a bus to pick up the five year olds from their front door and take them to the door of the school? What would be the arrangement? Would they have to pay for that and if not would the parents who have already chosen to take their children to Lerwick also not pay for transport?</p> <p>Regarding security, who will be responsible for the children while they are travelling?</p>
Helen Budge	<p>These are aspects which would be detailed out in the proposal paper. It will be absolutely clear what the alternative transport arrangements would be. The Commission for Rural Education is suggesting we need a transport policy – a clear framework of how we would do this. This would be part of the proposal paper. Those young people already travelling off Bressay would qualify for transport in the same way.</p>
Cllr. J. Wills	<p>Lerwick is running out of building land. The building land within ten miles of Lerwick is mostly in Bressay. If Lerwick is going to expand, Bressay is the obvious direction. If we close the school we may find in ten or fifteen years that it will be needed again. A new primary school will be needed and at present the rooms at Sound primary are too small. It is jam packed.</p>
Cllr. M. Stout	<p>The ferry review is one of the most far reaching and fair reviews and will report shortly. New machines will be available which can hold different tariffs. The fares may not be cheaper, however they will be cheapest for those who can least afford them. I fully agree that it is one of the significant factors which shape the community of Bressay – number and frequency of ferries. I do not accept that the ferry policy is a shambles. We carried out the consultations and Bressay was one which engaged poorly but we are close to a reasonable ferry provision for the money we can afford to spend. There is not much more to play around with. Ferry fares and accessibility are key to this, but it has to be seen in the light of what the community itself actually wants. Most of what happens will have to come from what the Bressay folk and what they want Bressay to be like – the shape of their community. My gut feeling is that if you take away a school for the foreseeable future, it will profoundly shape the community.</p>
	<p>If parents can choose which school they want to send their children to it is their right. If you close the Bressay school you are taking away this right.</p>
Cllr. J. Wills	<p>Can I ask what effort has been made to find out from those parents who have moved their children what would persuade them to use the school.</p>
	<p>No effort has been made to contact any parents to find out if they could be persuaded back or change their minds. No one asked if there is anything that could be done to make a difference. When I made the decision to</p>

	move my child out of Bressay nobody asked me.
Helen Budge	Before the summer holidays we held a meeting with all the parents who had children in the school before the summer. A number of parents attended this meeting who chose to put placing requests to other schools. We do have a note of that meeting and of the views of the parents who attended.
	Sorry Helen but this has been happening for a number of years now and it has had a knock on effect on the school roll. You need to be asking people from way back what it was that influenced their decision to move their children.
Helen Budge	I am just answering the point that we did have a conversation with those parents who were choosing to move their children, before the summer holidays. We have not surveyed everybody who chose in the past to move their children out of Bressay.
	Is the service willing to spend a little time, before beginning statutory consultation, to try Jonathan's suggestion of asking Lerwick parents if they would consider sending their children to Bressay and asking parents whose children moved in the past if there was anything they felt would have changed their minds.
Helen Budge	All parents have the choice to put their children to whatever school they wish. In the past ten years no parent from Lerwick has chosen to put their child into Bressay. This is the evidence we have currently. We have found that parents from Bressay have chosen to put their children to other schools.
	Parents have probably never thought about it. They are not aware of the option. There must be a few different things which could be tried. Is there any chance of a little time before consultation?
Helen Budge	That is why we are here tonight – to hear what your views are, which will all be considered following this meeting.
	Part of the issue may be that some people who have chosen to put their children to Lerwick or are considering it, may find it difficult to say in public. If tonight is key to what is going into the proposal for statutory consultation, some people may find a public meeting an uncomfortable setting to express their views. Is there a different way they can let the service know their views before the consultation begins?
Helen Budge	We have found this to be the case. There are opportunities for people to give us their views. We normally have one public meeting, however during a recent consultation, three meetings took place: main public meeting, group meeting with some parents and a parent council meeting. We are open to any meeting situation.
	Can you do this before the statutory consultation period. It is about gathering people's thoughts into the proposal for Council.

Helen Budge	We can look at what you are suggesting tonight and go on to look at how we can take on board some of what is being reported here. I cannot take on board the ferries and I will not pursue anything relating to that. The Councillors here tonight have heard your views on this. In respect of the school, education and parents views I will be taking this on board.
Cllr. J. Wills	I am suggesting, for a community this size, is that the basic research to find out why parents are moving or have moved their children, should not be done at any sort of public meeting. It should be carried out confidentially and privately with individuals by council staff. What exactly made them chose to do so and what would influence them.
Helen Budge	Thank you Councillor. The form which is now available to parents for placing their child at a different school to the catchment area school does ask this question so we do have this information for more recent placements. We received further views from the parents meetings. We do not have a level of detail going back twenty years as this type of information was not gathered.
Cllr. J. Wills	I do suggest that we try to carry out a bit of research into this.
	I think you will find that you won't have that information for even the last year.
Cllr. A. Wishart	I think it is very clear that nobody here tonight wants the school closed. This has been established. My question is: does this need to go to Committee in August? We have heard that there is a will here in the community to try to look at community development to bring ideas together. There are longer term issues which we have heard about for example housing and transport. In the meantime there will be pressure on us from the Council to look at the whole issue of the Bressay Primary School. I would like to see this not move ahead too quickly so that the community has an opportunity look at options and possibilities. It is not just about education. It is about community also.
Cllr. V Wishart	As Chairperson of the Education and Families Committee I will not accept the report at the August meeting. I would like to see more time to discuss.
	I am a parent of two bairns in the school. If the school roll is going to be six after the holidays, our two will be leaving. We feel that six pupils is not enough and we will move our bairns to Lerwick. The changes which have come with Curriculum for Excellence and the emphasis on what children are learning, I feel that my children will be disadvantaged if they stay in a very small school. There is just not the variety and they do not have the opportunity to try different things in physical education for example. There are limited activities outside school also. This is not a decision we have taken lightly.
Cllr. M. Stout	A few people have mentioned the possibility of bairns using sports facilities in Lerwick more than they do now whilst having the benefits of receiving the bulk of their education here in Bressay. I don't know if this is technically possible.

Helen Budge	This does happen. We have integration with other small schools which come together for sports and drama events. During the transition year at primary 7, many activities are arranged to bring the pupils together so that they are better prepared for transition. Bressay school has always been very positive in giving the young folk opportunities to do this, as and when possible.
Cllr. M. Stout	This could be extended, given Bressay's concerns. Could this, along with raising the school roll, be one of the aspects which would bring Bressay school up to a standard which would make it more acceptable for folk?
Helen Budge	We can consider this. The school does a lot of work with other schools – swimming and other activities. I think what the parent is referring to here is the day to day social interaction and playing together.
	I have two children at the school. My middle daughter has said that if the school drops to four she doesn't want to go there any longer. She doesn't want to be left at school with three boys. There is no choice. The issue is not childcare. When you look around you here tonight, where are the young up-and-coming folk who could be parents? It is not the school and not the teaching. It is the island. There is no housing and ferries are expensive and being cut. I do not want the school to close at all. I want my children to be at the school but I have to look at what my daughter is needing.
Helen Budge	I really appreciate what both sets of parents have said. Thank you for your openness in this community.
	I do not think Bressay realises the situation parents are in here.
	We have been in this position for a while now. Every time someone takes a bairn out it affects the next parent's number of what they feel is an acceptable limit. This weakens the school a bit more each time.
Helen Budge	The Act is such that parents have the choice of where they put their children. I cannot challenge that, except where we do not have the space or the staff to accommodate the request.
Ruth MacKenzie	I need to ask people to think very carefully about the voice of the children. We do have integration, particularly in the transition year. One of the things which has happened when the children attend these integration events at larger settings is that children decide that is where they want to be. Children have chosen themselves and they want to be in classes where there are playmates and peers of their own ages. I think the situation is incredibly sad and not how I wish to end my time at Bressay. Please remember to listen to the children and for whatever reason it is very difficult for them to be isolated and on their own.
	There is a park which is almost completed. This should be used to take other communities into Bressay rather than bairns always having to travel to the mainland. Integration should take place here on the island. It would be very sad if this school was to close after a brand new park and facilities have been build – which was one of the main aims of this island.

	The kids want a social interaction as well as an educational one. It has been reported that moving kids was convenient for parents. This is not the case and is quite offensive.
Cllr. A. Wishart	I am glad to be corrected on that and glad it has prompted this conversation. Thank you.
	I grew up on Bressay and I don't live on Bressay currently. I would like to but I can't afford to. I do have children and I never considered a time when I would not be able to send them to Bressay school. I appreciate that it is individual choice but I feel it is very sad that even if I could get to live here, my children will never attend the school.
	Has much consideration been put into future parents on Bressay – maybe five or ten years down the line? Could Lerwick schools accommodate an increase of, say 50 primary aged children?
Helen Budge	What we have done in the past on Fetlar and Papa Stour was to mothball the schools. This gave the opportunity for the school to be re-opened if families moved into the island again. We have considered mothballing this school and I take Tavish's point that the guidance around this has been interpreted by our legal team to mean that the roll has to be at zero. This is not law and we will go back and check this.
	How many bairns are required to re-open a mothballed school?
Helen Budge	In Papa Stour the most recent case, one set of parents arrived however they did not stay long enough for us to get through the process of considering re-opening. This family had two or three bairns.
	So it is obvious that two bairns aren't enough to keep the school open but one is enough to re-open a mothballed school.
Helen Budge	It was one family, with a number of children. Not one pupil.
	What will be the best way for parents with children under five who wish to access nursery provision to do so? We are speaking here about five year old children going on a bus to Lerwick. It could be very difficult for parents to send under fives to Lerwick for nursery provision.
Helen Budge	We don't have a statutory obligation to provide pre-school education in Bressay. We do have to provide a number of places across Shetland and these do not have to be in any particular community. On some of the remote isles we cannot provide a full five days, two and half hours. We negotiate with the parents and provide a couple of sessions per week. It is not a statutory obligation.
	I was not aware of that.
Helen Budge	Why should you be? We have always provided a very good pre-school education across all our islands and as long as we have enough places for our three and four year olds, there is no obligation on where they attend. There are no catchment areas.

	If a decision is made to move to close a school can, or do, closed schools ever re-open.?
Helen Budge	I am not aware of a closed school in Shetland re-opening.
Cllr. J. Wills	If you re-open Gulberwick you would have 100 pupils.
Helen Budge	Thank you.
	Rather than arguing the legalities of mothballing over closure, surely the Education Committee can decide to close but keep the school in a mothballed state. The school would then not have to be sold.
Helen Budge	The proposal paper would need to include an alternative use for the building. Council can certainly decide that it wishes to retain the building. I can check this legally. For example Quarff school was closed and used for other things.
Cllr. J. Wills	Could the school be leased out for other uses meantime?
Helen Budge	We can look at this.
Cllr. A. Wishart	I feel this has been a very useful meeting highlighting how much the community is involved and not simply the school. I would still like to think that some positive thought will be given to how the school could be mothballed and how the community itself can turn around so that parents want their children to stay and pupils themselves want to stay. Who would bring this forward?
	Have there been any propositions from the Bressay Community Council on this? Are they being pro-active?
	The Community Council is aware of this and will need time to discuss.
	You have called this meeting here tonight to listen to the opinions of the Bressay people on the proposal to close Bressay school but you have not asked for a show of hands. Are you leaving under the impression that 100% are for this or 100% are against?
Cllr. A. Wishart	I did say earlier that I assumed that no one here wanted the school to close and nobody contradicted me.
	I do not want to see the school close but I do not want to keep it open at the bairns expense. We discussed this with our children also. We could not make a decision without involving them. This is not a recent problem. There have been years of small numbers in the Bressay school.
Helen Budge	I would like to say that we do appreciate very much the work the staff does at Bressay Primary School who are providing as good an education as they possible can for the young folk here.
Cllr. V. Wishart	Thank you for your opinions this evening. We will leave this for the moment to allow the Community Council time to discuss and to perhaps come up with some ideas. I can't do anything about the ferries just now.

Appendix A

MSP Tavish Scott	You are an Elected Member. Yes you can, with the greatest respect.
	The position of our ferries just shows how singular the Bressay position is. Nobody seems to take this into account except ourselves. You have influence so you can do something about it.
Cllr. M. Stout	I would like to pass on Cllr. Bell's apologies to this meeting. We are more than happy for you to contact us regarding this issue or any issue. Personally and as a Councillor I feel very strongly about how transport and housing affects the shape of our communities here. Feel free to get in touch.
Helen Budge	If you feel that you have not had the opportunity tonight to express your views or you have not wanted to take the opportunity here in public please contact me at helen.budge@shetland.gov.uk or send me a letter. We will take on board everything you have said and thank you.

Meeting closed at 8.00pm

Bressay Placing Request Analysis 2007 – 2013

Placing Requests Made From Bressay Primary School		Percentage
Number of Placing Requests Made Since 2007	18	-
Number of Children Involved in these Placing Requests	24	-
Number of Placing Requests to Bells Brae	17 children	70.8%
Number of Placing Requests to Sound	6 children	25.0%
Number of Placing Requests to Other	1 child	4.2%

Response to 'Request for Further Information' Forms	6 out of 9	66.7 %
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Age of Pupils When Placing Request was Made

Age	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Number	4	1	3	4	3	2	7
Percentage	16.7%	4.2%	12.5%	16.7%	12.5%	8.3%	29.2%

Most Popular School for each Age Group

Age	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7
Bells Brae	4	0	2	2	2	2	5
% of Age	100%	0%	66.7%	50%	66.7%	100%	71.4%
Sound	0	0	1	2	1	0	2
% of Age	0%	0%	33.3%	50%	33.3%	0%	28.6%
Other	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
% of Age	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Receiving School	Reason For Placing Request *
Bell's Brae	Attended nursery there and wished to continue on to attend P1. Older siblings and friends at the school.
Bell's Brae	Attended nursery there and wished to continue on to attend P1.
Bell's Brae	Attended nursery there and wished to continue on to attend P1.
Bell's Brae	Larger peer group, social interaction.
Bell's Brae	Pupil numbers too low to give children the best education.
Bell's Brae	Financial reasons, parent works in Lerwick and greater opportunity for after school activities.
Bells Brae	Parent worked in Lerwick, lack of childcare out of school hours in Bressay, no transport to after school clubs in Lerwick.
Bells Brae	Child's education lacking and was falling behind badly in basic skills like English and Maths.
Bell's Brae	Bullying.
Bell's Brae	Parent's work circumstances changed.
Bell's Brae	Parent felt that the children's educational and social needs were not being met.

Appendix B

Bell's Brae	Wanted children to mix with other children of similar age. Easier transition to Anderson High School. Confidence and self-belief increased by moving to Bells Brae.
Sound	Wanted children to attend a larger school and easier transition to Anderson High School.
Sound	Larger peer group for group activities, lack of friends to interact with.
Sound	Larger peer group.
Sound	Larger peer group.
Sound	Parents work in Lerwick and greater opportunity for after school activities.
Sound	Wanted a peer group that was closer to the child's age.
Sound	More opportunities in a larger school and an easier transition to Anderson High School.
Other	Child moved to Bressay catchment area but wished to continue to attend their previous school.

* Information in this table has been obtained from previous placing requests made between 2007-2013 and from a separate Request for Further Information form sent out by Children's Services in August 2013 to all relevant parents.

Director of Children's Services: Helen Budge

Private and Confidential

Children's Services

Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
Shetland, ZE1 0QD

Telephone: 01595 744000
Fax: 01595 744074
www.shetland.gov.uk

If calling please ask for
Audrey Edwards

Direct Dial: 01595 74 3966

Date: 23 August 2013

Our Ref: AE/hs/S40/06/13/

Your Ref:

Dear

Information Provided by Children's Services on Making a Placing Request

Following on from the public meeting in Bressay Public Hall on 29 July 2013, to discuss the falling school roll at Bressay Primary School, Helen Budge, Director of Children's Services has asked me to provide you with information on how we communicate with parents about placing requests.

We did a lot of work on admissions to our schools last year, all of which has to include an explanation to parents about how to make a placing request for their child(ren) if they wish them to attend a school outwith their catchment area school.

In 2012 we put in place our Admissions Policy which affirmed, in one document, our admission arrangements for all our schools. These arrangements include how a placing request is made. A link to the policy can be found here:

www.shetland.gov.uk/education/documents/AdmissionsPolicyFINAL.pdf

To put the policy in place we had to undertake a statutory consultation process under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

This meant there was a public notice in the Shetland Times to give notice of the consultation. This notice was in the paper on Friday 10 August and Friday 17 August 2012.

A copy of the public notice is enclosed here for you. You will see that it tells everyone reading it, that the Admissions Policy will include information on how to make a placing request. The notice also contains information about the public meetings available to discuss the draft policy.

The consultation period ran from Thursday 16 August 2012 to Wednesday 26 September 2012. At the start of the consultation period a copy of the proposal was sent to all parent councils and a copy was made available in each school. The proposal contained a copy of the draft Admissions Policy.

Once the consultation period ended a Consultation Report was prepared, which included an amended draft Admissions Policy. The Consultation Report was published on 7 November 2012, and was sent to all parent councils, and a copy was made available in all our schools. The Admissions Policy was approved by Shetland Islands Council on 5 December 2012.

In line with the approved Admissions Policy we then published a public notice in the Shetland Times on 25 January 2013, explaining to parents how to make a placing request. We will do this each year in January. I have enclosed a copy of this public notice for you.

As the new school year has started now, we will send out a reminder to all our schools and all parent councils about the Admissions Policy. The Admissions Policy and the Placing Request form are on our website all the time.

It is also very important for me to point out to you that Bressay Primary School is now a one-teacher school. For 2013-14 it had a projected roll of 6 pupils. The maximum number of pupils in a one-teacher school is nineteen. Our Admissions Policy allows us to keep one spare space in a one-teacher school for any child who may move into the catchment area during the year. Any remaining spaces after this would be the ones available for placing requests. Therefore we could accept 12 placing requests into Bressay Primary School. After twelve, we would refuse any further placing requests as this would mean the Authority would have to employ an additional teacher. This is the most clear cut reason in law for refusing a placing request – where it would incur unnecessary additional expense to the local authority.

I hope this information is helpful to you in explaining the position of the local authority.

Yours sincerely

Audrey Edwards
Executive Manager, Quality Improvement

Encs

c.c. Helen Budge, Director of Children's Services



**Shetland Islands Council
Children's Services
ADMISSIONS POLICY
(Amended)
2013**

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1.0 Introduction

Shetland Islands Council's Admissions Policy (the Policy) sets out the admission arrangements to its pre-school classes, primary and secondary schools and details how placing requests will be considered.

2.0 Legal Duties in Respect of Admissions

The Policy aims to meet Shetland Islands Council's legal duties in respect of admissions and can be summarised as: -

- To provide adequate and efficient school education.
- To provide information about schools and pre-school settings.
- To provide information about admission arrangements.
- To provide information on the right to choose an alternative school by making a placing request.
- To provide information about making a placing request when a child has additional support needs.
- To accept placing requests, except where Shetland Islands Council has the right to refuse a placing request.
- To provide information on the right to appeal if a placing request is refused.

3.0 Catchment Areas

Shetland Islands Council has identified catchment areas for all its primary schools and secondary schools, primarily to facilitate transport arrangements. Shetland Islands Council aims to provide a place for each pupil in their local catchment school and to meet requests from parents for a place at an alternative (non catchment) school, but there may be occasions when this is not possible – if for example the school could not meet that particular pupil's needs.

The catchment areas for each primary and secondary school are detailed in Appendices A and B. Appendix A shows a map of school catchment areas. Appendix B is a text description of each school's catchment area, noting the main populated hamlets.

There are no defined catchment areas for pre-school settings and a parent can choose whichever setting is most appropriate for their child. In the event of more requests for admission to a pre-school setting than places, Shetland Islands Council will follow the admission arrangements set out below at paragraph 5.1.

A catchment area can be changed to reflect movement in school rolls and changes to the school estate but before a change can be implemented a statutory consultation must be undertaken and any proposed change would need to be approved by Shetland Islands Council as Education Authority. Approval of Scottish Ministers may also be required in certain circumstances.

4.0 School Information

Information on all pre-school settings, primary and secondary schools are available at www.shetland.gov.uk.

In addition, each primary and secondary school must produce a School Handbook. These contain information about the school day, staffing and educational aims. They are available at www.shetland.gov.uk.

Copies of the above information can be supplied or inspected on request from: -

- Reception, Children's Services, Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0QD.
Telephone: (01595) 744000.
- Individual pre-school settings, primary and secondary schools.

5.0 Admission Arrangements

5.1 Admission to Pre-School

Funded pre-school education is available to all children for up to 475 hours each school year. The total number of hours of 475 is described as an entitlement. Normally this entitlement is provided by a child attending five sessions a week, each lasting 2.5 hours during the normal 38 week school year. This pattern of attendance gives the total of 475 hours.

However, as the 475 hours is an entitlement, it can be delivered differently at settings which offer longer opening hours, e.g. – a child could use their entitlement by attending only for three sessions a week during the normal school year, if each session lasts approximately 4 hours.

A child whose third birthday falls between the start of an academic session in August of one year and 28 February the following year, will commence pre-school education during the month following their third birthday or as soon as practicable thereafter.

A child whose third birthday is between 1 March and the start of an academic session in August of that year will commence pre-school education in August.

Shetland Islands Council places an advert in the local press during January each year, with details of all pre-school settings and the admission arrangements. Pre-school education must be requested by completing a Registration Form. Registration Forms will be available from: -

- All pre-school settings;
- www.shetland.gov.uk ; and

- Reception, Children's Services, Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0QD.

Details of where to return the Registration Form to will be clearly stated on the advert which appears in the press, and on the form itself. Forms must be returned by the specified date.

In the event that there are insufficient spaces to accommodate all the requests for admission to a pre-school setting, then Shetland Islands Council will allocate places in the priority order listed below.

- Children referred by Additional Support Needs, Social Work or Health professionals.
- Children who have already attended the pre-school setting and wish to continue for their pre-school year or have deferred entry to Primary School.
- Children who have siblings at the pre-school setting.
- Eligible four year olds.
- Eligible three year olds (oldest first).

Once priority spaces have been allocated and there are insufficient spaces left to accommodate the remaining requests, if all other factors are equal a ballot or a waiting list will be used to determine the allocation of remaining places.

Some settings keep a waiting list of children whose parents wish them to attend that setting. A setting can determine whether they wish to use a ballot or a waiting list to allocate remaining spaces. Settings must specify to parents the means they have used to allocate remaining spaces.

When a child has not been allocated a place in the requested setting, the parents will be contacted by Children's Services to discuss an alternative offer of pre-school education.

Parents can still ask that their requested setting retain their child's name in case a space becomes available during a school year as a result of a child leaving. In any such eventuality the criteria in the priority order for allocating spaces will be applied again to determine which child is offered any space which becomes available.

5.2 Admission to Primary One

There is a legal requirement that parents ensure a child attends school. A child will normally start attending school in August when their fifth birthday falls between 1 March of that year and 28 February in the following year. Therefore, any child whose fifth birthday falls after 28 February normally has to wait until the following August to start school.

A parent may decide to educate their child at a private school or at home. Parents are requested to notify Shetland Islands Council in advance of enrolling their child in a private school or of starting to

educate their child at home. Shetland Islands Council has a Home Education Policy which is available at www.shetland.gov.uk or by contacting Children's Services.

Shetland Islands Council places an advert in the local press during January each year, with details of all primary schools, catchment areas and the admission arrangements. Commencement of primary education must be requested by completing an Enrolment Form. Enrolment Forms will be available from: -

- All primary schools:
- www.shetland.gov.uk ; and
- Reception, Children's Services Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick ZE1 0QD

Details of where to return the Enrolment Form to will be clearly stated on the advert which appears in the press, and on the form itself.

For any pupil to qualify for admission to their local catchment school, parents must satisfy Shetland Islands Council that they ordinarily reside within the catchment area, either at the time the child will start school, or shortly thereafter. Appropriate information and evidence will be required to support all admissions. Details of supporting evidence required will be detailed on the Enrolment Form.

If a parent decides that they do not want to send their child to the local catchment area school, then the parent can make a placing request for the child to attend a different school. The procedure for making a placing request is outlined below at Section 7.

Enrolment Forms and placing requests received between the specified date and 15th March will be dealt with in accordance with the priority order detailed below at paragraph 5.4.

Enrolment Forms received after 15 March will be dealt with in order of receipt.

5.3 Early and Deferred Admission to Primary One

Early or deferred admission may be possible if it is considered appropriate to the aptitude and ability of the child. Early or deferred admission will be at the discretion of the Executive Manager – Quality Improvement in consultation with the appropriate Headteacher and pre-school setting.

Early or deferred admission must also be subject to there being sufficient space in the primary 1 or composite class.

Early or deferred admission must be requested by completing the Early/Deferred Admission Request Form. This form is attached to the policy as Appendix C. The forms are also available from: -

- All primary schools:
- www.shetland.gov.uk; and
- Reception, Children's Services, Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0QD

The Early/Deferred Admission Request Form should be completed and returned to: -

Executive Manager Quality Improvement
Children's Services
Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
Shetland
ZE1 0QD

Where possible, Early/Deferred Entry Forms should be submitted by the 15 March each year for determination by 30 April.

Alternatively forms can be completed and returned online at www.shetland.gov.uk

5.4 Admission to other Primary Stages

Children moving into a catchment area may be admitted to other primary stages at any time of the school year if there is a place or reserved place available. The same rules as for admission to primary 1 above will apply.

Parents must complete an Enrolment Form which is available at all primary schools, Hayfield and on line. The completed form must be submitted to address in Hayfield.

5.5 Capacity of Primary Schools

The capacity for each of Shetland Islands Council's primary schools is determined by the projected roll for the catchment area, maximum class sizes and the budget allocated to each school. Therefore, pupil capacity is not determined by physical capacity within the school building alone. Therefore, the capacity of primary schools may fluctuate on an annual basis. For up to date information on the capacity of a particular primary school, please contact: -

Executive Manager Schools
Children's Services
Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Shetland
ZE1 0QD

As at August 2012, the class limits for primary schools are: -

- Single teacher school – 19 pupils.

- Composite classes (a class with more than one age group) – 25 pupils.
- P1 single year groups – 25 pupils.
- P2 – P3 single year groups – 30 pupils.
- P4 – P7 single year groups – 33 pupils.

Reserved Places

In order to maintain some capacity to accept pupils who move into a catchment area during the school year, reserved places are established for each primary school.

For primary schools one reserved place will be kept per class. For example:

- One reserved place in a one teacher-one class school.
- Five reserved places in a five teacher-five class school.
- Ten reserved places in a ten teacher-ten class school.

Oversubscription

On occasion Shetland Islands Council may receive more applications for children to attend their catchment area primary school than its capacity allows.

In the event that there are insufficient spaces, then Shetland Islands Council will allocate places in the priority order listed below.

- Children referred by Additional Support Needs, Social Work or Health professionals.
- Children who have siblings at the primary school.
- Children who would have the furthest distance to travel to their nearest alternative school with a place available.

Once priority spaces have been allocated and there are insufficient spaces left to accommodate the remaining requests, if all other factors are equal a ballot will be used to determine the allocation of places.

When a child has not been allocated a place in their catchment area school, the parents will be contacted to discuss an alternative offer of primary education.

Schools will retain waiting list of pupils in their catchment area who have not been successful in obtaining a place in their catchment area school in case a space becomes available during a school year as a result of a child leaving. In any such eventuality the criteria in the priority order for allocating places will be applied again to determine which child is offered any place which has become available.

5.6 Admission Arrangements - Secondary

Parents of a child who is to transfer from primary to secondary education at the end of Primary 7 will receive information regarding the relevant secondary school. Each primary school will also arrange a transition programme to assist pupils through the transfer from primary to secondary education.

If a parent decides that they do not want to send their child to the local catchment area school, then the parent can make a placing request for the child to attend a different school. The procedure for making a placing request is outlined below at Section 7.

In exceptional circumstances pupils residing within a catchment area may be refused a place if the school is physically unable to accept more pupils and will be directed to the nearest alternative school.

If a child attends a primary school through a placing request, the child will be expected to transfer to their appropriate home catchment area secondary school. Should a parent wish their child to move on to the secondary school associated with the primary school their child attends as a result of a placing request or another secondary school, then a further placing request must be made in accordance with Section 7.

As almost all pupils entering a secondary school will transfer from one of Shetland Islands Council's primary schools a further Enrolment Form does not need to be completed as the child will be known to the Authority.

If however, a pupil joins a secondary school from another local authority, an Enrolment Form must be completed and appropriate proof of identity and home address will be required. Enrolment Forms are available at: -

- All secondary schools:
- www.shetland.gov.uk ; and
- Reception, Children's Services Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick, Shetland, ZE1 0QD

Details of where to return the completed Enrolment Form will be specified on the form itself.

6.0 Admission to Specialist Resourced Units

Shetland Islands Council has two special resourced units for meeting additional support needs.

Bells Brae Primary School's Additional Support Needs department currently consists of five classes which cater for pre-school and primary children with complex additional support needs. Children benefit from the expertise of a

team of people who work together to provide an individualised programme addressing their needs.

The Anderson High School has a department based at Gressy Loan which caters for secondary aged children with complex additional support needs.

Placements within these two specialist departments are at the discretion of Children's Services.

For more information and advice, please contact: -

Education Support Officer Additional Support Needs
Children's Services
Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
ZE1 0QD
Telephone: (01595) 744024

7.0 Placing Request Procedure

Parents who do not wish their child to attend the catchment area school can submit a placing request requesting that their child attend another school. Shetland Islands Council will always aim to meet parental choice where and when this is possible. Once a young person has reached the statutory school leaving age of 16, they can make a placing request for themselves.

Children's Services will place an advert in local press during January/February each year advising that there is an expectation that all pupils will attend their catchment area school. The advert will explain how to obtain information about the current catchment areas within Shetland. The advert will explain that if a pupil wishes to attend a school other than their catchment area school for the next school year which starts in August, then a placing request must be made to Children's Services.

The advert will advise parents and young people that placing requests to attend a different school should be made using Children's Services Placing Request Form. This form is attached to the policy as Appendix D. The Placing Request Advert will also specify that, to receive a decision by 30 April, Placing Request forms should be returned by 15 March.

Parents and young people wishing to make a placing request should complete the Placing Request Form (Appendix D) which is also available from: -

- all schools;
- www.shetland.gov.uk ; and
- Reception, Children's Services, Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick ZE1 0QD.

The completed form should thereafter be returned to:

Director of Children's Services
Children's Services
Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
ZE1 0QD

Alternatively the form can be completed and returned online and www.shetland.gov.uk

Placing requests received on or before 15 March for a child to attend a particular school commencing in August of the next academic session will be determined by 30 April. All other placing requests will be determined within two months of receiving the completed form.

Placing Request Procedure – Additional Support Needs

If a child has additional support needs and a parent decides that they do not want to send the child to the catchment area school, or the particular school that is recommended by Shetland Islands Council, then the parent can make a placing request for the child to attend a different school.

A placing request for a pupil with additional support needs may be made for any mainstream school or specialist setting in certain circumstances.

Parents and young people wishing to make a placing request should complete the Placing Request Form (Appendix D) which is also available from:-

- all schools:
- www.shetland.gov.uk : and
- Reception, Children's Services, Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick
ZE1 0QD

The completed form should thereafter be returned to:

Director of Children's Services
Children's Services
Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
ZE1 0QD

Alternatively the form can be completed and returned online and www.shetland.gov.uk

Placing requests received on or before 15 March for a child to attend a particular school commencing in August of the next academic session will be determined by 30 April. All other placing requests will be determined within two months of receiving the completed form.

For more information and advice on placing requests for pupils with additional support needs, please contact: -

Education Support Officer Additional Support Needs
Children's Services
Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
ZE1 0QD
Telephone: (01595) 744024

8.0 Grounds for Refusing Placing Requests

Shetland Islands Council can only refuse a placing request for certain reasons set out by law. For example, if allowing the placing request would mean that Shetland Islands Council would have to employ an additional teacher, spend a lot of money on building work to extend the physical capacity of the school or if the school is not suited to the age and ability of the child.

If a placing request is refused, the parents or the young person will be advised of the statutory ground for refusal. A place will be allocated at the relevant catchment area school or a particular school nominated by Shetland Islands Council.

If Shetland Islands Council receives more placing requests for children to attend a primary school than its capacity allows, places will be allocation in the priority order listed below.

- Children referred by Additional Support Needs, Social Work or Health professionals;
- Children who have siblings at the primary school;
- Children who have suffered bullying/and or racial harassment (independent evidence will be required);
- If the nature of the parents' employment has a direct effect on the need to make a placing request for their child.

Once priority spaces have been allocated and there are insufficient spaces left to accommodate the remaining requests, if all other factors are equal a ballot will be used to determine the allocation of places.

9.0 Appeals Procedure When Placing Requests are Refused

There is an appeals procedure for parents and young people to follow if they are unhappy with a decision to refuse their placing request. Details of the appeals procedure will be provided in the letter advising that the placing request has been refused.

Shetland Islands Council has established the Placing Requests Appeals Sub-Committee to determine any appeals and comprises of three persons to be drawn from a panel of independent persons and elected members.

If a parent or young person is unhappy with the decision of the Placing Requests Appeals Sub-Committee then there is a further right of appeal to the Sheriff Court.

There is a separate appeals procedure for pupils with additional support needs who have a co-ordinated support plan, who require a co-ordinated support plan but it is not yet finalised or there is a dispute about whether the pupil requires a co-ordinated support plan. In these cases, an appeal is considered by the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. The Additional Support Needs Tribunal can be contacted by writing to:

ASNTS
Europa Building
450 Argyle Street
Glasgow
G2 8LH

Or: 0141 242 0148

10.0 School Transport

Shetland Islands Council has a School Transport Policy which details the entitlement to school transport. It can be located at www.shetland.gov.uk or by contacting the department.

Parents who choose to send their child, through a placing request, to a school other than their designated school will be responsible for their child's transport. It is important that parents consider this when making a placing request.

There is no legal requirement for Shetland Islands Council to provide transport to a pre-school setting. However, transport may be provided at the discretion of Shetland Islands Council. This will be determined on a case by case basis. The Shetland Childcare Partnership offer funding for pre-school transport in limited circumstances.

For further details on school transport please contact: -

Executive Manager – Schools
Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
ZE1 0QD
Telephone: (01595) 744000

For further details of the Shetland Childcare Partnership Pre-School Transport Scheme please contact: -

Shetland Childcare Partnership
Old Library Centre
Lerwick
Shetland

ZE1 0EL

Telephone: (01595) 745403

11.0 Complaints Procedure

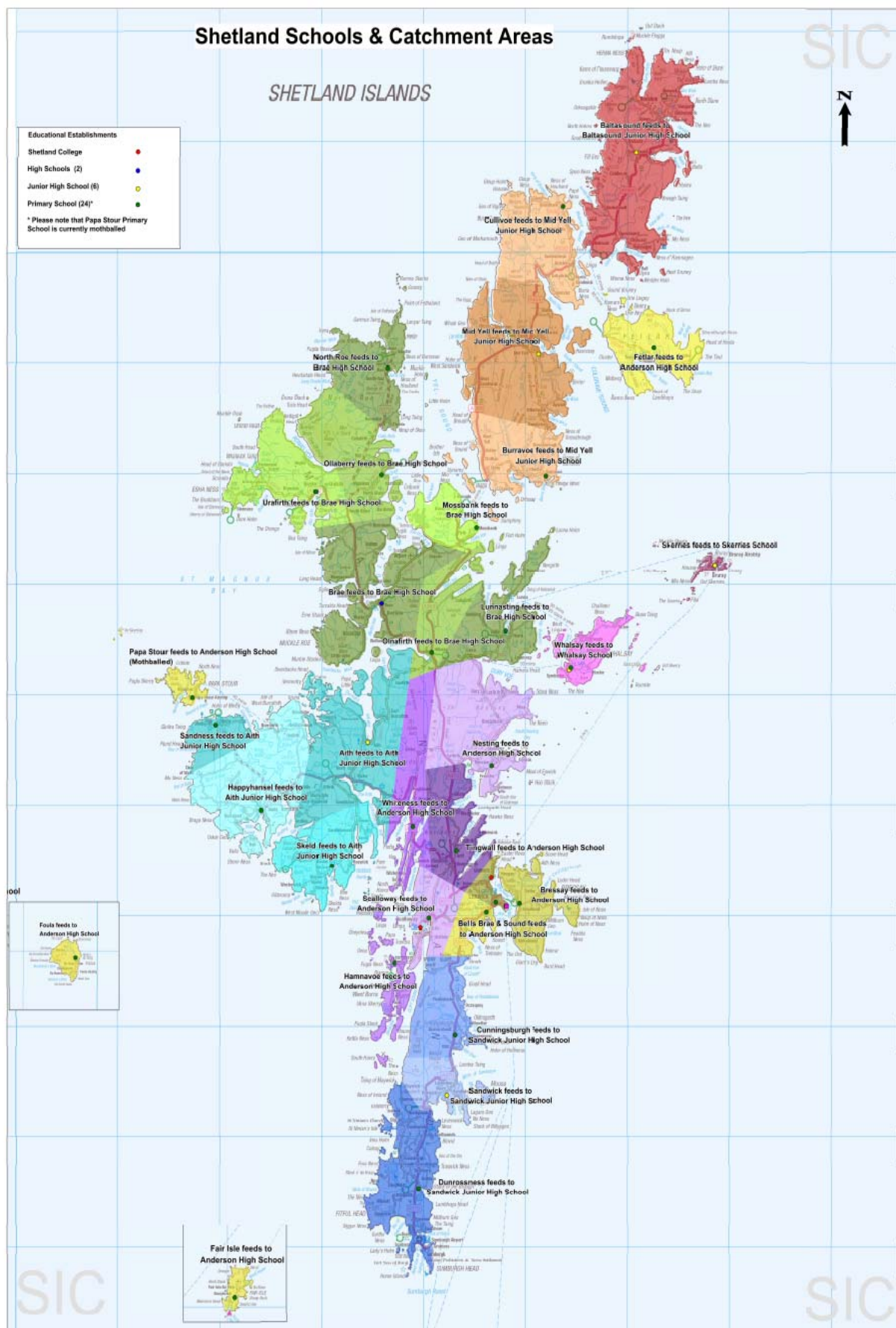
If anyone is dissatisfied with the application of this Policy, they can submit a written complaint under the Children's Services Complaints Procedure. A copy of the Children's Services Complaints Procedures can be obtained by contacting the department or online at www.shetland.gov.uk

12.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed and monitored every three years or sooner if required due to a change in legislation or the school estate.

Any future changes to the policy in relation to regulating priorities for admission, or as respects placing in schools generally, will require statutory consultation.

APPENDIX A



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Date 14/06/2013

APPENDIX B

Children's Services-Admissions Policy

Catchment Areas

Below are descriptions of catchment areas with main populated hamlets noted.

North Isles Cluster

Baltasound Junior High School	<i>The whole island of Unst.</i>
Cullivoe Primary School	<i>North Yell including Gloup, Cullivoe, Gutcher, North Sandwick, Sellafirth and Colvister.</i>
Mid Yell Junior High School	<i>Central Yell including Basta, The Herra, Camb, North-a-voe, Mid Yell, East Yell, Aywick and West Sandwick.</i>
Burravoe Primary School	<i>The South of Yell including Burravoe, Gossabrough, Hamnavoe, Ulsta, Cuppister and West Yell.</i>
Fetlar Primary School	<i>The whole island of Fetlar.</i>

North Mainland Cluster

North Roe Primary School	<i>North Roe, Lochend and as far south as the Collafirth Pier.</i>
Ollaberry Primary School	<i>From Collafirth including Swinister, Ronas Voe, Ollaberry, Gluss and Bardister.</i>
Urafirth Primary School	<i>Eshaness, Hillswick, Urafirth, Heylor and Hamar.</i>
Brae High School	<i>From Ennisfirth in the North, including Sullom, Islesburgh, Brae, Muckle Roe, Graven, Wethersta as far south as Parkgate.</i>
Olnafirth Primary School	<i>From Mulla, including Voe, Lower Voe, Dale and Collafirth. Catchment area extends West to the Loch of Gonfirth.</i>
Lunnasting Primary School	<i>From Lunna, including Vidlin, Swining and Laxo.</i>
Mossbank Primary School	<i>Mossbank, Toft and Firth.</i>

Whalsay and Skerries Cluster

Whalsay School	<i>The whole island of Whalsay.</i>
Skerries School	<i>Both inhabited islands of Out Skerries.</i>

West Mainland Cluster

Sandness Primary School	<i>Melby, Norby, Sandness and Boust.</i>
Happyhansel Primary School	<i>Including Walls, Dale of Walls, West</i>

	<i>Burrafirth as far east as West Houlland.</i>
Aith Junior High School	<i>Including Sandsound, Bixter, Aith, Clousta, Gonfirth, East Burrafirth, Twatt, Noonsbrough, Tresta and Gruting.</i>
Skeld Primary School	<i>Skeld, Reawick, Culswick and Sand.</i>

Central Mainland Cluster

Whiteness Primary School	<i>Including Whiteness, Stromfirth, Weisdale, Cott, South Whiteness.</i>
Tingwall Primary School	<i>Including Griesta, Tingwall, Wadbister, Girlsta and Brunthamarsland.</i>
Scalloway Primary School	<i>Scalloway, Trondra and as far north as the Loch of Tingwall.</i>
Hamnavoe Primary School	<i>Both West Burra and East Burra.</i>
Nesting Primary School	<i>From the southside of Laxo Voe including Drury, North Nesting and South Nesting.</i>

Lerwick Cluster

Bells Brae Primary School	<i>Lerwick east of the Ayre of Clickimin and including Frakkafield.</i>
Sound Primary School	<i>Lerwick west of the Ayre of Clickimin, Gulberwick and Brindister.</i>
Bressay Primary School	<i>The whole island of Bressay.</i>
Foula Primary School	<i>The whole island of Foula</i>

South Mainland Cluster

Cunningsburgh Primary School	<i>Quarff, Fladdabister, Cunningsburgh as far south as Mail.</i>
Sandwick Junior High School	<i>Sandwick including Hoswick. As far south as Channerwick.</i>
Dunrossness Primary School	<i>Levenwick, Bigton, Maywick, Quendale, Virkie, Boddam and Scousburgh.</i>
Fair Isle Primary School	<i>The whole island of Fair Isle.</i>

Currently Mothballed

Papa Stour Primary School	<i>The whole island of Papa Stour</i>
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Secondary Schools (feeder Primaries)

Baltasound Junior High School	<i>Baltasound Junior High School Primary Department</i>
Mid Yell Junior High School	<i>Cullivoe Primary School, Mid Yell Junior High School Primary Department and Burravoe Primary School</i>

Skerries School	<i>Skerries School Primary Department</i>
Brae High School	<i>North Roe Primary School, Ollaberry Primary School, Urafirth Primary School, Mossbank Primary School, Olnafirth Primary School, Lunnasting Primary School and Brae High School Primary Department.</i>
Whalsay School	<i>Whalsay School Primary Department</i>
Aith Junior High School	<i>Sandness Primary School, Happyhansel Primary School, Skeld Primary School and Aith Junior High School.</i>
Anderson High School	<i>Bells Brae Primary School, Sound Primary School, Bressay Primary School, Fetlar Primary School, Foula Primary School, Fair Isle Primary School, Papa Stour Primary School, Scalloway Primary School, Hamnavoe Primary School, Nesting Primary School, Tingwall Primary School, Whiteness Primary School.</i>
Sandwick Junior High School	<i>Cunningsburgh Primary School, Sandwick Junior High School Primary Department, Dunrossness Primary School</i>

APPENDIX C

Children's Services-Admissions Policy Early/Deferred Admission to Primary 1



Shetland Islands Council Early Entry Form Early/Deferred Admission to Primary 1

Child Details

Surname:.....

Forename(s):.....

Sex: Male/Female

Date of Birth:.....

Name of Parent/Carer

Title:.....Initial:.....Surname:.....

Home Address:.....

Town:.....Postcode:.....

Name of Pre-School Provision Attended:

.....

Name of Primary School Due to Attend:

.....

Please state your reasons for making this request:

.....

.....

.....

Signature of Parent/Carer:Date:

APPENDIX D

Children's Services-Admissions Policy **Placing Request Form**



Shetland Islands Council **Placing Request Form**

Child Details

Surname:.....

Forename(s):

Sex: Male/Female

Date of Birth:

Name of Parent/Carer

Title:.....Initial:.....Surname:.....

Home Address:

Town:.....Postcode:

Telephone No:

Name of Primary/Secondary School currently attended

Name of School:.....

Address:

.....Stage:.....

Name of Primary/Secondary School requested

Name of School:.....

Address:

Stage:..... Start Date Requested:

Please state your reasons for making this placing request.

.....

.....

Signature of Parent/Carer:Date:

Appendix E

Glossary of Terms

Catchment Area – the geographical area in a local authority which determines which children are entitled to attend which school.

Deferred Entry to Primary 1 – this is where a child is of age to enter Primary 1 but their parents make a request for them to remain in pre-school education for an additional year. This is usually requested because the parents feel their child may not be developmentally ready to start their primary education.

Early Entry to Primary 1 – this is where parents of a child whose birthday falls after the latest date in a year to make them eligible to start Primary 1 make a request for them to start Primary 1 a year earlier.

Placing Request – this is the formal request a parent makes if they wish their child to attend a school which is not their catchment area school.

School Capacity – the total number of pupils a school can take in to educate, based on space, staffing and budget allocated to it by the local authority.

Children's Services Admissions Policy

Placing Request Form



Shetland Islands Council Placing Request Form

Child Details

Surname: Forename(s):
Sex: Date of Birth:

Name of Parent / Carer

Title: Initial(s): Surname:
Home Address:
Town: Post Code:
Telephone No:

Name of Primary / Secondary School currently attending

Name of School: Stage:
Address:

Name of Primary / Secondary School requested

Name of School: Stage:
Address:

Start Date Requested:

Please state your reason(s) for making this placing request

Reason(s):

Signature of Parent/Carer: Date:

Shetland Islands Council

Children's Services

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Notice of Consultation

Admissions Policy

Under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 Children's Services are undertaking a Statutory Consultation regarding the implementation of a new Admissions Policy. The aim of the Policy will be to set out Shetland Islands Council's arrangements with regards admissions to its pre-school settings, primary and secondary schools, catchment areas for all schools and how placing requests will be considered.

The Proposal Paper

The Proposal Paper which contains full details of the Admissions Policy and its aims/objectives is available in the following ways;

- On the website, <http://www.shetland.gov.uk/education/>
- For inspection at all nurseries, primary and secondary schools and at Hayfield House and Shetland Library.

The Consultation Period and making representations

The Consultation Period will commence on Thursday 16 August 2012 and run until Wednesday 26 September 2012.

Anyone wishing to make a written representation to the consultation should submit them within the consultation period to:

Admissions Policy Consultation
Children's Services
Hayfield House
Hayfield Lane
Lerwick
ZE1 0QD

Alternatively responses can be emailed to admissionconsultation@shetland.gov.uk

All responses must be received by Wednesday 26 September 2012 to ensure they are taken into account.

Please be aware that the content of your response will be open to public scrutiny and may have to be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it. If you do not wish the content of your response to be made publicly available, you should clearly state: 'I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to councillors and council officers of Shetland Islands Council'. Otherwise, it will be assumed that you agree to the content of your response being made publicly available. Personal details will not be made public.

Public Meetings

Two public meetings are being held to discuss this Consultation:

- Islesburgh Community Centre, Lerwick, on Tuesday 28 August 2012 from 7-9pm
- Brae High School, Brae, on Wednesday 29 August 2012 from 7-9pm

Shetland Islands Council

Children's Services

Placing Request Notice

Parents/ Carers who wish to make a Placing Request for their child to attend a school **other** than their catchment area school, should do so by completing a Placing Request form. The form is available from all schools, Hayfield House or online at www.shetland.gov.uk and should be returned to the following address:

Placing Requests

Children's Services

Hayfield House

Hayfield Lane

Lerwick

Shetland

ZE1 0QD

Or by email to placingrequests@shetland.gov.uk

Applications will be accepted from the publication of this advert up to the 15 March 2013 and parents/carers will be notified of the outcome in writing by 30 April 2013.

Shetland Islands Council's Children's Services Admissions Policy deals with prioritisation of placing requests. The policy can be found at www.shetland.gov.uk or by contacting Children's Services.

Meeting with parents re. Bressay Primary School

Thursday 8th August, 6.30pm, Bressay Primary School

Present: Beatrice Lowe, Shirley Gifford, Katrina Gifford, Allan Wishart, Michael Stout, Vaila Wishart, Jonathan Wills, Alistair Christie-Henry, June Porter

Apologies: Malcolm Bell

Brief Notes

- Beatrice summarised main reason for calling meeting - essentially to look at ways of increasing the school roll in order to try and keep it open.
- Fear if the school is closed or mothballed temporarily, it will never reopen again.
- Could parents with children at Bells Brae and Sound primary schools be given an option to send their children to Bressay?
- There may be children at school in Lerwick who would benefit from small class sizes in Bressay?
- Could transport be made available to bring pupils across?
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that Sound School in particular is bursting at the seams, but this may not actually be the case.
- Could Bressay primary be seen as part of Lerwick catchment primary school provision? Amid talk of a need for a new super primary might it make economic sense?
- If it is acceptable for children from Bressay to attend school in Lerwick, why is it not acceptable for children in Lerwick to attend school in Bressay? Need to ask the question.
- What are the current and projected school rolls for Bells Brae and Sound into the future?
- Is wrap around childcare on the island part of the solution?
- May not the whole solution, but could be part of a package of measures which may help make Bressay an attractive place to live for families to come and live, and in turn boost the school roll.
- Attempts to encourage establishment of a network of childminders was unsuccessful in past. Support still available for any individual or group of individuals looking to go down this self-employment route. Very much dependent on there being individuals on the island interested in this kind of work.
- There are a variety of possible reasons why parents have chosen and continue to choose to send their children to Lerwick schools rather than Bressay, e.g.: lack of wrap around childcare, personal reasons, concern re. reducing class sizes and potential impact on

educational experience. Whatever the reasons, it is an individual choice, and must be respected.

- Would be really useful however to understand the reasons, in the wider context of helping retain a healthy school roll, and ensuring the conditions are in place to make Bressay an attractive place to live.
- Acknowledgement that the situation Bressay School finds itself in is symptomatic of a number of long standing wider community issues, highlighted previously in consultation documents such as the STAG report – ie: lack of suitable housing, restrictions posed by ferry timetable, increasing cost of ferry fares, lack of available land to build new homes, lack of childcare for working parents, proximity to Lerwick and the need for residents to access all major services in Lerwick etc, etc....
- Interesting to compare the cost of travel from Bressay to Lerwick, with for example Walls or Sandness to Lerwick. There may be a perception that it is more expensive to live in Bressay, than it actually is. Need to try and dispel any myths.
- Feeling that Bressay is at a pivotal point where it has to look inwardly as well as outwardly to try and map out a community vision for the future, a bit like what residents of Sandness have done. Support for convening a community meeting / workshop to begin this process.
- What is it that Bressay has to offer prospective residents? What is unique about Bressay? What are its selling points? What would encourage new folk particularly young families to move to the island?
- The above will not necessarily save the Bressay school in the short term, but may map out a way to redress the balance, and ensure that Bressay has a sustainable future, with a balanced demographic, a vibrant school and other local amenities.
- Bressay Community Council to convene meeting with Jerry Edwards and June Porter – with a view to organising a community workshop prior to the report going to Council.
- June to forward any previous community consultation information / STAG summary and other profile data available to Vaila and Allan.
- Vaila to raise specific question of Lerwick pupils attending Bressay with Helen Budge.

June Porter
Community Work Officer
Community Planning and Development

Primary School Rolls at 19 August 2013

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	Total
Bells Brae Primary School - Primary	42	39	39	46	43	41	47	297
Sound Primary School	39	36	40	45	59	38	47	304

There are two classes for each year group in both of these schools.

School Rolls

	TOTAL NURSERY	TOTAL PRIMARY	TOTAL SECONDARY	Total
Aith Junior High School - Primary	17	58		75
Aith Junior High School - Secondary			85	85
Anderson High School			911	911
Baltasound Junior High School - Primary	11	45		56
Baltasound Junior High School - Secondary			18	18
Bells Brae Primary School - Primary	27	297		324
Blyde Haven Nursery	5			5
Brae High School - Primary	18	102		120
Brae High School - Secondary			199	199
Bressay Primary School		6		6
Burravoe Primary School		13		13
Cullivoe Primary School		24		24
Cunningsburgh Primary School	18	79		97
Dunrossness Primary School	13	104		117
Fair Isle Primary School	1	4		5
Fetlar Primary School		7		7
Foula Primary School	1	2		3
Hamnavoe Primary School		49		49
Happyhansel Primary School	7	43		50
Islesburgh Pre-School Group	10			10
Lunnasting Primary School	3	25		28
Mid Yell Junior High School - Primary	16	42		58
Mid Yell Junior High School - Secondary			43	43
Mossbank Primary School	5	35		40
Nesting Primary School		24		24
North Roe Primary School		9		9
Ollaberry Primary School		9		9
Olnefirth Primary School		8		8
Sandness Primary School		7		7
Sandwich Junior High School - Primary	18	100		118
Sandwich Junior High School - Secondary			156	156
Scalloway Primary School	23	112		135
Skeld Primary School	6	22		28
Skerries School - Primary		3		3
Skerries School - Secondary			2	2
Sound Primary School	36	304		340
Tingwall Primary School		71		71
Urafirth Primary School	11	10		21
Whalsay School - Primary	10	82		92
Whalsay School - Secondary			51	51
Whiteness Primary School	22	91		113
Total	278	1787	1465	3530