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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL THURSDAY, 26 APRIL, 2018

A MEETING of the SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL will be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, NEWTOWN ST. BOSWELLS on THURSDAY, 26 APRIL, 2018 at 10.00 AM

J. J. WILKINSON,
Clerk to the Council,
19 April 2018

BUSINESS																
1.	Convener's Remarks.															
2.	Apologies for Absence.															
3.	Order of Business.															
4.	Declarations of Interest.															
5.	<p>MSYP Presentation on the "Right Here Right Now" Campaign</p> <p>Presentation by Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament on their campaign "Right Here Right Now" which seeks to promote the rights of young people in Scotland.</p>	15 mins														
6.	<p>Minute (Pages 5 - 20)</p> <p>Consider Minute of Scottish Borders Council held on 29 March 2018 for approval and signing by the Convener. (Copy attached.)</p>	2 mins														
7.	<p>Committee Minutes</p> <p>Consider Minutes of the following Committees:-</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">(a) Eildon Area Partnership</td> <td style="width: 50%;">8 March 2018</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(b) Berwickshire Area Partnership</td> <td>15 March 2018</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(c) Audit & Scrutiny</td> <td>19 March 2018</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(d) Hawick Common Good Fund</td> <td>20 March 2018</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(e) Civic Government Licensing</td> <td>23 March 2018</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(f) Planning & Building Standards</td> <td>26 March 2018</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(g) Executive</td> <td>17 April 2018</td> </tr> </table> <p>(Please see separate Supplement containing the public Committee Minutes.)</p>	(a) Eildon Area Partnership	8 March 2018	(b) Berwickshire Area Partnership	15 March 2018	(c) Audit & Scrutiny	19 March 2018	(d) Hawick Common Good Fund	20 March 2018	(e) Civic Government Licensing	23 March 2018	(f) Planning & Building Standards	26 March 2018	(g) Executive	17 April 2018	5 mins
(a) Eildon Area Partnership	8 March 2018															
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(c) Audit & Scrutiny	19 March 2018															
(d) Hawick Common Good Fund	20 March 2018															
(e) Civic Government Licensing	23 March 2018															
(f) Planning & Building Standards	26 March 2018															
(g) Executive	17 April 2018															
8.	<p>Committee Minute Recommendations (Pages 21 - 22)</p> <p>Consider the recommendations made by the Executive Committee on 17</p>	5 mins														

	April 2018. (Copy attached.)	
9.	Open Questions	15 mins
10.	St. Margaret's RC Primary School - Consultation Outcome Report (Pages 23 - 90) Consider report by Service Director Children and Young People. (Copy attached.)	10 mins
11.	Early Years and Childcare - Expansion to 1140 hours (Pages 91 - 106) Consider report by Service Director Children and Young People. (Copy attached.)	15 mins
12.	School Estate Review: Secondary School Review - Galashiels, Hawick, Peebles & Selkirk (Pages 107 - 132) Consider report by Service Director Children and Young People. (Copy attached.)	15 mins
13.	Community Action Team Steering Group Consider draft terms of reference for Member/Officer Group to monitor the Police Community Action Team. (Copy to follow.)	10 mins
14.	Motion by Councillor Jardine Consider Motion by Councillor Jardine in the following terms:- "The elected members, would like to pay tribute and congratulate all the athletes and coaches from our region, that have competed in the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia. It shows the strength and depth of sport, in our small region. That twelve representatives from all over the Scottish Borders, were chosen to compete in several sports as part of the most successful overseas Scottish Commonwealth Games Team. It is hoped that the performances of our homegrown athletes, on the Gold Coast of Australia, will also encourage the next generation of Scottish Borders sporting stars."	5 mins
15.	Any Other Items Previously Circulated	
16.	Any Other Items Which the Convener Decides Are Urgent	
17.	Private Business Before proceeding with the private business, the following motion should be approved:- "That under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the aforementioned Act."	
18.	Minute (Pages 133 - 136) Consider private Section of Minute of Scottish Borders Council held on 29 March 2018. (Copy attached.)	1 mins
19.	Committee Minutes	2 mins

Consider private Sections of the Minutes of the following Committees:-

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| (a) Hawick Common Good Fund | 20 March 2018 |
| (b) Executive | 17 April 2018 |

(Please see separate Supplement containing private Committee Minutes.)

NOTES

- 1. Timings given above are only indicative and not intended to inhibit Members' discussions.**
- 2. Members are reminded that, if they have a pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in any item of business coming before the meeting, that interest should be declared prior to commencement of discussion on that item. Such declaration will be recorded in the Minute of the meeting.**

Please direct any enquiries to Louise McGeoch Tel 01835 825005
email lmcgeoch@scotborders.gov.uk

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SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

MINUTE of MEETING of the SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL held in Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells on 29 March 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:- Councillors D. Parker (Convener), S. Aitchison, A. Anderson, H. Anderson, J. Brown, S. Bell, K. Chapman, K. Drum, G. Edgar, J. A. Fullarton, C. Hamilton, S. Hamilton, S. Haslam, E. Jardine, H. Laing, S. Marshall, W. McAteer, T. Miers, D. Moffat, S. Mountford, D. Paterson, C. Penman, C. Ramage, N. Richards, E. Robson, M. Rowley, H. Scott, S. Scott, E. Small, R. Tatler, E. Thornton-Nicol, G. Turnbull.

Apologies:- Councillors J. Greenwell, T. Weatherston.

In Attendance:- Executive Director (P. Barr), Executive Director (R. Dickson), Service Director Assets & Infrastructure, Service Director Children & Young People, Service Director Regulatory Services, Director of Public Health, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Social Work Officer, Chief Legal Officer, Chief Roads Officer, Clerk to the Council.

1. CONVENER'S REMARKS

- 1.1 The Convener welcomed Councillor Caroline Penman to her first meeting of the Council following her election at the recent By-election in the Selkirkshire Ward.
- 1.2 The Convener congratulated the Community Capacity Building Team comprising Juliana Amaral, Lynne Marshall, Amanda Renwick and Jillian Scott on receiving the silver award at the recent iESE (Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise) Public Sector Transformation Awards 2018. The Convener represented the award to Lynne Marshall and Jillian Scott who were present at the meeting.
- 1.3 The Convener congratulated David Robertson and his team for receiving the CIPFA Scottish Public Sector Team of the Year Award 2018. The Convener represented the award to David Robertson, Suzy Douglas, Kirsty Robb, Lizzie Turner and Sandra Blacklock who were present at the meeting.

DECISION

AGREED that congratulations be passed to those concerned.

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meetings held on 25 January and 20 February 2018 were considered.

DECISION

AGREED that the Minutes be approved and signed by the Convener.

3. COMMITTEE MINUTES

The Minutes of the following Committees had been circulated:-

Tweeddale Area Partnership	10 January 2018
Audit & Scrutiny	15 January 2018
Civic Government Licensing	19 January 2018
Local Review Body	22 January 2018
Eildon Area Partnership	25 January 2018
Executive	30 January 2018
Berwickshire Area Partnership	1 February 2018
Lauder Common Good Fund	2 February 2018

Planning & Building Standards	5 February 2018
Jedburgh Common Good Fund	7 February 2018
Kelso Common Good Fund	7 February 2018
Hawick Common Good Fund	7 February 2018
Cheviot Area Partnership	7 February 2018
Police, Fire & Rescue and Safer Communities Executive	9 February 2018
Selkirk Common Good Fund	14 February 2018
Audit & Scrutiny	14 February 2018
Local Review Body	15 February 2018
Lauder Common Good Fund	19 February 2018
Teviot & Liddesdale Area Partnership	20 February 2018
Peebles Common Good Fund	20 February 2018
Pension Fund & Pension Board	7 March 2018
Pension Fund Board	8 March 2018
Galashiels Common Good Fund	8 March 2018
Local Review Body	8 March 2018
Executive	13 March 2018
Executive	13 March 2018

DECISION

APPROVED the Minutes listed above.

4. OPEN QUESTIONS

The questions submitted by Councillors Tatler, Robson, Paterson, Chapman, Brown, Drum, Ramage and H. Anderson were answered.

DECISION

NOTED the replies as detailed in Appendix I to this Minute.

5. SCOTTISH BORDERS COMMUNITY FIRE AND RESCUE PLAN

There had been circulated copies of the Community Fire and Rescue Plan for the Scottish Borders. The Convener welcomed Stephen Gourlay, LSO with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to the meeting. Mr Gourlay advised Members that this was an outcome focussed plan which dovetailed with the Scottish Borders Community Plan. The Plan covered 5 local priorities which included home safety, community resilience, safer roads, anti-social behaviour and the reduction of unwanted fire alarm signals. He also commented on the successful "Our Living Safely in the Home" pilot in the Cheviot locality and the stations taking part in the national pilot to provide a response to OHCA incidents. It was noted that although this pilot was currently on hold it was intended to roll this out to all stations in the Borders. Involvement in road safety programmes was also a priority. Members welcomed the Plan.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Scottish Borders Community Fire and Rescue Plan.

6. CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Social Work Officer on the activities of the Child Protection Committee during the period 1st August 2016–31st July 2017 aimed at protecting children and young people in the Scottish Borders from abuse and neglect. The report explained that the Scottish Borders Child Protection Committee (CPC) oversaw the development of all multi-agency child protection policies and procedures in the Scottish Borders and at the very forefront of this work were the online multi-agency child protection procedures. During this period a number of new sections and protocols were added or updated to ensure best practice and that they were in line with national guidance and legislation. The SBCPC continued to self-evaluate, to ensure good practice and reflective review, and also to seek areas for improvement following the Care Inspectorate visit in early 2016 and the Business Plan 2016-2019 reflected this. The report detailed that 593 child protection referrals were followed up resulting in 37 children being placed on the Scottish Borders Child Protection Register between 1st August 2016 and 31st July 2017.

Child Protection Training remained a key responsibility of the CPC with a range of multi-agency and single agency events being held throughout the year. A training strategy for 2016-2017 was developed and courses were detailed in the report which over 2,991 people had attended. Mr Michael Batty, who had taken over as Independent Chair in September 2017, highlighted the main work of the Committee. He commented on the roll out of the "Neglect toolkit" which had been well received by both staff and families. The main areas for the next 12 months included the introduction of the Scottish Government Child Protection Improvement Programme and the Scottish Borders Public Protection Review. Mr Batty answered Members' questions and advised that following the introduction of the new training update model attendance figures could be included in the next annual report. With regard to "neglect" training it was noted that this was having a significant impact with an increase in the number of cases and staff reporting increased confidence levels in dealing with this. Funds had also been identified to introduce an intervention project. With regard to addressing the matters raised by the Care Inspectorate, Mr Batty advised that a meeting with the Inspector had been scheduled to validate the quality improvements which had already been made. The importance of engagement with young people was also discussed and the identification of around 50 young ambassadors was highlighted.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

- (a) to endorse the content of the Child Protection Committee Annual Report; and**
- (b) that the report be published on the Council's website and distributed to interested parties.**

7. ADULT PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Social Work Officer on the continuing progress in Scottish Borders in the development of an interagency approach to the support and protection of adults who are at risk of harm, as defined in the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. The report explained that the number of cases progressing from Referral to Adult Protection concerns, as defined by the Act, displayed an increased pattern with 204 cases in 2016-2017 compared to 171 cases in 2015-2016 and 169 cases the previous period. Adult Protection concerns were investigated where it was known or believed that an adult was at risk. For those referrals that did not meet the criteria, they did not progress to an Adult Protection concern. However, a significant number were signposted to other services for support. Financial and physical harm continued to be the most prominent types of harm in the Scottish Borders. Work with trading standards last year to tackle financial harm and scams had seen a positive impact on adult protection referrals, particularly in the age range 65 – 79 years of age, with figures down by a third. Most cases of physical harm happened in the adult's own home usually by someone known to them. Reports of physical harm and neglect were also reported in private care home settings. Scottish Borders investigated all incidents of harm in these settings and had now delivered bespoke adult protection training into all 22 care homes within the Scottish Borders. Within the under 65 year age range, social media and smart phone technology was particularly impacting on relationships. Many adults were introduced to a wider group of friends / acquaintances through this technology. However, this technology could also be used in some situations, to target and harm the most vulnerable adults. Mr Jim Wilson, Independent Chair of the Committee, highlighted the main aspects of the report and emphasised the need to repeat training due to high staff turnover in the care sector. With regard to issues raised during the inspection he continued to meet with the Inspector regarding the improvements identified. Mr Wilson answered Members' questions and advised that figures could be included in the training matrix in future reports.

**DECISION
AGREED:-**

- (a) to endorse the content of the Adult Protection Committee Annual Report; and**

- (b) that the report be published on the Council's website and distributed to interested parties.**

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Robson declared an interest in the following two items of business in terms of Section 5 of the Councillors Code of Conduct and left the Chamber during their discussion.

8. **SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE ON RENEWABLE ENERGY**

With reference to paragraph 16 of the Minute of 22 December 2016, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Regulatory Services seeking approval of the Supplementary Guidance on Renewable Energy, as contained in Appendix 1 to the report. The report explained that the draft Guidance had been subject to public consultation and Appendix 2 to the report contained details of the 33 representations received following that public consultation and officer responses to the points raised. The report explained that although wind energy was the main component part of the Guidance, reference was also given to a range of other types of renewable energy which were considered the most common and emerging types where useful guidance could be given. These other renewable energy types included micro-renewables including photovoltaic panels, field scale solar voltaics, biomass, energy from waste, anaerobic digestion, hydro and ground source heat pumps. The report also detailed the amendments which had been made to the Guidance following the public consultation. Members welcomed the Supplementary Guidance which was considered to strike the correct balance between meeting Government Policy and ensuring that development was located in the best place.

DECISION

AGREED to:-

- (a) approve the Supplementary Guidance, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (b) note the representations received and responses within Appendix 2 to the report;**
- (c) note the Environmental Report; and**
- (d) forward the Supplementary Guidance to Scottish Ministers.**
9. **HAWICK FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME – REQUEST FOR DELEGATED AUTHORITY**
- With reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of 21 December 2017, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Assets and Infrastructure seeking delegated authority to commence the land purchase negotiations and use the appropriate Compulsory Purchase Order powers where required and also provide the Chief Legal Officer with delegated authority to use the powers under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 to allow entry to land for the construction of the Scheme. The report explained that following a six week re-publication of the Scheme, following a final decision to Confirm the Scheme by Scottish Borders Council on 21 December 2017, there were no appeals registered with the Sheriff Court in Selkirk which meant that the Scheme was now 'Operative' under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009. This was a key milestone in achieving the 80% Scottish Government funding for the Main Works. The detailed design and advanced works were commencing well and the Project Team continued to proactively engage with the public in relation to both elements. Now that Hawick Flood Protection Scheme 2017 was 'Operative' the project team would support the Planning Team to submit the package of information to Scottish Ministers to consider 'Deemed Planning' in accordance with Regulation 14 of Flood Risk Management (Flood Protection Schemes, Potentially Vulnerable Areas and Local Plan Districts) (Scotland) Regulations 2010. The report detailed the circumstances in which the different powers would be used or required. Members welcomed the progress being made with the Scheme.

DECISION

AGREED to provide:-

- (a) the Service Director Assets & Infrastructure the delegated authority to commence the land purchase negotiations and use the appropriate Compulsory Purchase Order powers where required;
- (b) the Chief Legal Officer the delegated authority to use the powers under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 to allow entry to land for the construction of the Scheme; and
- (c) the Chief Legal Officer the delegated authority to use the powers under the Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009, if required, to request a Sheriff or Justice of the Peace to authorise entry to land if entry has been obstructed.

10. SCHEME OF DELEGATION

With reference to paragraph 18 of the Minute of 26 June 2014, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Chief Executive seeking approval for an amended Scheme of Delegation to take account of changes in management structure within the Council and some legislative updates. A copy of the amended Scheme was appended to the report.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the amended Scheme of Delegation as detailed in the Appendix to the report.

MEMBER

Councillor Brown left the meeting.

11. DRAFT CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

There had been circulated copies of a draft Calendar of Meetings covering the period from August 2018 to July 2019. The Clerk to the Council advised that a change was required to move the Audit and Scrutiny Committee from 26 November to 27 November 2018 to avoid a clash with the SESplan Committee.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Calendar of Meetings 2018/19, subject to the above change to the date of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

12. SCOTTISH BORDERS LIVING WAGE GROUP MEMBERSHIP

With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of 25 January 2018, Councillor Tatler, seconded by Councillor Paterson, proposed that the Membership of the above Group comprise Councillors Edgar, Greenwell, Jardine and himself together with representatives from the Opposition Groups. The following were proposed and accepted:-

Councillor A. Anderson and Councillor Laing – proposed by Councillor Bell and seconded by Councillor H. Anderson

Councillor Chapman – proposed by Councillor Robson and seconded by Councillor Bell

Councillor Paterson – proposed by himself and seconded by Councillor Tatler

Councillor H. Scott - proposed by himself and seconded by Councillor Marshall

Councillor Penman – proposed by herself and seconded by Councillor Haslam.

DECISION

AGREED that the Membership of the Scottish Borders Living Wage Group comprise Councillors A. Anderson, Chapman, Edgar, Greenwell, Jardine, Laing, Paterson, Penman, H. Scott and Tatler.

13. COSLA MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that following changes to the COSLA Boards it would be more appropriate for Councillor Weatherston to be a member of the Health & Social Care Board than Councillor Jardine. The appointment of Councillor Weatherston was proposed by Councillor Haslam, seconded by Councillor Aitchison and unanimously approved.

DECISION

AGREED that Councillor Weatherston be appointed to the COSLA Health & Social Care Board.

14. APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODY

It was noted that a replacement was required to represent the Council on the Focus Centre Committee following the resignation of Councillor Jardine. Councillor Haslam, seconded by Councillor Marshall, proposed that Councillor H. Scott be appointed and this was unanimously approved.

DECISION

AGREED that Councillor H. Scott be appointed as the Council's representative to the Focus Centre.

15. MOTION BY COUNCILLOR BELL

15.1 Councillor Bell, seconded by Councillor Laing, moved his Motion as detailed on the agenda in the following terms:-

"In light of the similar and very worrying forecasts by both the UK and the Scottish Governments of the potential negative impact on the economy of all of the different Brexit options, and in light of the forecast of a double digit decline in the economy of the neighbouring North East of England in the event of a Hard Brexit:-

- (a) Council requests the Leader to write to the Prime Minister to inform her of the Council's considered opinion that after Britain leaves the EU it remains within both the Customs Union and the Single Market, and;
- (b) Asks the Chief Executive to bring to Council within three months an analysis of the impact and potential mitigations for the Borders Economy of a Hard Brexit."

Councillor Bell and Councillor Laing spoke in support of the Motion.

15.2 Councillor Chapman, seconded by Councillor Robson, moved as an amendment that the words "the" before "Customs Union" and "Single Market" be changed to "a". This amendment was accepted by Councillor Bell.

15.3 Councillor Rowley, seconded by Councillor Miers, moved as an amendment that the Motion be rejected as it was premature and they spoke in support of this amendment.

15.4 Following a summing up of his position by Councillor Bell, Councillor Paterson, seconded by Councillor A. Anderson, moved that the vote be taken by Roll Call and this was unanimously approved.

Roll Call Vote

Motion by Councillor Bell
Councillor A. Anderson
Councillor H. Anderson
Councillor Bell

Amendment by Councillor Rowley
Councillor Aitchison
Councillor Edgar
Councillor Fullarton

Abstentions
Councillor Parker
Councillor Tatler

Councillor Chapman
Councillor Drum
Councillor Laing
Councillor Moffat
Councillor Paterson
Councillor Penman
Councillor Ramage
Councillor Robson
Councillor Thornton-Nicol

Councillor C. Hamilton
Councillor S. Hamilton
Councillor Haslam
Councillor Jardine
Councillor Marshall
Councillor McAteer
Councillor Miers
Councillor Mountford
Councillor Richards
Councillor Rowley
Councillor H. Scott
Councillor S. Scott
Councillor Small
Councillor Turnbull

The Amendment was accordingly carried.

DECISION

DECIDED that Councillor Bell's Motion be rejected.

16. MOTION BY COUNCILLOR HASLAM

- 16.1 Councillor Haslam, seconded by Councillor Bell, moved her Motion as detailed on the agenda in the following terms:-

"The Elected Members, communities and individuals of the Scottish Borders want to pay tribute to, and offer thanks for, the tireless work of the SBC teams that were out and about during the recent bad weather. All involved worked incredibly hard to make sure that our communities remained safe throughout the unprecedented weather. We also wish to thank support staff in the NHS, Mountain rescue teams, 4x4 drivers, resilient community groups and volunteers for all of their work to transport essential workers, clear snow and help residents in our towns and villages. Thanks also to the staff at Headquarters who spent their nights and days in the emergency bunker co-ordinating the services in very difficult conditions."

Councillor Haslam and Councillor Bell spoke in support of the Motion.

- 16.2 Councillor Rowley proposed the addition of a further sentence to the Motion after the word "villages" as follows:-

"Our special thanks are also due to the many hundreds of farmers, keepers, estate and rural workers right across the Scottish Borders who committed their equipment, time and worked exceptionally hard to keep so many of our rural communities and residents safe and connected at a time when their own work was more difficult than normal."

This addition was accepted and the amended Motion approved unanimously.

DECISION

AGREED to approve the Motion as detailed above.

17. PRIVATE BUSINESS

DECISION

AGREED under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the business detailed in Appendix II to this Minute on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 6, 8 and 9 of Part I of Schedule 7A to the Act.

SUMMARY OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

18. **Minute**
The private section of the Council Minute of 25 January 2018 was approved.
19. **Committee Minutes**
The private sections of the Committee Minutes as detailed in paragraph 3 of this Minute were approved.
20. **South of Scotland Economic Partnership – Update**
Members approved a report by the Executive Director on the work of the South of Scotland Economic Partnership.
21. **Tweedbank Future Development Opportunities**
This item was withdrawn from the agenda.
22. **Borders Innovation Park Update**
Members approved a report by the Service Director Assets and infrastructure on projects related to the Borders Innovation Park.
23. **Common Riding Policy**
Members approved a new Festival Grants template to ensure that applicants were meeting the requirements of the Equality Act.

The meeting concluded at 1.40 p.m.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
29 MARCH 2018
APPENDIX I

OPEN QUESTIONS

Question from Councillor Tatler

To Executive Member for Children & Young People

What plans does SBC have to provide adequate supported accommodation for young people?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton

Albert Place, Galashiels

SBC have worked in partnership to provide Supported Accommodation in Albert Place, Galashiels. The model created at Albert Place provides 4 self-contained flats dedicated to provide transitional supported housing for young people leaving care.

The Team provide support around:

- (a) Housing options;
- (b) Community integration and outreach work;
- (c) Employability and worklessness; and
- (d) Tenancy support and independent living skills.

Housing Protocol

Following negotiation between SBC Social Work, Housing and Registered Social Landlords, a protocol was signed by all 4 RSLs in the Scottish Borders ending the practice of care leavers having to register as homeless to enable them to bid for tenancies. The protocol also includes a monthly meeting between the Throughcare Aftercare Social Work Team and RSLs to identify suitable accommodation and support from across all options and resources available.

Supported Carers

The Supported Carer Scheme is a registered adult care scheme whose role and remit focuses on providing transitional, family based care for young people who were previously looked after. It is hoped to grow this option for care experienced young people to aid transition to independent living and other accommodation options.

Foster Carers

Foster carers continue to provide care and accommodation to many looked after young people or young people who are in Continuing Care. Currently 48 out of 230 looked after young people are aged over 16 years.

Wheatlands Residential Unit

Our 5 bedded residential unit has had a settled group of young people for some time (in the main 16 to 18 year olds). Recently, as an extension of the residential unit, we have developed a satellite flat, which will allow young people to move on from the unit to a very supported tenancy type placement. The first young person to use the flat will be moving in to the tenancy in April.

Other Developments

Discussion is on-going between SBC and the RSLs on how best to provide appropriate accommodation and support to Care experienced young people. This is managed through both the monthly Housing Options meetings and through direct communication relating to the specific needs of individual young people.

Questions from Councillor Robson

1. To Executive Member for Roads and Infrastructure

In reply to my question to Council on 24 August 2018, Councillor Edgar stated that in undertaking the Council's role in relation to public utilities and the New Roads & Street Works Act, a number of

officers are employed to carry out the duties required by the Act, together with other roads functions. However, the Council does employ one dedicated full time Utility Inspector.

Further to this answer, in the light of additional resources for the forthcoming financial year, does the Council intend to employ another Utility Inspector dedicated to checking reinstatement work by public utilities in the Council's road network?

Reply from Councillor Edgar

Council officers continue to be involved in all of the duties required by the Act, together with all other roads functions. Significant work is being undertaken to further improve the inspection regime of the network, and this will assist in the identification and recording of latent defects within the 2 year maintenance period for utility reinstatements. Consideration is also being given to the Council undertaking utility reinstatements. At this time there are no plans to employ another dedicated utility inspector.

Supplementary

Councillor Robson was of the view that an extra officer would pay for itself by ensuring that reinstatements were carried out to the correct standard and asked that the addition of such an officer be kept under review. Councillor Edgar confirmed this would be done.

2. To Executive Member for Children & Young People

When will the Council's updated Autism Strategy be published and what resources are earmarked to assist with its introduction and development?

Reply from Councillor C Hamilton

The Autism Strategy for Scottish Borders Council was launched in 2015. This sits alongside the Scottish Strategy for Autism which was published in 2011.

There is currently a full time Development Officer in post to drive forward this strategy across the Scottish Borders – Anita Hurding. Three engagement events were held across the Borders in September 2017 to find out what parents, careers and professionals across the Borders needed in terms of resources and support.

In addition to this a scoping survey was launched to seek the views of people across Scottish Borders with a diagnosis of autism.

A strategic group currently oversees the direction of the strategy and this is supported by several operational multi agency workstreams.

Questions from Councillor Paterson

1. To Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Locality Services

Can the Executive Member please let us know what plans the Administration has for toilet provision in the Scottish Borders? Constituents keep asking me when this Administration will be bringing a report to Council.

Reply from Councillor Aitchison

A report is currently being prepared which will set out a number of options for the future provision of toilets in the Scottish Borders recognising that the current Administration has not expressed a view on the current plans for public convenience provision in the Scottish Borders. The report will summarise the position in relation to charging and comfort schemes/partnerships and consideration of any recommendations that are included in the report.

The report currently making its way through the normal consultation processes and Members should expect to be able to consider it in the near future.

2. To the Leader

Will the Council Leader be writing to the Prime Minister asking for clarification on the deal that was recently struck between the UK Government and the European Union with regards to foreign fishing vessels still being allowed to fish in Scottish waters long after we leave the European Union?

Reply from Councillor Haslam

Given the complexity of the negotiations between the UK Government and the European Union all we can really do at this stage is refer to the latest position of the UK Government on this issue. This was given in the statement on the EU-UK Article 50 negotiations made on Monday 19 March 2018 in Brussels David Davis, Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union the UK Government sets out its position in relation for the next phase of the negotiations, in relation to the EU annual fishing negotiations which includes access to UK sea areas.

'We've also agreed specific safeguards when it comes to annual fishing negotiations. These arrangements will only apply for the negotiations in 2019, since we will still be a Member State for those that take place at the end of this year. Through 2020 we will be negotiating fishing opportunities as an independent coastal state, deciding who can access our waters and on what terms. For the year where it is relevant we have agreed the European Union will have to consult us ahead of the negotiations. And the United Kingdom's share of the total catch cannot be changed, protecting the interests of the United Kingdom fishing community.'

This Council continues to stand strongly behind the fishing communities of East Berwickshire and in my discussions with national politicians I will ensure that the sensitivity of these issues and our commitment to the local fishing industry is fully understood.

3. To Executive Member for Children & Young People

Can the Executive Member please tell me why there seems to be a decline in educating our children in Scottish folk/traditional music in our schools?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton

There has been no change or reduction to the provision of teaching Scottish/Folk music in our schools. Here are the reasons that this is not the case:

- In all SQA Music exams, from National 1 to Advanced Higher, pupils are required by the course content, to learn about traditional Scottish music. This aspect of the curriculum is assessed within the listening paper. The rationale for this is so that young people learn about their musical heritage and can pass this onto future generations.
- In SQA Music exams, pupils can choose to perform traditional pieces/songs as part of their performance programme. A programme must have contrasting repertoire, thus performing a Scottish piece is a common feature. Music instructors in schools regularly give young people traditional pieces to learn on violin, guitar, flute and brass. Pupils also have the option of performing on penny whistle, clarsach, bagpipes, snare drum and accordion. Schools usually have a number of candidates who choose to perform bagpipes as one or their two instruments of choice.
- School music departments have close links with community pipe bands, folk clubs and fiddle groups.
- In the Broad General Education music curriculum, from Nursery to S3, there is also a strong focus on Scottish Music, either through listening, performing or creating Scottish Music. Music teachers are very clear of the expectation of the delivery of this within the curriculum. Often, the curriculum will have a Scottish unit of work and singing traditional songs features highly. Other staff would be curriculum support teachers, music instructors or Youth Music Instructors or class teachers.
- Some high schools have very successful ceilidh bands which rehearse regularly at lunchtime and who perform at concerts and community events.
- Many of our young people perform in community music groups such as Riddle Fiddles or the Small Hall Band.

- Hawick hosts an annual Burns Competition for all schools for singing and instrumental performing.
- Selkirk High School still has a commitment to using their DSM to employ three traditional music instructors for clarsach and accordion. This school is our traditional music school.
- Young people who get music instruction or play in the regional ensembles often perform Scottish music and our instructors regularly arrange traditional Scottish tunes for their pupils and groups.
- Youth Music instructors regularly teach Scottish content in their projects in primary schools. This includes learning the penny whistle.
- Evidence of all of this work can be seen at school concerts and regional ensemble concerts throughout the year, both in primary and secondary schools.
- Scottish Borders Schools have a strong tradition in performing Scottish music of which they are very proud and this continues to be the case.

The Member is invited to meet the Executive Member to share concerns, as there is no evidence regarding a decline in educating our children in this area.

Questions from Councillor Chapman

1. To Executive Member for Children & Young People

Can the Executive Member for Children and Young People advise what plans this Council has to celebrate Year of Young People, what resources are being allocated to support these plans, and when a public plan will be produced?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton

The Council embarked upon a consultation with young people in January and February 2018, as it was felt that the young people should decide how to celebrate the year of the young people. The consultation involved all secondary schools and some primaries. Third sector partners have also consulted with young people. There was an online survey too.

The results of the Consultation will be included in a paper going to the Executive on 1st May. The Children and Young People's Leadership Group is ensuring full partnership support and involvement in events, activities and legacy.

The Secondary School Estate Consultations and Youth Action Hawick have also provided engagement and consultation opportunities.

Key themes have emerged regarding areas for change and improvement. The detail will be in the May Committee paper and further consultation to prioritise a timeline of implementation. However, notably the following suggestions have already been incorporated into delivery plans: social space in schools and community environments (with access to Wi-Fi), Borders wide 'music jam' festival in the early Autumn to promote music and develop music connections, broader learning pathways and a modernised school curriculum, youth learning opportunities and spaces to study at night and further inclusion of the pupil voice in all Council change processes. Another key concept in the feedback is legacy and a commitment to reducing plastic and a campaign on equalities in the Borders. Another key theme emerging is the opportunity for pupil and community debates and this will be developed in parallel to the outcome of meetings with Borders Church representatives who have asked to be included within the YOYP plans, e.g. a debate on faith in the Modern World, a 'question time' panel event on current political issues.

The Portfolio Holder would like to commend the high quality response to the Consultation and note that the full plan will be presented to the May Executive Committee. There will be a Communications Plan embedded with the SBC and Partners YOYP Plan.

Supplementary

Councillor Chapman expressed concern that it was already late March and a number of neighbouring authorities had already published their plans and the CYPP Group had not met for some time and he asked that the Council do everything in its power to promote YOYP for the

young people in the Borders. Councillor Hamilton responded that there had been a full consultation with young people with 900 responses, so this was now being taken forward.

2. To the Leader

Can the Leader of the Council advise how she is ensuring that Scottish Borders Council is maximising on Year of Young People throughout 2018 and is at the forefront of all Council meetings, from senior CMT meetings through to Community Council meetings?

Reply from Councillor Haslam

The Council adopted the approach of consulting the young people and asking them what they wanted out of the Year of Young People. The level of response from the Young People is extensive, honest, enlightening and very inspiring. The Young People have clearly set out an expectation of participation at all levels within the Council. The ideas are absolutely tremendous and insightful: By way of exemplification young people across the Borders have made a call for 'social space outdoors with appropriate street furniture' in all communities i.e. a place for young people to gather. They are planning to lead a 'plastics reduction campaign' in schools and communities and have asked that special recycling 'stations' available internationally are developed in the Borders. They have asked for Community debates on issues such as 'Donald Trump', 'Equalities' and 'challenging perceptions of youth in the Borders'. They have specifically asked that Members, MPs and MSPs attend Question time events in the Borders and that these are streamed on social media – and that the panel face questions on themes set by the young people. They have listed many ideas for events and activities e.g. a cross schools and communities 'great Borders Bake off' and challenged existing practice e.g. they wish 'therapy pets' to be allowed into schools, more carriages on the trains.

This demonstrates the passion and capacity of our young people in taking their place in our communities and in the future of the Borders and builds upon existing excellent practice in youth participation in the Scottish Borders, e.g. Peebles Debating Club recently won the National Donald Dewar Debating Competition. (The Leader took the opportunity to congratulate the team on their success)

The Executive paper in May will set out the YOYP Plan month by month and this will include Members' Briefings re their participation and outline roles and responsibilities across all Council groups and partnership activities. This will be monitored by CMT and the Children & Young People's Partnership Leadership Group.

I would ask that all Members and Council Groups take note of the feedback from the Consultation at the Executive in May, the YOYP Plan and fully respond to the offers of participation both in their locality and in Borders wide activities.

Finally, a policy will be taken to the Executive in the autumn on ensuring pupil and youth participation will build upon the YOYP and ensure that there is legacy in giving our young people their rightful place in our communities and in the future of the Borders.

Supplementary

Councillor Chapman welcomed the Leader's response but asked that all Council departments be involved in YOYP not just Children and Young People. Councillor Haslam advised that there would be regular Member briefings and asked Members to work with their Community Councils to involve young people as membership of Community Councils was open to those 16 years old and above. Everyone was in a position to get involved.

3. To Executive Member for Roads and Infrastructure

Can the Executive Member for Roads and Infrastructure advise what Scottish Borders Councils understanding of 'fixing our roads' means?

Reply from Councillor Edgar

Scottish Borders Council undertakes cyclical safety inspections of its adopted road and footway network as per the recommendations within The Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance. Any

defects identified during safety inspections are then “repaired” to remove the identified defect. There are a number of types of repair undertaken including temporary patching and Jet patching.

The Council also undertake “repairs” to its road or footway network based on condition survey information. These surveys identify sections of the network where damage or deterioration of the asset has occurred. The damage or deterioration may not necessarily be a defect as identified in a safety inspection, however, in undertaking the works, the Council is seeking to improve the condition of the identified section of the network and therefore the network as a whole.

All information is compiled and forms the basis for the Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP) and this is used to prioritise the actions required on the network. All repairs undertaken on the Council’s road and footway network are managed within the allocated Revenue and Capital budgets.

Supplementary

Councillor Chapman asked if a comprehensive report could be provided showing all the ways in which money was spent in repairing our roads. Councillor Edgar confirmed such a report could be prepared and emphasised that road repairs were always carried out to the highest standard.

Question from Councillor Brown

To Executive Member for Roads and Infrastructure

The Council Budget approved on February 2018 contained a cut of £40,000 through a reduction of opening times of the council’s Community Recycling Centres. Can the Executive Member give details of the exact changes to the opening times in each centre and provide information about how this change will be notified to the public?

Reply from Councillor Edgar

The primary focus of the Community Recycling Centre review has been to explore the potential for changing the sites operating hours to better reflect the needs of residents whilst maximising savings opportunities.

The new operating model has taken account of feedback and findings from:

- Benchmarking
- Stakeholder Engagement; and
- Site traffic data

Potential new arrangements include:

- Eyemouth and Selkirk Community Recycling Centres will be shut two days per week between Monday and Friday and all other sites will close 1 day per week.
- All sites will remain open at weekends.
- All sites will have extended operating hours during the summer periods.
- All sites will see opening hours shifted back so that they are open later in the evening in the summer.

It is not intended to introduce any changes until October 2018. Officers are currently working with the Communications department to develop a detailed communication plan to ensure all members of the public including elected Members, Community Councils and other stakeholders are well aware ahead of the changes.

A members briefing is scheduled to take place on 17 April to provide all members with more detail in relation to the new Community Recycling Centre arrangements.

Supplementary

Councillor Brown asked if the Executive Member could confirm that now that the review had been completed and money removed from the budget that it was highly unlikely that a recycling centre would be provided in Jedburgh. Councillor Edgar agreed that it was highly unlikely.

Question from Councillor Drum

To Executive Member for Transformation and HR

During the recent winter weather when we had both amber and a red warnings in place for parts of our region and both Scottish Borders Council and Police Scotland were advising that only 'essential' travel should be undertaken, some staff did not attend their place of work. Do we have figures for the number of staff who had to use annual leave or TOIL for the days they did not come into work?

Reply from Councillor Mountford

Council staff made an exceptional effort to ensure frontline services continued to run through the period of adverse weather.

Managers and staff were prepared for the disruption and the vast majority of staff who were not deployed to front line services were able to work from home or other local bases.

Annual leave and Toil are recorded locally and are not currently held centrally on Business World although this will be part of the system in the future.

Supplementary

Councillor Drum asked how many staff were disadvantaged because they were in posts that could not work from home or did not have IT equipment. Councillor Mountford undertook to try to obtain this information if possible.

Question from Councillor Ramage

To Executive Member for Children & Young People

The recently approved Conservative led administration voted to make a cut of £80,000 to school crossing patrols and janitorial services. Can you clarify which crossing patrols are to be targeted for these cuts and exactly how many schools will lose their crossing patrol? How many staff will risk losing their posts and how the "consultation process" will be undertaken?

Reply from Councillor C. Hamilton

The review will look at the service as a whole rather than targeting any individual site. A key element of the service review, which is in its infancy and information gathering stage, will be to identify and implement efficiencies without necessarily incurring any job losses.

The consultation will include a number of factors such as Crossing times, Crossing numbers and crossing locations. The process will consult with a broad range of stakeholders including, Parent / Community Groups, Senior Management, HR, Head Teachers staff and pupils

Supplementary

Councillor Ramage noted that there had been no mention of a review in the budget papers and that she had passed schools on her way to the meeting where crossing points were unmanned. She asked if removing crossing patrols did not compromise the plan to keep children safe as they walked to school. Councillor Hamilton undertook to look into the matter further and get back to her.

Question from Councillor H. Anderson

1. To the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Locality Services

The Council budget approved on 20 February 2018 contained a 5% reduction in funding (amounting to £11,000) to CAB services across the authority. Can the Executive Member detail how and when this reduction will be implemented, bearing in mind that the existing contract has several months to run and a new contract of service has yet to be negotiated.

Reply from Councillor Aitchison

In setting its budget the Council agreed to savings of £161k in 2018/19 and a further £11k in 2019/20 to be achieved from a reduction in costs as a result of the integration of Customer

Services, Welfare Benefits and Housing staff. It was also agreed that a review be undertaken of the welfare and debt advice provided by the Borders Citizens Advice Consortium.

An initial meeting took place on 20 February 2018 to discuss the format for this review and further meetings are being set up with the relevant stakeholders to progress this.

Supplementary

Councillor Anderson advised that CAB were concerned that the £11k cut would be made mid-year which would result in the loss of 24 hours of advice provision per week. She asked if the cut would be made in 6 months time and asked that consideration be given to not making this cut. Councillor Aitchison undertook to take the information provided by Councillor Anderson away and come back to her with a response but he did emphasise that this was a review.

2. To Executive Member for Community Safety

On 20 February the Council approved a budget containing a commitment to spend £282,000 to deploy a new community policing team comprising a Sergeant and six officers to target anti-social behaviour and prevent low level crime, such as parking. Can the Executive Member give details of how this new team is to be recruited, when it will be operational, who these officers will be operationally accountable within SBC and how this new team's work will be directed and targeted?

Reply from Councillor McAteer

The new Community Action Team has been established by Police Scotland and the Sergeant and six police constables are now in place. The team will be fully operational from 1 April 2018. The team will remain operationally accountable to Police Scotland's Area Commander but their work will be co-ordinated through Graham Jones, the Councils Safer Communities Manager.

A prioritised work plan will be developed for the Team which will be determined by local intelligence and the proposal is to set up a new Member/Officer group which will meet on a regular basis in order to consider tasking and shaping the plan. There will be further discussions with Members on this shortly.

The first meeting will be arranged as soon as possible but for the first few weeks the Team will focus on parking and anti-social behaviour.

The relationship between the Council and Police Scotland in respect of this new service is underpinned by a service level agreement.

Regular performance reports will be presented to the Police, Fire & Rescue & Safer Communities Board and the Executive Committee on the effectiveness of the new service.

Supplementary

Councillor Anderson asked if consideration could be given to setting up a process to log how the officers spent their time to ensure that the Council was receiving the service for which it was paying. Councillor McAteer confirmed that this would need to be done and indeed it was crucial as we had to ensure that our communities were safer as a result of employing these officers.

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL 26 April 2018

STARRED ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MINUTES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – 17 April 2018

6. SELKIRK TOWN CENTRE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT UPDATE

With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of 19 September 2017, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director providing an update on the Selkirk Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID), outlining the support provided by the Council for the delivery of the BID and in terms of governance. Members were advised that the Selkirk Town Centre BID was developed following a period of business plan development and local business consultation. The Selkirk Town Centre BID Steering Group, with the formal agreement of both the Scottish Government and Scottish Borders Council, progressed to a successful formal ballot in November 2017. Governance processes were required to ensure transparency of funding and resources, including SBC's financial input and contribution to the Project, and it had been agreed by Council that an Elected Member be appointed to the Selkirk BID Board. The report being considered by the Committee today proposed that the representative should be a Member from the Selkirkshire Ward. During discussion, it was agreed that Councillor Edgar be recommended as the Selkirkshire member to be appointed to the Selkirk BID Board.

DECISION

- (a) **NOTED the successful, positive Selkirk Town Centre BID ballot on 30 November 2017.**
- * (b) **AGREED TO RECOMMEND that an Elected Member from the Selkirkshire Ward represents the Council on the Selkirk Town Centre BID Board.**

7. HAWICK AND EAST BERWICKSHIRE MEMBER WORKING GROUPS

There had been circulated copies of a report by the Executive Director proposing the establishment of two new Working Groups to consider the economic challenges and opportunities in Hawick and Eyemouth and East Berwickshire. The Groups would have advisory powers and would offer advice and guidance to the Executive Committee based on the analysis undertaken. Local Elected Members would form the core of the Working Groups, along with other local stakeholders, who would be involved as appropriate. Both Groups would be Chaired by Councillor Rowley, Executive Member for Business and Economic Development and other Elected Members could be co-opted to the Groups as required. During discussion, Members agreed that a young person's representative should be included as a key stakeholder and it was noted that the Working Groups would work closely with local Area Partnerships.

DECISION

- * (a) **AGREED TO RECOMMEND that:-**
 - (i) **the two new Working Groups be established as soon as possible; and**
 - (ii) **business people and other local stakeholders should be co-opted onto the new Working Groups in line with local Member expectations.**
- (b) **AGREED to receive further appropriate progress reports by the Executive Director as agreed with the Chair of the Working Groups.**

8. BORDERLANDS INCLUSIVE GROWTH DEAL UPDATE

With reference to paragraph 7 of the private Minute of 5 December 2018, there had been circulated copies of a report setting out progress made in taking forward the Borderlands initiative and highlighting the work to produce a Borderlands Inclusive Growth Proposition. The Borderlands Inclusive Growth Proposition had been submitted to the Secretary of State for Scotland and to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Jobs and Fair Work in October 2017 and it had since been agreed that the five partner Local Authorities should sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide a clear governance framework for the pre-Deal period. The report also advised that all partners had agreed to provide £100k of funding during this pre-Deal period and for Scottish Borders Council, this required an additional contribution of £50k in the year 2018/19. Discussion followed and officers responded to questions from Members. In response to a question the Chief Officer Economic Development explained that “inclusive growth” meant that all sections of the communities would be considered when taking this Proposition forward. In view of the importance of this project the Chairman proposed that this decision should be ratified by Council and that a further recommendation should be added with regard to the approval of the approval of the final deal.

DECISION

- (a) NOTED the positive progress made in developing a Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and in discussing that with UK and Scottish Governments.**
- * (b) AGREED TO RECOMMEND:-**
 - (i) to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Executive Member for Business and Economic Development, to accept the terms of the Draft Memorandum of Understanding as set out in Appendix 2 to the report;**
 - (ii) that the Council contribute a further £50,000 towards the joint pre-Deal development costs, to be allocated from existing budgets in the Economic Development service; and**
 - (iii) that further progress reports be presented during 2018 as the development stages of the deal proceed; and**
 - (iv) that Council should approve the final proposition of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal prior to submission to the UK and Scottish Governments.**



ST MARGARET'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL CONSULTATION OUTCOME REPORT

Report by Service Director, Children and Young People

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

26 April 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following the completion of a public consultation process as set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (as amended), this report requests that Scottish Borders Council agree to recommend the approval of the proposal to close St Margaret's RC Primary School, Hawick and for the children currently attending the school being offered a place at a catchment school.**
- 1.2 At its meeting on 7 November 2017, the Executive Committee agreed to the commencement of a statutory consultation regarding the proposed closure of St Margaret's following a sustained drop in pupil numbers.
- 1.3 A statutory consultation was undertaken from 22 November 2017 to 22 January 2018.
- 1.4 A consultation report in respect of the proposals was prepared and published on 8 March 2018. The Consultation Report is attached as Appendix 1. The Consultation Report was advertised in the press, with all interested parties given a three week period until 29 March 2018 to raise concerns or pose alternative solutions through written or electronic submissions. No concerns or alternative solutions were submitted during this period.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 I recommend that Scottish Borders Council agree to recommend that:-**
 - 2.1.1 St Margaret's RC Primary School, Hawick is closed; and**
 - 2.1.2 The children that currently attend the school are offered places within a catchment area primary school based on their home address.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 St Margaret's RC Primary School, Hawick (St Margaret's) is a denominational primary school within Hawick High School's catchment zone. St Margaret's has capacity for 100 pupils. There are currently 14 pupils attending the school, 10 of which are currently registered as being baptised Roman Catholic. There were no admissions into Primary 1 for the current school year 2017/18. Only 3 pupils have been admitted into P1 over the last 3 years.
- 3.2 The school roll has fallen significantly over the last 20 years from 56 in 1997 to 14 in this current school year. The school has operated at an average capacity of 22% over the last 10 years, with the roll falling below 20 since 2012. Current projections indicate no increase in demand for admissions at St Margaret's in the next 2 years. As admissions to St Margaret's have continued to decline over the last 2 decades it can be extrapolated that demand for denominational education within the town has reduced in that period.
- 3.3 When Council Officers met with parents as part of School Estates Review process, the parents indicated that they were content with the learning provision at St Margaret's, but that they had concerns about the challenges that their children sometimes faced regarding integration into the community. The parents were very positive about the support that the school receives from the local Priest. They also commended the Saturday Polish School, which is in receipt of some funding from the Council. The Service Director, Children and Young People shared concerns with parents regarding the children's inclusion in the community as the school roll comprised a majority of pupils who spoke English as an additional language and that there was only a single composite class P1-P7. The Service Director also expressed concerns that the requirements within the Curriculum for Excellence, for team skills and group work with children of a similar age, were limited at St Margaret's. While this is similar to the position in small rural schools, the context is different as inclusion issues for the children within their local rural community is not a factor. The parents did state that they would like to see their children have broader experiences, but they also stated apprehension about the children being outwith this small group at primary school age.
- 3.4 Since the commencement of the School Estates Review process the roll at St Margaret's Hawick has fallen by a further 17%. Council Officers continue to have concerns that St Margaret's, set within the context of the town of Hawick, may not support an inclusive approach for the children's education and may not always prepare the children socially for the transition to Hawick High School. The small, diminishing roll also limits the ability to offer a full range of curricular and learning opportunities for the children and some children at key stages may have limited opportunities to form an age related peer group. In addition the school does not comprise a hall so the children are required to travel to Drumlanrig St Cuthbert's Primary School for certain PE lessons. Officers' concerns and the educational benefits that are associated with the proposal are covered in more detail in the Proposal

Paper which is contained in Appendix 1 of the Consultation Report annexed as Appendix 1.

- 3.5 Council Officers also have concerns regarding a small number of children being in such a large building, when there are many schools in their own catchment area with space and capacity. This is arguably not the best use of such a large building within the town, or the best environment for the children and does not represent a best value approach.
- 3.6 The Proposal Paper was published in English and Polish on 22 November 2017; the consultation period ran from 22 November 2017 to 22 January 2018. In accordance with the statutory requirements and process set out in the Proposal Paper, Education Scotland have reviewed the consultation process and have visited the school and met with staff, parents and pupils from St Margaret's and neighbouring schools. Education Scotland has prepared a report regarding the consultation process and an assessment of the educational benefits attached to the proposal. A copy of Education Scotland's report and our responses to all their comments are contained in the Consultation Report.
- 3.7 Officers have considered the terms of the Education Scotland report and all the consultation responses received and have responded in detail to the comments and questions in sections 6 and 8 of the Consultation Report. During the Consultation Period, 9 responses were received. 56% were in agreement with the proposal to close St Margaret's.
- 3.8 In terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended (2010 Act) the Council must publish the Consultation Report for a period of 3 weeks to provide interested parties an opportunity to raise concerns or pose alternative suggestions through written or electronic submissions. The Consultation Report was published on 8 March 2018 with all interested parties given until 29 March 2018 to respond.
- 3.9 Taking full cognisance of the responses and the identified education benefits for the children, Officers recommend that Scottish Borders Council approves the closure of St Margaret's and that the children are offered a place in a catchment area school.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

A financial template has been completed by Finance as part of the statutory consultation process and is annexed to the Proposal Paper.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

- 4.2.1 There is a risk that the Scottish Ministers will call the proposals to close the school in for review, referring the proposal to the Schools Closure Review Panel. Ministers have an 8 week period from the date of the Council's decision to consider whether the decision and consultation should be reviewed. The grounds for call in concern (1) failure to comply with the requirements of the 2010 Act or (2) that the Council has failed to take into account a material

consideration. In the event that the closure is called in and the Schools Closure Review Panel does not support the closure decision, the Council would be unable to consult on the school for a minimum period of 5 years. This significant risk has also been mitigated by Council officers closely adhering to the terms of legislation and having carried out pre-consultation engagement as part of the Schools Estate Review process. In addition officers have liaised and worked closely with Catholic Church representatives regarding all of the denominational schools in the region. The majority of consultation responses were in support of the proposal and Education Scotland's report confirms that they agree with the educational benefits attached to the proposals. All comments in the report regarding transition timing and planning and religious instruction have been addressed in full in the Consultation Report.

- 4.2.2 Given that St Margaret's is a denominational school any closure proposal also requires consent from the Secretary of State before implementation. As part of this process the Secretary of State requires to be satisfied that adequate arrangements have been made for the religious instruction of the children. In the event that the Secretary of State is not satisfied with the arrangements then he can impose conditions as he sees fit regarding the provision of religious instruction. If there is no agreement regarding the proposal between the Council and the Church, the Secretary of State is also required to consider written representations from the Church regarding the potential impact of a closure and then assess whether there has been a comparative deterioration in the position between denominational and non-denominational schools in the area. These risks have been mitigated through officers working closely with Church representatives regarding the proposal and to agree a programme of religious instruction, education and observance for the St Margaret's pupils. The programme is contained in the Consultation Report. The Church has confirmed their support to the Council's approach.

4.3 **Equalities**

An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out on the proposals. If St Margaret's does close this will result in there no longer being a denominational school in the Hawick area. This is mitigated by the diminishing demand for denominational education as evidenced by the declining roll and the education and inclusion benefits gained by the children attending their local catchment school in Hawick. This will also be further mitigated by the Council's planned programme to provide adequate religious instruction, education and observance for the St Margaret's pupils.

4.4 **Acting Sustainably**

The St Margaret's proposal sits within the broader context of the School Estates Review which has sustainability embedded as a key consideration. The sustainability of St Margaret's is a consideration in terms of this proposal.

4.5 Carbon Management

This proposal is carbon neutral

4.6 Rural Proofing

This proposal does not relate to new or amended strategy and rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

4.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report

5 CONSULTATION

The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Donna Manson

Service Director Children and Young People

Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Donna Manson	Service Director Children and Young People

Background Papers: Consultation Report dated 8 March 2018 in relation to proposal to close St Margaret’s RC Primary School Hawick

Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee 7 November 2017

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print, various computer formats and as well as obtaining information on other language translations and additional copies, by contacting the address below.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA

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CONSULTATION REPORT

**STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS TO CLOSE ST
MARGARET'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL IN HAWICK AND TO
OFFER THE CHILDREN CURRENTLY ATTENDING THE
SCHOOL A PLACE AT A CATCHMENT SCHOOL**

CONSULTATION PERIOD:

22 NOVEMBER 2017 TO 22 JANUARY 2018

This Consultation Report has been prepared by Scottish Borders Council Children and Young People's Services in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended

1. INTRODUCTION

This Consultation Report has been issued following a decision by Scottish Borders Council's Executive on 7 November 2017 to undertake a statutory consultation in respect of proposals regarding St Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick (**St Margaret's**). The consultation process and Report have been prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended (**the Act**).

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The proposals consulted upon were that:-

2.1.1 St Margaret's is closed; and

2.1.2 The children currently attending St Margaret's are offered a place at a catchment area primary school, based on their home address.

2.2 The Proposal Paper for the consultation is attached as **Appendix 1** and contains full details of the proposals and the Council's reasons for commencing the statutory consultation process.

2.3 This Report, in addition to providing a summary of the background to the proposals and consultation process, contains an analysis of the written and online submissions received along with the Council's responses to each comment received. Information is also given regarding the next stages of the consultation process, along with details of ways to further engage in the next steps of the process.

3 BACKGROUND

Pre-Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

3.1 In February 2016 Scottish Border Council's Executive agreed to commence a pre-consultation process regarding the current school estate provision and what it should aspire to look like across the region. The Council undertook to engage with all stakeholders to obtain information and opinions regarding the current school estate and to seek views and ideas in respect of the vision of the future school estate.

3.2 The five strategic principles that were adopted when reviewing the school estate were:-

3.2.1 Increased educational opportunities;

3.2.2 Improved outcomes for children and young people;

3.2.3 Sustainability;

3.2.4 Future proofing the school estate;

3.2.5 Affordability.

3.3 The pre-consultation was promoted through letters, school mail, press releases, social media, posters and newsletters with consultation events held across the region.

3.4 In September 2016 Council officers and Councillors met with:-

- the chairs of the parent councils for the denominational schools in the Borders; and

- Patricia Carroll the Pastoral Resources and RE Director from the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh.

This meeting was to discuss the School Estates Review and the issues and challenges facing each of the denominational schools in the region. Following this meeting it was agreed to address issues regarding leadership and sustainability across the schools. It was agreed that meetings would be held with the parents/carers and parent councils of the individual schools regarding school specific issues, including roll numbers

- 3.5 Following these meetings, the leadership structure across the schools was changed and progress was made at 3 of the denominational schools stabilising and increasing pupil numbers.
- 3.6 When Council officers met with parents/carers of St Margaret's pupils, the parents/carers indicated that they were happy with the learning provision at the school but did highlight some concerns regarding the challenges their children can face integrating into the community. Council officers expressed concerns regarding inclusion in the community (as a large proportion of the pupils speak English as an additional language) and also the limitations that a smaller roll presents in respect of the ability to fully provide the Curriculum of Excellence and the breadth of experiences for the children in terms of friendships and socialisation, teaching and learning. The Council also discussed with parents/carers ways in which parents/carers could help boost the school roll; which included positive promotion of the school through social media, events and advertising in the local area.
- 3.7 However the school roll at St Margaret's continued to decline. In the 2017/18 school year the roll fell by 17% from the previous year, with no new admissions into Primary 1. The Council's Children and Young People's Services team therefore met again with parents/carers, staff and pupils of St Margaret's and the Catholic Church to discuss the future of St Margaret's and Catholic denominational education in Hawick.
- 3.8 A decision was taken on 7 November 2017 by the Council's Executive to commence a statutory consultation process on 22 November 2017 regarding the proposed closure of St Margaret's given the;-
- 3.8.1 sustained decline in roll, with no current evidence of a likely increase in demand;
 - 3.8.2 concerns regarding inclusion and integration of the children into their local community;
 - 3.8.3 constraints on opportunities for the children having a full range of curricular and learning opportunities in terms of the Curriculum for Excellence;
 - 3.8.4 constraints on team and group work;
 - 3.8.5 Council's ambition to further strengthen the social and emotional development of the children;
 - 3.8.6 Council's ambition to improve transitions for the children through the stages of learning;
 - 3.8.7 inadequate PE facilities at the school; and
 - 3.8.7 inefficient use of the school estate as the school is operating at 14% of capacity.
- 3.9 Prior to this decision, Council officers held further discussions with the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh regarding the future of St Margaret's. The Church, although

disappointed that the school roll had suffered a continued decline, confirmed their support to the proposals and, in the event the decision is made for closure, agreed:-

- to work with the Council to support the children and families; and
- to work collaboratively with the Council to provide religious instruction and education in a form acceptable to the families.

3.10 The Council's detailed reasoning for this proposal is set out in the Proposal Paper in **Appendix 1**. The Council considers that there are strong Educational Benefits contained in the proposals which would benefit the current and future pupils of St Margaret's, the staff and the Community.

3.11 Meetings were held with the parents of St Margaret's pupils on 20 November where the proposals and consultation process were explained and discussed (a full translation was provided). The Proposal Paper (in both Polish and English) was distributed to parents in advance of the consultation period.

4 PUBLIC MEETINGS

4.1 A Public Consultation meeting was held at 7pm on 5 December 2017 at St Margaret's.

4.2 18 members of the public attended the public meeting along with 5 elected members and 10 Council officers (including St Margaret's staff members and a translator).

4.3 A presentation was given at the meeting by Donna Manson, Service Director of Children and Young People at the Council. Minutes of the public meeting detailing the presentation, questions, comments and the Council's responses are attached as **Appendix 2**.

4.4 The presentation and all the documents were available at the meeting in both English and Polish and a member of Council staff provided a full interpretation of the presentation and Q&A discussion.

5 MEETINGS WITH PUPILS AND STAFF

5.1 Council officers held meetings with pupils and staff in St Margaret's on 6 December. Pupils were encouraged to talk about how they felt about their school and the possibility that their school may close. They were also asked for their thoughts about potentially attending another school. The main issues that they raised are detailed in **Appendix 3**. They were encouraged to ask questions and have had regular discussions in class with their class teacher and the head teacher on an ongoing basis to ensure that they receive the support that they need.

5.2 Staff have been engaged with throughout the pre-consultation and consultation process. There have been meetings with Council officers before the consultation started and during the process. The main issues raised at their meeting with Council officers are summarised in **Appendix 4**.

6 REPRESENTATIONS

6.1 There were 9 written representations made during the initial consultation period in respect of proposals, comprising 7 online responses and 2 written responses. The Council notes and welcomes all the responses, recognising that this might be an

emotional and worrying time for the affected families.

6.2 The responses can be categorised as follows:

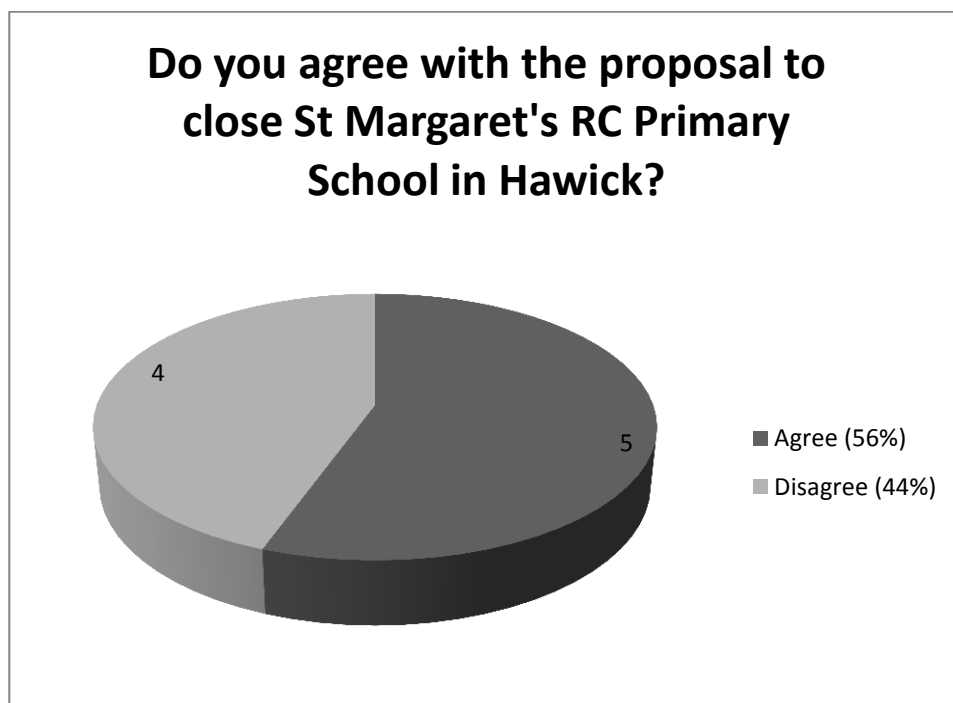
6.2.1 22% of responses were from parents;

6.2.2 22% of responses were from other parties connected to St Margaret's

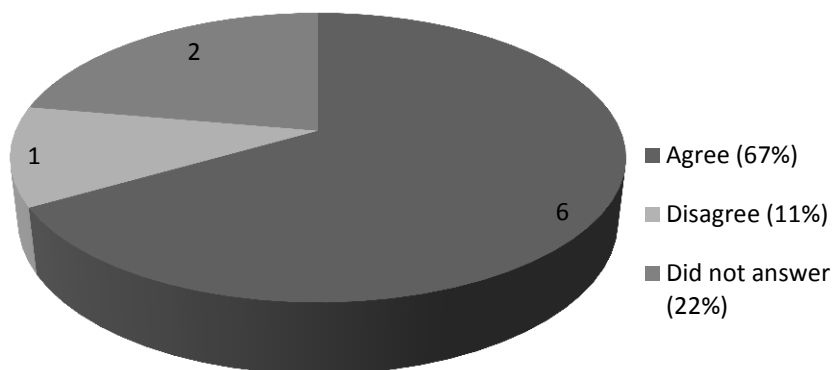
6.2.3 56% of responses were from members of the community.

6.3 To support the families with this element of the consultation process, individual appointments (with the Headteacher and a translator) were offered to each family.

6.4 We have analysed the responses based in the completed response forms. The responses indicate the following responses to each question:-



Do you agree with the proposal to offer the children currently attending St Margaret's a place in a catchment school?



6.4 A summary is given below of the main points contained in the responses regarding the Proposal and the Council's response to concerns or questions raised in the forms:

Summary of Comments in favour of the Proposal to close St Margaret's

The costs to keep the school open are high

Council Response: The comment is noted. The costs per pupil at St Margaret's are higher than at some primary schools in the area however the proposal has been made as the Council believes that the pupils would benefit educationally and socially if they were to attend a school which would be able to offer a fuller range of curricular and learning opportunities; and be part of a wider peer group.

It's difficult to justify the cost per pupil when there are spaces in other schools in Hawick

Council Response: The comment is noted. The Council confirms that the proposal to close the school is based on the potential educational and social benefits for the children.

Non-denominational schools with a similar roll profile have been closed

Council Response: The comment is noted. The Council is currently undertaking a review of all its schools and we have been working with all schools in the region with a roll of under 50 pupils to consider ways to increase the roll. A proposal regarding a school closure is only made when the Council considers that there would be strong educational benefits attached to the proposal. All proposals for closure require to be (1) in full compliance with the Act and (2) approved by Scottish Borders Council following third party assessment by Education Scotland. All closure proposals are subject to call in for review from the Scottish Government if Ministers consider that the Council has failed to comply with the requirements of the Act or has not taken account of material consideration relevant to the closure decision. If a call in decision is made a referral is made to the School Closure Review Panel who then can decide to either refuse consent or grant consent with or without conditions.

Non-denominational schools are better for inclusion and can reduce bias

Council Response: *The comment is noted. The Council seeks to support parents in their school placing choices, as far as possible. The Council has been working with the denominational schools within the Region and 3 of the 4 have seen either an increase or stabilisation in demand from parents for places at the school.*

The children are not able to participate in group and team work as they can in other schools in the town

Council Response: *The comment is noted. The Council considers that collaborative working is an important element of the curriculum. The Council believes that the proposals contain strong educational benefits for the children.*

There would be social and educational benefits for the children if they were to attend a larger school in the town

Council Response: *Noted and Agreed.*

Summary of Comments/Questions not in favour of the Proposal to close St Margaret's:

Why is the Council consulting on this when it is already recommending closure? It's like the decision has already been made

Council Response: *The question and comment are noted. The consultation process is laid down in the Act. The Act specifies that a Council must consult on certain proposed changes to its school estate (including closures, catchment changes and transport changes). The Act requires that Councils publish a proposal paper containing details of the proposal(s) and the educational benefits of the proposal. The proposal paper then invites responses to the proposal and seeks comments and alternative suggestions to the proposal.*

Council officers have not yet made a recommendation for closure but have made a proposal for consultation. The consultation process allows people their opportunity to have their say, make comments and challenge the proposal, which the Council must respond to. The comments, questions and responses received during the consultation process form an important part of the process and will be fully considered in both the Consultation Report and in the decision making process. All closure proposals require third party assessment from Education Scotland and are subject to call in from the Scottish Government.

Small schools are better for children

Council Response: *The comment is noted. The Council seeks, as far as possible, to support parental choice for school placings, recognising that a decision about school placings can be made for a number of reasons. The Council is currently working with all the schools in the region with a roll of under 50 pupils to seek to boost their roll. The Council considers that there can be strong educational benefits for children having the opportunity to engage with a full range of curricular and learning experiences. The Curriculum for Excellence places particular emphasis on collaborative and team working. The size of a school roll, if it is too small, can limit children's access to a wide range of opportunities for collaboration, team work and skills development.*

What has been done to increase the roll?

Council Response: *The question is noted. The Council commenced a review of denominational schools in 2016 as part of our current School Estates Review project. At this point meetings were held with the Church Educational Representative and the chairs of the Parent Councils of the denominational schools in the area. Subsequently meetings were held with the parents at St Margaret's to discuss the school and any issues/questions that parents/carers had. The Council at this stage shared suggestions with parents to help boost the roll which included promoting the school through social media, events and engagement with the community. Unfortunately St Margaret's has experienced a further reduction in pupil number as parent/carers have been making school placement choices for a variety of reasons and only a few have chosen St Margaret's in recent years. There were no P1 admissions in 2017/18 and we have seen no evidence of demand for places in future years.*

The community that the school currently serves will be adversely affected by the closure

Council Response: *The comment is noted. The Council is aware of the impact that a school closure can have on a community and individual families. In the event that a decision is made to close the school, we will work closely with individual families to support them with their choice of school and ensure that an individualised transition plan is put in place for each child. We will also continue to work with the Church and its representatives to ensure that religious instruction and education will continue to be provided in a form acceptable to the families.*

Hawick children should not lose the option of a Catholic education and the ethos that this education brings

Council Response: *The comment is noted. The Council seeks to support parents and carers in their educational choices as far as possible; however the demand for denominational education in Hawick has reduced considerably over the last 20 years. The Council considers that there are clear educational benefits regarding this proposal and will undertake with the families to support them in any transition. In the event that a decision is made for closure, the Council will continue to work closely with the Church regarding the future provision of religious education and instruction to the children.*

The quality of a school is not determined by its size

Council Response: *The comment is noted. The Council does not consider that the assessment of the quality of a school should be based on its size. The Council works hard to ensure that quality and standards are achieved across all of its schools. This is assessed independently by Education Scotland through their inspection programme. The Council considers that the size of a school can limit curricular and learning opportunities for children; particularly in respect of collaboration and team work.*

The children receive a good education at St Margaret's. They like the school and the teaching approach. They want to learn and are happy to go to school

Council Response: *The comments are noted. The Council also notes that the parents and carers are happy with the education provided at the school. However the Council considers that its proposal would have educational and social benefits for the children. In particular, it would allow the children opportunities to experience the full breadth of the Curriculum for Excellence; which places significant emphasis on collaborative working and peer challenge. The size of the current roll at St Margaret's can limit the opportunities for this.*

The educational standards are high and the children are well prepared for secondary school

Council Response: *The comment is noted. As stated above, the Council notes the parent's and carer's satisfaction with the school. However the Council does believe that there would be clear educational benefits for the children having more opportunities, to experience a fuller breadth of the Curriculum for Excellence and wider learning and social opportunities. Attending one of the town's larger schools would also allow the children access to a wider peer and friendship group, which can also assist with transition through the stages of education.*

Summary of Comments/Questions In Favour of the Proposal to Offer the Children Places in Their Catchment School:

The children will not have to travel far to attend school and would have more time for homework and rest

Council Response: *The comment is noted. In the event that the decision is made to close the school, the Council will work with families to support them in their decision regarding school choice.*

It would be common sense for them to attend the catchment school.

Council Response: *The comment is noted. In the event that the decision is made to close the school, the Council will work with parents to support them in their decision regarding school choice.*

Summary of Comments/Questions Not in Favour of the Proposal to Offer the Children Places in Their Catchment Schools:

The children may wish to attend the same school as their friends from St Margaret's

Council Response: *The comment is noted. In the event that the decision is made to close the school, the Council will work with parents to support them in their decision regarding school choice and will support the children through the transition process.*

The children should be given the chance to attend another RC school. They may be split up from their friends if they go to a catchment school

Council Response: *The comment is noted. In the event that the decision is made to close the school, the Council will work with parents to support them in their decision regarding school choice. Enhanced transition arrangements will be made to support the children in the event that they move school.*

7 AGREEMENT WITH THE CHURCH AND DENOMINATIONAL INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION

- 7.1 The Council has worked closely with the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh for a number of years. Both parties have worked collaboratively to bring positive changes to the leadership structure of the denominational schools across the region and to address issues regarding roll stabilisation.
- 7.2 Prior to commencing this Statutory Consultation process, Council officers met with representatives from the Archdiocese and it was agreed that the Church would support the proposal and would work with the Council to support the families during the process.
- 7.3 Discussions have commenced between the Church and the Council regarding the provision of religious instruction, education and observance in the event that the decision is made to close St Margaret's. The Church has confirmed that it will work with all parties to agree the most appropriate way to provide this. Both parties are committed to support the families during this process.
- 7.4 The Council has prepared an outline plan regarding the way religious instruction, education and observance would be provided to the children, in the event the decision is taken to close St Margaret's. The plan will be finalised and formalised once the families and children decide which school they wish to attend.
- 7.5 The plan seeks to (1) provide a framework for the provision of religious education, instruction and observance in accordance with the Curriculum for Excellence and (2) to allow the children to continue on their faith journey.
- 7.6 Religious instruction and education will be provided by a suitably qualified teacher based on the principles and guidance contained in **This is Our Faith** – the programme recommended by the Catholic Education Service which incorporates the principles of the Curriculum for Excellence.
- 7.7 The Council will seek to support the continuation of the children's faith journey with support from the Church, to facilitate instruction and observance at appropriate times through classes run either in or outwith school time.

8 EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

- 8.1 Education Scotland was notified in advance of the commencement of this Statutory Consultation. On completion of the Statutory Consultation period, a copy of the Proposal Paper was sent by the Council to Education Scotland. Education Scotland also received a copy of all relevant additional materials including the minutes of public meeting, written representations and responses received (where possible) by the Council following the consultation period.
- 8.2 Education Scotland has prepared a report on the educational aspects of the proposals, based on the representations and documents mentioned above as well as their interviews with pupils, parents and staff. In preparing their report, Education Scotland visited affected schools and made reasonable enquiries of people there as they considered appropriate. This can be found at **Appendix 5** and also on the Education Scotland Website following this link:

[Education Scotland Consultation Reports](#)

- 8.3 Issues raised in the Education Scotland Report with regards to the Proposals are set out below:

HM Inspectors considered:

“ 2.3 School staff who spoke to HM Inspectors reported that the online response system was awkward to use and it would not let them proceed unless they indicated that they supported the proposal or that they were against it. Several staff would have preferred a third “don’t know” option as they were neither strongly for or against the proposal.”

Council’s Response:

Noted. This consultation was launched on a new platform that Council has recently started to use for all our consultations. Constructive feedback is always welcome and we will ensure that future consultations are constructed to allow a third option to facilitate comment without the necessity of a definite response to a closed question. The Council ensured that there were alternative methods to engage in the process. Paper copy response forms were available at the school and to download from the consultation webpage. Details of website, postal and email addresses were also provided in the proposal paper to facilitate response and engagement in a variety of ways.

“3.1 The council considers that there are strong educational benefits associated with the proposal. It believes that being part of a larger school community will provide children with the opportunity to develop a wider and more diverse peer group within the community. It thinks that this will provide opportunity for interaction with a larger number of peers, allowing access to a wider range of views, and the opportunity to experience a wider range of teachers and learning experiences. It further believes that being part of a larger school community will enhance children’s learning and provide them with opportunities to experience a broader curriculum. There is a strong case for children from St Margaret’s RC Primary School benefitting by being part of a larger school and having a wider peer group. Children have very few peers of the same age, being part of a single class of 14 pupils from P2 to P7. They currently have to travel to a neighbouring school for physical education because they lack appropriate facilities in their own school. Overall, this aspect will be of significant educational benefit to children if the proposal moves forward.

Council’s Response: Noted and agreed. The Council considers there are significant educational benefits attached to this proposal

“3.2 The council believes that attending a primary school which has an early learning and childcare setting will allow children to learn with their peers from an early age. However, many schools across the country do not have nursery classes and this does not necessarily place children at a significant disadvantage. Overall, this aspect will be of more limited educational benefit to children.”

Council’s Response: Noted and agreed.

“3.3 The council thinks that attending a larger catchment school will

provide more opportunities for children to participate in team sports and other activities, including benefitting from a wider range of solo and group musical and artistic opportunities. The current size and makeup of the school roll makes team sports difficult to organise and run. Local PE teachers are clear that this puts children in St Margaret's RC Primary School at a disadvantage. Whilst these children undertake musical and artistic activities in their school, they will benefit from being part of a wider peer group, allowing them to come together in larger groups. Overall, this aspect will be of educational benefit to children if the council proceeds with the proposal."

Councils Response: Noted and agreed. The Council considers that there are significant educational benefits attached to the proposal in respect of participation and opportunities for PE and the arts

"3.4 The council considers that having a wider range of peers, to have discussions with, will help to develop children's awareness of the world of work, developing social and employability skills. Children from other local schools are clear that working in pairs and in groups is a very important aspect of their learning across the curriculum and they think that children from St Margaret's RC Primary School would benefit greatly from this approach. Overall, this aspect will be of educational benefit to children if the proposal moves forward."

Council's Response: Noted and agreed

"3.5 Children who attend St Margaret's RC Primary School who spoke to HM Inspectors are sad at the prospect of their school closing. They can see advantages in being part of a larger school but will miss being in the same class. They are concerned about what will happen to the records of their achievements in the school such as certificates and trophies if the school closes. They would like the opportunity to visit the schools which they could transfer to with parents and classmates so that they can make an informed choice. In its final proposal paper, the council should ensure that appropriate time and opportunity is made available for enhanced transition procedures to take place for children from St Margaret's RC Primary School."

Council's Response: Noted and agreed. The Council is aware of the children's attachment to the school and their pride in their achievements. In the event a decision is taken to close the school, the Council intends to investigate further, with the children, the best way to ensure that their achievements are preserved and the history of the school is preserved. Discussions will be held with local societies and the library in this regard. In our discussions with parents and the pupils to date, we have undertaken to arrange visits, meetings and events with other schools to assist and support the families in any decision making process. The intention is to provide enhanced support to each family during the decision and any future transition process.

"3.6 Parents of children who currently attend St Margaret's RC Primary School who spoke to HM Inspectors are not convinced that the

closure is either necessary or desirable. They have concerns that the proposal paper gives the early learning provision in other schools as a benefit of closure and yet they have been asking for this provision to be put in place in St Margaret's for a number of years. They also have concerns that they have heard of instances of bullying in other schools.

The council should ensure that they continue to discuss parents' concerns with them, including why early learning provision was never included in St Margaret's."

***Council Response:** Noted. The Council's early learning provision in the Borders is provided through a blend of local authority, private and voluntary providers. There are currently 6 local authority operated and 4 private and voluntary provisions within Hawick, which currently meet demand within the town. Unfortunately we have been unable to identify a level of demand for an early learning setting at St Margaret's which would sustain a viable setting. We are aware of the concerns regarding bullying and will continue to support and work with the parents as the consultation progresses. In the event a decision for closure is taken, we will work closely with parents and support them during and after their decision process regarding schools.*

"3.7 Staff at St Margaret's RC Primary School understand the rationale for the proposal, although they feel that the establishment of an early learning provision several years ago could have helped the school roll to rise. They have justifiable concerns that timings for the council decision-making followed by effective transitions for pupils may be too tight for the school to be closed by August 2018. In its final proposal paper, the council should confirm that appropriate time and opportunity will be available for enhanced transition procedures to take place for children from St Margaret's RC Primary School."

***Council Response:** Noted. Comments regarding ELC provision are given above. We are aware of this time frame and have had discussions with the staff regarding the potential timing implications. Our suggested time table, if a decision to close is taken, is provided in **Section 9**. We will continue to work with staff and families to ensure all necessary support is given to families to ensure the transition is as smooth as it can be.*

"3.8 Children who attend other local primary schools who spoke to HM Inspectors are in favour of the proposal. They are keen to make the children welcome in their own schools. They think that children from St Margaret's RC Primary School will benefit from a wider range of friends and from a wider range of learning opportunities. They also think that children and their parents should get the opportunity to visit other schools so that they can make an informed choice about where they would like to go next session."

***Council Response:** Noted and agreed.*

"3.9 Parents of children who attend other local primary schools who spoke to HM Inspectors are in favour of the proposal. They feel

that the move to a larger peer group will be of benefit to the children who currently attend St Margaret's RC Primary School. They think that it will be important to have high quality transition procedures in place for these children and that the authority should be aware that the children will need ongoing support to help them to come to terms with closure of their school."

Council Response: Noted and agreed

"3.10 Staff from other local primary schools who spoke to HM Inspectors are generally in favour of the proposal. However, they have a justifiable concern that this will end Catholic education in the local area and they feel that the authority should make it clear how the children from St Margaret's will be supported in their faith journey should the school close."

*Council Response: Noted. The Council has been working closely with staff from St Margaret's, the local priest and representatives of the Church to agree a programme of religious education and instruction for the children. This is detailed in **Section 7***

"3.11 Representatives from the Catholic Church acknowledge that the current situation in St Margaret's RC Primary School is not an effective use of council resources and that children are likely to benefit educationally from being part of a larger peer group. However, there is not clarity in the proposal paper about how children will be supported in their faith whilst in a non-denominational school. In its final proposal paper, the council should clarify how children will be supported in their faith journey if their school is closed."

*Council's Response: Noted and agreed – see comments above in **Section 7**.*

"4 Summary

- There is overall educational benefit to the proposal to close St Margaret's RC Primary School. Children who attend this school do not currently have the opportunity to benefit from working in age-appropriate groups and their school is not well-suited to modern learning and teaching across the curriculum. Children and staff currently have to travel to a neighbouring school for physical education because they lack appropriate facilities in their own school. Team sports and other group activities are compromised by the total school roll of 14 pupils from P2 to P7.
- There are a number of aspects which the council should consider when finalising this proposal. There are justifiable concerns that timings for the council decision-making followed by effective transitions for pupils may be too tight for the proposed closure date of August 2018. In its final proposal paper, the council should clarify the timescale for closure and confirm that children and their parents will get the opportunity to visit other schools so that they can make an informed choice about which school they attend next session. It should further confirm that appropriate time and opportunity will be available for enhanced transition

procedures to take place for children from St Margaret's RC Primary School. The council should also clarify how children will be supported in their faith journey and to continue to progress with the curriculum for Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools if their school is closed and be supported in coming to terms with the closure. If the proposal is progressed, the council should ensure that it continues to discuss parents' concerns with them in the best interests of their children."

Council Response:** Noted and agreed. The Council has prepared a draft Transition Plan in conjunction with staff at St Margaret's and other schools within the town. This is detailed in **Section 9

9 PROPOSALS FOR TRANSITION

- 9.1 The Council has prepared an outline transition plan to assist with providing support to both the children and families in the event that a decision is taken to close St Margaret's. The Council has confirmed to parents that they will seek to support any placement requests that they may wish to make.
- 9.2 The transition plan has been prepared by Council officers in conjunction with staff from St Margaret's and other schools within the cluster. The draft plan seeks to provide enhanced support to assist with the decision making process and to assist children transition to their new school. To assist with this process a translator will be made available before, during and after the transition to assist and support the families in the process.
- 9.3 A detailed programme of dates and activities for transition will be drawn up and shared with all families once decisions have been made about which school(s) the children will attend. This programme will include visits to the receiving school, meetings with staff and headteacher, invitation to attend events in the receiving school during the summer term, opportunities to spend time in class and sharing all communication with families in the term before transition. There will also be a planned series of events and activities to ease the transition out of St Margaret's.

10 COMPLIANCE WITH THE STATUTORY PROCESS

Scottish Borders Council has complied in full with terms of the Act:

Proposal Paper

- 10.1 The Council prepared a Proposal Paper which was published on 22 November 2017, in both English and Polish. A copy of the Proposal Paper is attached as Appendix 1.
- 10.2 A copy of the Proposal Paper was made available free of charge in these locations: –
- Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA
 - St Margaret's Primary School, Buccleuch Street, Hawick, TD9 0HU
 - Hawick Library, North Bridge Street, Hawick TD9 9QT

and published on the Scottish Borders Council website (in both English and Polish):

www.scotborders.gov.uk/stmargarets

10.3 The publication of the Proposal Paper was advertised in various local newspapers, on the week commencing 12 November 2017, providing the dates for the consultation period and the public meeting.

10.4 Formal notice of the proposals was sent by letter or email to:

- the parents/carers of children attending the affected schools;
- the Parent Councils of the affected schools;
- the parent/carers of any children likely to attend the affected Schools or any affected school within two years of the date of the publication of the Proposal Paper, as far as known to the Council;
- the pupils attending the affected schools insofar as the Council considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity;
- any Trade Union which is representative of the staff;
- the Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at the affected schools;
- the Community Councils of Hawick, Burnfoot, Denholm & District, Hobkirk, Southdean, Newcastleton and District, Upper Liddesdale & Hermitage and Upper Teviotdale & Borthwick Water
- the community planning partnership (as defined in section 4(5) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) for the area where any Affected School is situated or any other community planning partnership that the Council considers relevant;
- the constituency Member of the Scottish Parliament;
- the constituency Member of Parliament;
- the List Members of the Scottish Parliament.

Length of Consultation Period

10.5 The consultation period for the Proposals ran from 22 November 2017 until 22 January 2018 (both dates inclusive). This period allowed for the statutory minimum of 30 school days.

Public Meetings

10.6 A public meeting was held on:

5 December 2017 at 19.00 at St Margaret's.

Minutes of the meeting are contained in **Appendix 2.**

Meetings with Pupils and Staff

10.7 Meetings were held with pupils and staff at St Margaret's. A record of questions, views and responses is included in **Appendices 3 and 4.**

Preparation of Public Consultation Report

10.8 The Council has reviewed the proposals for St Margaret's having regard to the responses received during the consultation period and the Education Scotland Report. This Consultation Report will be published on **8 March 2018** and is available for further consideration for a period of three weeks from that date, until **29 March 2018**. The intention is that interested parties should have time to consider the Consultation Report and if they so

wish, to raise concerns and pose alternative solutions by making written or electronic submissions to:

St Margaret's RC Hawick Schools Consultation
Children and Young People's Services
Scottish Borders Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA
or

Email Address: schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk; or

- 10.9 If you wish to respond by letter or electronically, you are invited to state your relationship with the school – for example, “pupil”, “parent”, “carer”, “relative”, “former pupil”, “teacher in school”, “member of the community” etc. Responses from Parent Councils, Staff and Pupil Councils are particularly welcome.
- 10.10 Those sending in a response, whether by letter or electronically, should know that their response may be open to public scrutiny and may have to be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it. If they do not wish their response to be made publicly available, they should clearly write on the document: “I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Councillors and Council Officers of Scottish Borders Council and to the Scottish Government and its officers”. Otherwise, it will be assumed that the person making the response agrees to it being made publicly available.
- 10.11 For any written or electronic response to be considered it must be received by the Council no later than 5.00pm on the last day of the consultation period, **29 March 2018**.

Distribution

- 10.12. A copy of the Consultation Report will be made available free of charge for public consultation from **8 March 2018 to 29 March 2018** in these locations: –
- Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA
 - St Margaret's Primary School, Buccleuch Street, Hawick, TD9 0HU
 - Hawick Library, North Bridge Street, Hawick TD9 9QT

and published on the Scottish Borders Council website:
www.scotborders.gov.uk/stmargarets

DECISION

- 11.1 This report together with any other relevant documentation will be considered by Scottish Borders Council who will be asked to make a decision at the full Council meeting on 26 April 2018.
- 11.2 Where a decision is taken to approve a school closure proposal, the Council is required to notify Scottish Ministers within 6 days of the decision and place a notice on its website stating the decision and advising that there is a period of 3 weeks from the date of the decision for any party to make representations, either in support or against the Council's

closure decision, to Scottish Ministers.

11.3 Representations should be made to:

schoolclosure@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

or

The Scottish Government
School Infrastructure Unit
2A (South)
Victoria Quay
EH6 6QQ

11.4 The Scottish Ministers have a period of 8 weeks following the Council's decision to decide whether to call the closure decision in or not. If the Ministers do not make a decision within that period the proposal is automatically permitted to proceed. If the decision is taken to call the Council's decision in the Scottish Ministers will advise the Council in writing as expeditiously as possible.

11.5 There are clear grounds within the Act for calling in a proposal. The Ministers can call in a proposal where it appears to the Scottish Ministers that the Council may have failed:

- (a) in a significant regard to comply with the requirements imposed on it by (or under) this Act so far as they are relevant to the closure proposal, or
- (b) to take proper account of a material consideration relevant to its decision to implement the proposal.

11.6 Any closure decision called in by the Scottish Ministers will be referred to the School Closure Panel for determination. The School Closure Panel has a period of 8 weeks to notify the Council of its decision. In the event that the Panel refuses to consent to the closure, the Council can appeal the decision on a point of law. In the event the Panel's decision is upheld there will be a 5 year restriction on the Council making a further school closure proposal in respect of St Margaret's.

12 INACCURACIES IN THE PROPOSAL PAPER

There were no material inaccuracies or omissions found or notified to the Council in respect of the Proposal Paper.

13 COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY PROCESS

13.1 Throughout this consultation, the Scottish Borders Council Children and Young People Services team has given due regard to the provisions of the Act.

13.2 The statutory consultation process was robust, with engagement from the local community, and provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to identify key issues. Any areas of concern are responded to within **Sections 4, 5 and 6**. This final consultation document seeks to present all information and ask for any further views or alternatives to the proposal to close St Margaret's.

13.3 A recommendation will be made to the Council at its meeting on 26 April 2018 to make a final decision on the proposals. The recommendation will be based on the documents and

information presented in this Consultation Report and will take due cognisance of any further views or alternatives to the proposals expressed during the consultation period regarding this Consultation Report.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES
SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

8 March 2018

Appendix 1 – Proposal Paper dated 22 November 2017

Appendix 2 - Minutes of Public Meeting 5 December 2017

Appendix 3 – Summary of Meeting with Pupils 6 December 2017

Appendix 4 – Summary of Meeting with Staff 6 December 2017

Appendix 5 – HMIE Report dated February 2018



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

PUBLIC CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

**STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CLOSURE
OF ST MARGARET'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL IN HAWICK**

CONSULTATION PERIOD:

22 NOVEMBER 2017 TO 22 JANUARY 2018

PUBLIC MEETING :

**ST MARGARET'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
BUCCLEUCH STREET,
HAWICK,
TD9 0HU
ON 5 DECEMBER 2017 AT 7PM**

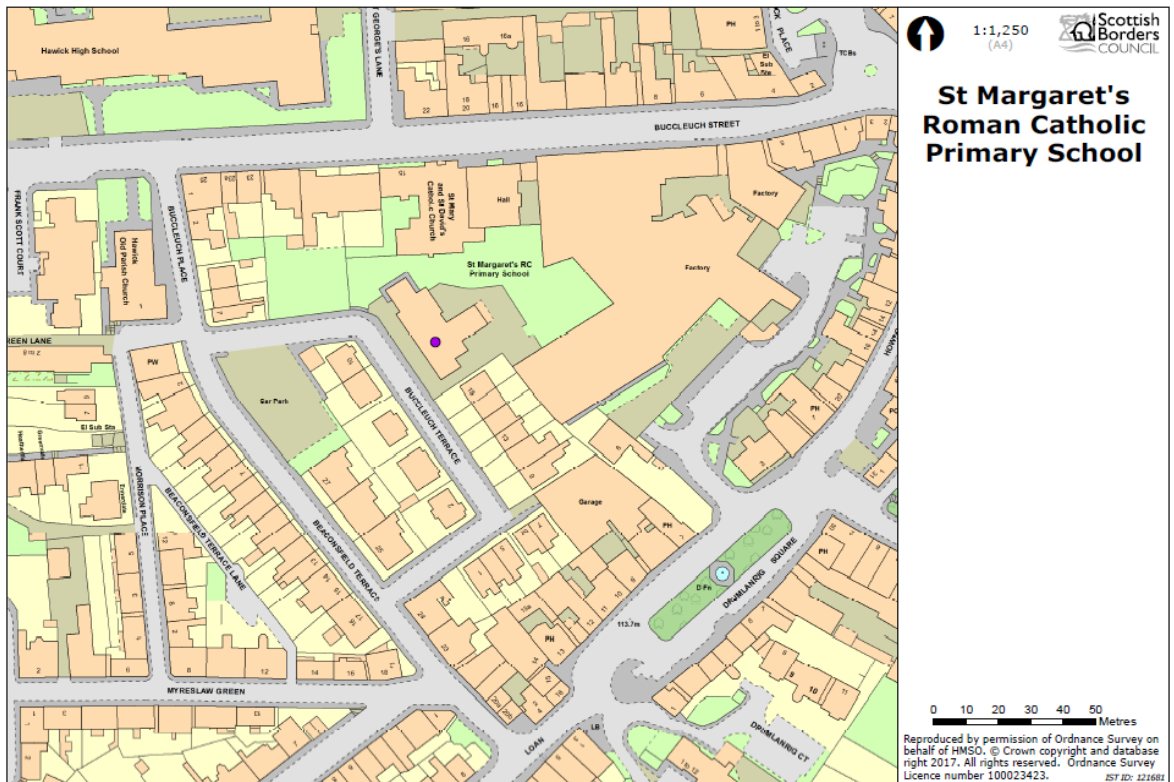
This Consultation Proposal Document has been prepared by Scottish Borders Council Children and Young People's Services in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended

1. THE PROPOSAL

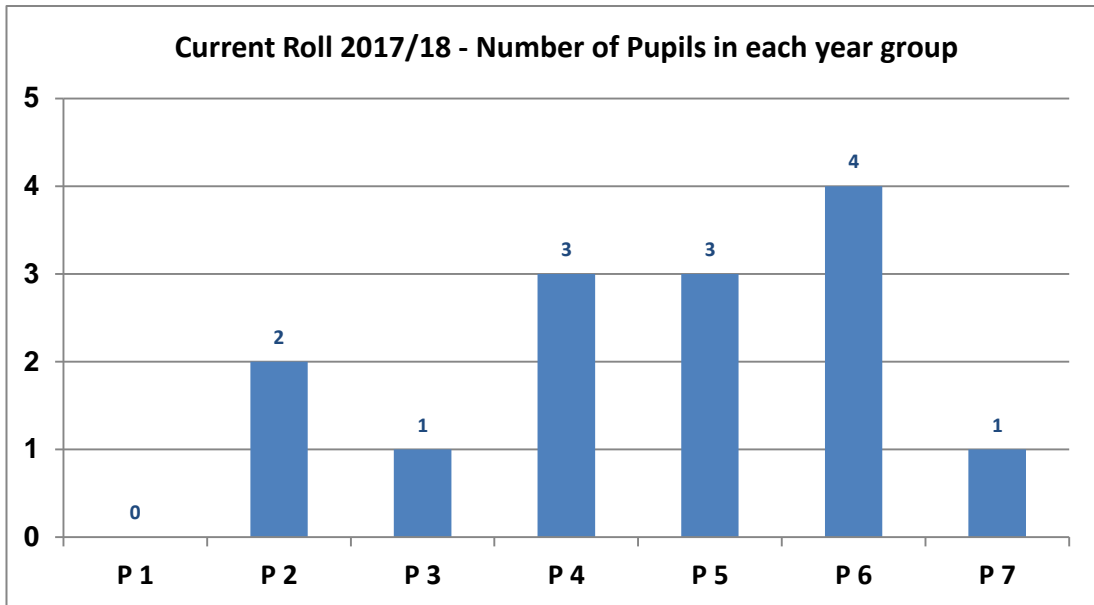
It is proposed that, subject to the outcome of this statutory consultation process, St Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick (**St Margaret's**) is closed and the children that currently attend the school are offered places within a catchment area primary school, based on their home address.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSAL

- 2.1 St Margaret's is a Catholic denominational primary school in Hawick and is within Hawick High School's catchment zone. There is no Early Learning and Childcare setting at the school.
- 2.2 St Margaret's location is shown below:-

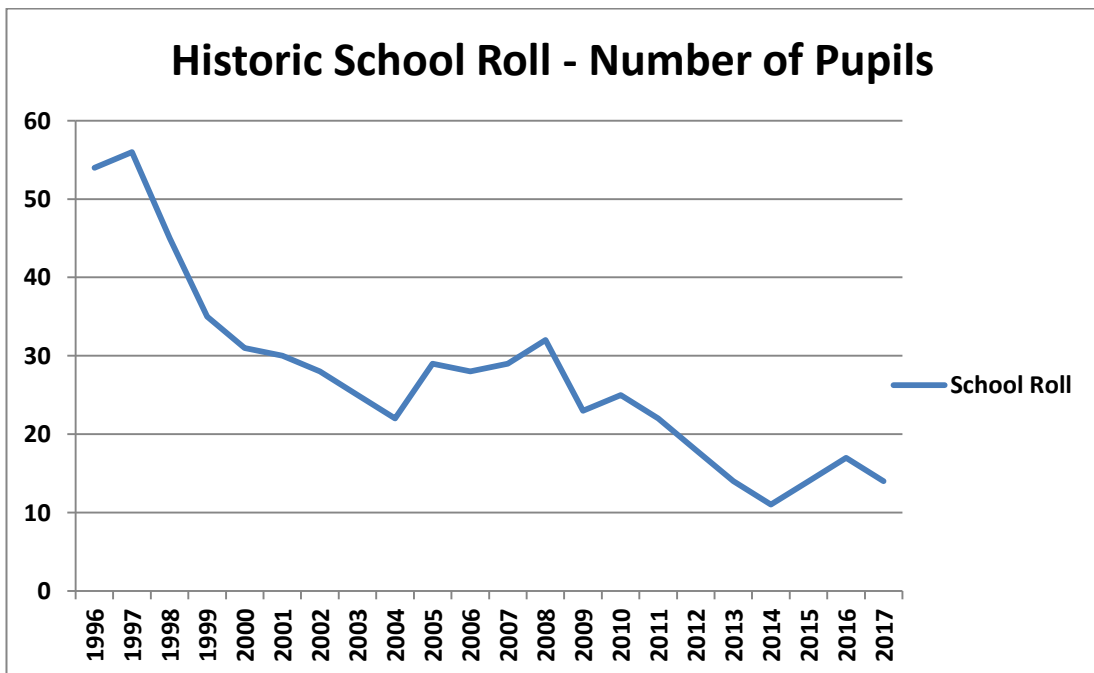


- 2.3 The school has capacity for 100 pupils. There are currently 14 children attending the school. 10 of the children are currently registered as being baptised Catholic. There were no admissions into Primary 1 for the current school year. Over the last 3 years only 3 pupils have been admitted into Primary 1. The current roll comprises the following:



2.4 St Margaret's currently operates with a P2-P7 class and has a full time teacher. There is a Manager of Learning who is Headteacher of St Margaret's, jointly with the RC Primary Schools in Galashiels and Selkirk. Other teachers visit St Margaret's during the week to provide lessons in music, PE etc. and support with English as an additional language. There is also a number of staff supporting the school. In total there are 5.22 Full Time Equivalent employees supporting the school.

2.5 The roll has been falling significantly over recent years and St Margaret's has consistently operated below capacity. Over the last 10 years the school has operated at an average capacity of 22%; and is currently operating at 14% of capacity. This is not projected to change as current projections indicate that the school roll will not exceed the current numbers in the next 2 years.



REASONS FOR FORMULATING THE PROPOSAL

3 PRE-CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 3.1 In February 2016 Scottish Border Council's Executive (Education) Committee agreed to commence a pre-consultation process regarding the current school estate provision and what it should aspire to look like across the region. The Council undertook to engage with all stakeholders to obtain information and opinions regarding the current school estate and to seek views and ideas in respect of the vision of the future school estate.
- 3.2 The five strategic principles that were adopted when reviewing the school estate were:-
 - 3.2.1 Increased educational opportunities;
 - 3.2.2 Improved outcomes for children and young people;
 - 3.2.3 Sustainability;
 - 3.2.4 Future proofing the school estate;
 - 3.2.5 Affordability.
- 3.3 The pre-consultation was promoted through letters, school mail, press releases, social media, posters and newsletters with consultation events held across the region.
- 3.4 As part of the School Estate Review engagement, Council officers met with parents of St Margaret's pupils, who indicated that they were happy with the learning provision at the school but did highlight some concerns regarding challenges their children can face integrating into the community. Council officers expressed concerns regarding inclusion in the community, as a large proportion of the pupils speak English as an additional language and also the limitations that a smaller roll presents in respect of the ability to fully provide the Curriculum of Excellence and the breadth of experiences for the children in terms of friendships and socialisation, teaching and learning.
- 3.5 As the school roll further declined in the 2017/18 school year by a further 17%, the Council's Children and Young People's Services team wish to engage again with parents, staff and pupils of St Margaret's and meet with the Catholic Church to discuss the future of St Margaret's and Catholic denominational education in Hawick.

4 PROPOSAL AND REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1. The Council wishes to consult with parents, pupils, staff and the community on the proposal to close St Margaret's as a primary school within the town of Hawick. Pupils will be offered places within a catchment area primary school, based on their home address, with RC pupils being provided with religious instruction in a form agreed during the Consultation process with parents and the Church.
- 4.2 There are a number of reasons why the Council wishes to consult on this proposal:-
 - 4.2.1 The school roll has diminished significantly over a number of years and is not projected to increase. The fall in roll over the last 20 years may indicate that there may be insufficient demand for a denominational school in the town;
 - 4.2.2 A diminishing roll can limit the ability to offer a full range of curricular and learning opportunities to all the children. The size of the school roll limits the children's access to a wider range of peers' views and ideas for collaborative working and skills development which allows children to support each other's learning and learn how to challenge thinking. This also limits the children's

exposure to different teaching styles and methods. A small school roll can also result in children at key stages having a limited age related peer group.

- 4.2.3 The Council has concerns that there may be issues regarding inclusion and integration into the community for the St Margaret's pupils. Parents have also expressed concerns regarding the challenges their children can face integrating into the community.
- 4.2.4 St Margaret's does not have facilities for PE requiring specialist equipment. The children therefore have to travel to attend Drumlanrig St Cuthbert's Primary School for some PE lessons.
- 4.2.5 A small school roll restricts opportunities for team sports and other active recreational activities. This also applies to individual sports, where the successful learning of skills can also be supported by talking about and sharing experiences. This further applies to the health and wellbeing element of the curriculum which involves discussion and debate between pupils about healthy lifestyle choices.
- 4.2.6 The school is large enough for 100 pupils but has only 14 pupils; with such a diminished roll this is not efficient or effective use of space and may present issues for the children and staff as they cannot make full use of the building. There is capacity in all the primary schools within Hawick which would allow the St Margaret's pupils to attend their catchment school. More information about the catchment schools is given in **Section 5**.

5 SCHOOLS IN HAWICK

- 5.1 The proposal is that pupils will be able to attend their local catchment school. There are currently 6 primary schools (5 of which are non-denominational) and 1 secondary school in Hawick. These are indicated in the catchment map attached in **Appendix 1**.

<u>2016/17</u>	Capacity	Pupil Roll	Occupancy
St Margaret's RC Primary School	100	14	14%
Burnfoot Community School	373	236	63%
Drumlanrig St Cuthbert's Primary School	340	279	82%
Stirches Primary School	150	110	73%
Trinity Primary School	307	215	70%
Wilton Primary School	307	190	62%
Hawick High School	1339	887	66%

- 5.2 In line with the Council's asset management strategy condition surveys are undertaken on a rolling programme by a team led by a chartered building surveyor. The suitability assessment is undertaken by the Head Teacher and validated by Senior Managers within Children and Young People's Services. These assessments are undertaken approximately every five years unless significant building or operational change has occurred within the school requiring additional assessment.

The definition and assessment categorisations are set by the Scottish Government as follows:

Condition - an assessment of the physical condition of the school and its grounds.

A: Good	Performing well and operating efficiently
B: Satisfactory	Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration
C: Poor	Showing major defect and/or not operating adequately
D: Bad	Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure

Suitability - an assessment of the school as a whole, its buildings and its grounds and of the impact these have on learning and teaching, leisure and social activities and the health and well-being of all users.

A: Good	Performing well and operating efficiently
B: Satisfactory	Performing well but with minor problems
C: Poor	Showing major problems and/or not operating optimally
D: Bad	Does not support the delivery of services to children and communities

5.3 The schools in Hawick are rated:-

Hawick School Ratings			
	Survey Date	Condition	Suitability
St Margaret's RC Primary School	2014	B	B
Burnfoot Community School	2014	B	B
Drumlanrig St Cuthbert's Primary School	2014	C	C
Stirches Primary School	2014	C	C
Trinity Primary School	2014	C	B
Wilton Primary School	2014	B	B
Hawick High School	2014	B	B

5.4 The most recent inspection reports for each of the non-denominational schools in Hawick can be accessed on the Education Scotland website at <https://education.gov.scot/>

Or accessed here:

[Burnfoot Community School Inspection Report 2010](#)

[Drumlanrig St Cuthbert's Primary School Inspection Report August 2016](#)

[Stirches Inspection Report 2009](#)

[Trinity School Inspection Report 2011](#)

[Wilton Primary School Inspection Report 2014](#)

6 PRE CONSULTATION WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

- 6.1 Council officers have maintained a strong working relationship with representatives of the Catholic Church throughout the Schools Estate Review process; working together to achieve positive outcomes for the denominational schools in the Scottish Borders.
- 6.2 Meetings have been held between Council officers and Church representatives regarding the proposal to close St Margaret's and the educational benefits have been fully discussed. Council officers and the Church representatives will continue to work together during the consultation process.

7 EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT OVERVIEW

- 7.1 The Council has statutory duties relating to the provision of Education in the Scottish Borders. The Council's key priorities, within the context of national and local policies, regarding (1) raising levels of achievement and attainment and (2) improving educational outcomes for all children and young people are set out in the Council's Business Plan and our Children and Young People's Services Plan. The key priority is to improve attainment and achievement levels for all our children and young people, both within and outwith the formal curriculum. As part of a multi-agency partnership, the following priorities have been identified within the Children and Young People's Services Plan:
 - 7.1.1 Raising attainment and achievement for all and closing the gap between the lowest and highest achievers;
 - 7.1.2 Promoting the health and well-being of all children and young people and reducing health inequalities;
 - 7.1.3 Keeping children and young people safe;
 - 7.1.4 Improving the well-being and life chances for our most vulnerable children and young people;
 - 7.1.5 Increasing participation and engagement.
- 7.2 The Curriculum for Excellence is the national curriculum for Scottish schools. It aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work now and in the future. The Council has a further duty to deliver a service which meets the criteria for best value, in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, economy and equal opportunities, and which meets the agreed priorities in the Single Outcome Agreement and Scottish Borders Council's Corporate Plan.
- 7.3 The purpose of the Curriculum for Excellence is encapsulated in the four capacities to enable each child or young person to be:
 - 7.3.1 a successful learner;
 - 7.3.2 a confident individual;
 - 7.3.3 a responsible citizen; and
 - 7.3.4 an effective contributor.
- 7.4 The Educational Benefits of the Proposal have been assessed taking account of the requirements under legislation and the priorities and aims of both the Council's Corporate Plan and Children and Young People's Services Plan and having regard to the terms and guidance of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR THE PUPILS

7.5 The Council considers that there are strong educational benefits associated with the proposal which will positively impact upon the pupils currently and likely to attend St Margaret's:-

- 7.5.1 Being part of a larger school community will provide pupils with the opportunity to develop a wider more diverse peer group within the community. The forging of close friendships and the development of self-esteem will be enhanced by each pupil being enabled to be part of an age appropriate peer group of a sufficient size to allow a range of interactions and relationships to form and reform. This should also assist with both the children's integration into the community that they live in and with the children's transition through the stages of education from nursery to secondary; as children will support each other with the social and emotional aspect of transitions.
- 7.5.2 Being part of a larger school community will provide opportunity for interaction with a larger number of their peers, which will allow children to access a wider range of views and ideas for collaborative working and enable the children to support each other's learning and learn how to challenge thinking.
- 7.5.3 Being part of a larger school community will provide the pupils with the opportunity to experience a wider range of teachers and learning experiences. Some of the educational benefits will arise not just from larger pupil numbers but also because a larger staff and parent body increases the likelihood of greater community involvement in a range of activities that will support the provision of a richer and higher quality curriculum.
- 7.5.4 The Curriculum for Excellence places significant emphases on collaborative working and skills development in wider settings as it is recognised that a pupil's social and emotional development is essential to delivery of the curriculum. Being part of the larger school community will enhance their learning and will provide all pupils with opportunities to experience more aspects of the Curriculum for Excellence as the size of the current roll limits the extent of the Curriculum on offer.
- 7.5.5 Each of the non-denominational primary schools within the town of Hawick has an Early Learning and Childcare setting which will allow attending children the opportunity to learn from an early age with their peers, smoothing their transition into Primary stage education.
- 7.5.6 Attending a larger catchment school will provide more opportunities for team sports and other active recreational activities. This applies even to individual sports, where successful learning of skills is helped by talking and sharing experiences. It further applies to the health and wellbeing element of the curriculum which involves discussion and debate between pupils regarding healthy lifestyle choices. Whilst these problems can currently be partially overcome by taking the pupils to participate in activities in a neighbouring school, that in itself involves time out of school travelling there and back.

7.5.7 As with sports, a larger roll would also provide a greater likelihood of pupils benefitting from a wider range of solo and group musical and artistic opportunities.

7.5.8 As part of the Curriculum of Excellence, one of the aims of Developing Scotland's Young Workforce is to develop increased awareness of the world of work, social skills and employability skills. Such knowledge and understanding and skills acquisition very much benefit from discussions and dialogue with peers of the same age/stage and through increased opportunities for interaction with the community.

7.6 IMPACT ON STAFF

7.6.1 The staff will be supported by the HR Support Processes in the Council to ensure a smooth transition in their roles.

7.6.2 In a larger school staff will be able to receive support in providing an inclusive curriculum and work together to provide support to children who may have additional support needs. Being part of a larger team will enable staff to share planning and curricular resources and work more collaboratively and can also learn from each other to provide improved approaches to learning and teaching.

7.7 IMPACT ON PUPILS AT OTHER SCHOOLS IN THE COUNCIL AREA

7.7.1 The pupils at the other schools within the Hawick School cluster will benefit from the increased diversity in their schools and from the opportunity to expand both their social and educational peer group. This will allow children to access a wider range of views and ideas for collaborative working and allow the children to support each other's learning and learn how to challenge thinking.

7.7.2 St Margaret's is one of 4 denominational schools in the Scottish Borders and shares a Headteacher with St Joseph's RC Primary School, Selkirk and St Margaret's RC Primary School, Galashiels. If the proposal proceeds the children and staff at St Joseph's and St Margaret's in Galashiels will benefit from the Headteacher having more time to concentrate and work with them to continue to raise standards, close the attainment gap and improve the learning experience.

8 TRANSITION PLANNING

If the outcome of this statutory consultation process is that St Margaret's is to close it is proposed that this will come into effect from August 2018. The Council recognises that in the event the proposal proceeds that the transition process for the children, parents and staff will require to be carefully planned and managed. Each pupil will require an individualised transition programme to assist and support them before, during and after their transition.

9 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

This proposal will assist in ensuring that children across Hawick will have parity of access to learning, opportunities and facilities in their communities. All children will have access to the same early years' experience, primary and secondary schools as those in their community which should assist with transition throughout their learning journey.

10. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 10.1 The 2010 Act, requires the Council to provide information regarding the financial implications of a school closure proposal. A template has been provided by the Scottish Government, following consultation with the Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education. The template has been completed in respect of St Margaret's utilising the projected figures in the Devolved School Management Budgets for 2017/18.
- 10.2 As the pupils currently enrolled at St Margaret's fall within more than one catchment area we have for the purpose of the financial template assumed that all the current pupils transfer to one school. As illustrated in the template the addition of a further 14 pupils will not have significant financial impact on the receiving school.
- 10.3 The completed template highlights that the current cost of educating pupils at St Margaret's Hawick at £10,300 per annum is significantly above the Scottish Borders average cost per pupil of £3,696 per annum.

11. SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS FOR THIS PROPOSAL PAPER

- 11.1 This Proposal Paper has been prepared by the Council's Children and Young People's Services in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended (**2010 Act**). The 2010 Act sets out a consultation procedure that a Local Authority must follow for certain proposals affecting schools in their area. The 2010 Act and its explanatory notes are available for reference at the following websites, respectively:

[Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#)

[Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010 - Explanatory Notes](#)

- 11.2 The proposal to close St Margaret's is deemed a relevant proposal in terms of the 2010 Act (the **Proposal**) and is therefore subject to the statutory consultation procedure specified in the 2010 Act.
- 11.3 The proposal paper will be available for inspection, free of charge, at:
- Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA
 - St Margaret's RC Primary School, Buccleuch Street, Hawick, TD9 0HU
 - Hawick Library, North Bridge Street, Hawick TD9 9QT

and published in both English and Polish on the Scottish Borders Council website:

www.scotborders.gov.uk/stmargarets

- 11.4 Copies of this Proposal Paper are available in both English and Polish (and other languages upon request) from:
- St Margaret's RC Hawick School Consultation
Children and Young People's Services
Scottish Borders Council
Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA
Telephone: 01835 825080
E-mail: schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk
- 11.5 Formal notice of the Proposal and relevant information will be given and be made available, free of charge, to the consultees listed as follows:
- the parents/carers of the children who attend an affected school;
 - the Parent Council of an affected school;

- the parent/carers of any children likely to attend an affected school within two years of the date of the publication of the Proposal Paper;
- the pupils attending an affected school;
- the Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at an affected school;
- any Trade Union which is representative of the staff;
- Hawick Community Council;
- the community planning partnership (as defined in section 4(5) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) for the area where an affected school is situated or any other community planning partnership that the Education Authority considers relevant;
- the constituency Member of the Scottish Parliament;
- the constituency Member of Parliament;
- the List Members of the Scottish Parliament.

11.6 **Advertisement in Local Media**

Advertisements were placed in the relevant local media the week beginning 13 November 2017, giving the dates for the consultation period and for the public meeting.

11.7 **Consultation Period**

The consultation for this Proposal will run from 22 November 2017 and will end on 22 January 2018. This period allows for the statutory minimum of six weeks, including at least thirty school days.

11.8 **Public Meetings**

A public meeting will be held, the details of which are set out below:

Tuesday 5 December 2017 at 7pm at
 St Margaret's RC Primary School
 Buccleuch Street
 Hawick
 TD9 0HU

11.9 **Format of Public Meeting**

Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The meeting, which will be convened by Scottish Borders Council, will be addressed by the Director of Children and Young People's Services and other relevant parties.

The meetings will provide an opportunity to:

- Hear more about the Proposal
- Ask questions about the Proposal
- Have your views recorded so that they can be taken into account as part of the Proposal process.

A note will be taken at the meeting of comments, questions and officer responses. These notes will be published on the Council website and a copy will be made available on request. These notes will be forwarded to Education Scotland, along with other submissions and comments received by the Council during the consultation process.

11.10 **Meetings with Pupils and Staff**

Meetings will be held with pupils and staff in St Margaret's. A record of questions, responses and views will be taken and this will be published in the Consultation Report.

12 HAVE YOUR SAY – HOW YOU CAN RESPOND TO THE PROPOSAL

- 12.1 A consultation regarding a proposed change to your child's or your community's school is your chance to share your views. Your responses can really shape and influence future decisions; you can play your part by:
- Submitting a written or electronic response to the Council as outlined below;
 - Attending the public meeting on 5 December at St Margaret's RC Hawick at 7pm to ask questions; raise concerns/issues; make suggestions;
 - Speaking to your local Councillors;
 - Engaging with your school's Parent Council. The Parent Council can play a key role in engaging with the Council throughout the process;
 - Make representations as part of your Community;
 - Informing Scottish Borders Council if you think that this Proposal Paper has significant inaccuracies or omissions.
- 12.2 All interested parties are invited to respond to the Proposal by making written or electronic submissions on the Proposal to:
- St Margaret's RC Hawick School Consultation
Children and Young People's Services
Scottish Borders Council
Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA
Or
Web Address: www.scotborders.gov.uk/stmargarets
- 12.3 A response form is available from Children & Young People's Services, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA or online at www.scotborders.gov.uk/stmargarets. A copy of the response form is provided in **Appendix 2**.
- 12.4 Use of the response form is not compulsory. If you wish to respond by letter or electronically, you are invited to state your relationship with the school – for example, "pupil", "parent", "carer", "relative", "former pupil", "teacher in school", "member of the community" etc. Responses from Parent Councils, staff and Pupil Councils are particularly welcome.
- 12.5 Those sending in a response, whether by letter or electronically, should note that their response will be open to public scrutiny and may be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it. If they do not wish their response to be made publicly available, they should clearly write on the document: "I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Councillors and Council Officers of Scottish Borders Council". Otherwise, it will be assumed that the person making the response agrees to it being made publicly available.
- 12.6 All written responses must be received by the last day of the consultation period, **22 January 2018**.
- 12.7 Education Scotland has prepared guidance regarding School Consultations. This can be accessed at [Education Scotland's Guidance on School Consultations](#).

13 INVOLVEMENT OF EDUCATION SCOTLAND

A copy of this Proposal document will be sent to Education Scotland by the Council. Education Scotland will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Council from any person during the consultation period or, if Education Scotland agree, a summary of them. Education Scotland will further receive a summary of any oral representations made to the Council at the public meeting that will be held and, as available (and so far as otherwise practicable), a copy of any other relevant documentation. Education Scotland will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 3 weeks after the Council has sent them all representations and documents mentioned above. In some cases, it is possible for them to extend the 3 weeks with the agreement of the Authority. However, for the avoidance of doubt, the 3 week period will not start until after the consultation period has ended. In preparing their report, Education Scotland may enter the affected school(s) and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there as they consider appropriate and may make such reasonable enquiries of such other people as they consider appropriate.

14 PREPARATION OF CONSULTATION REPORT

- 14.1 The Council will review the Proposal having regard to the Education Scotland report, the written representations that it has received and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting. It will then prepare a Consultation Report.
- 14.2 This Report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be advertised in local newspapers. It will be available on the Council website and from Council Headquarters, the public library in Hawick, as well as St Margaret's, free of charge. Anyone who made written representations during the consultation period will also be informed about the report. The report will include a record of the total number of written representations made during the consultation period, a summary of the written representations, a summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting, the Authority's response to the Education Scotland Report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the Education Scotland Report and any other relevant information, including details of any alleged inaccuracies and how these have been handled.
- 14.3 The Consultation Report will be published and available for further consideration for a period of three weeks, before it is presented to Full Council at the next scheduled Council meeting.

15 NOTE ON CORRECTIONS

If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal Paper, either by Scottish Borders Council or any person, Scottish Borders Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or there has been an inaccuracy. It will then take appropriate action which may include the issue of a correction or the re-issuing of the Proposal Paper, or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period, if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and Education Scotland will be advised

16 SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL DECISION AND SCOTTISH MINISTERS CALL-IN

- 16.1 No decision will be taken in regard to the Proposal or any changes put into effect by either the Council or the Council's Executive (Education) Committee until the statutory consultation process has been properly completed.
- 16.2 If the Council makes a final decision to implement the Proposal, it will require to notify the Scottish Ministers of that decision, and provide them with a copy of the Proposal document and Consultation Report. This must be done within 6 working

days of that decision. The Council must also publish on its website the fact that it has notified Scottish Ministers of its decision and of the period during which consultees have the opportunity to make representations to Ministers.

- 16.3 The Scottish Ministers have an 8 week period from the date of that final decision to decide if they will call-in the Proposals regarding a closure. During the first three weeks of this period, anyone is able to make representations to Ministers on whether the decision should be called-in. Within the first 3 weeks of that 8 week period, the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Until the outcome of the 8 week call-in process is known, the Council cannot proceed to implement the Proposals. Ministers may come to a decision sooner than eight weeks (but not before the three weeks for representations to be made to them has elapsed).
- 16.4 The Scottish Ministers may issue a call-in notice only if it appears to the Scottish Ministers that the Council has:-
- 16.4.1 failed, in significant regard, to comply with the requirements of the 2010 Act in terms of the closure Proposals; or
- 16.4.2 failed to take proper account of a material consideration relevant to the decision to implement the Proposals.
- 16.5 If Scottish Ministers decide to call in a closure Proposal, they must refer it to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels for determination by a School Closure Review Panel. The Council, as the Education Authority, may not implement the closure Proposals (wholly or partly) unless the Panel has granted consent to it (with or without conditions) and either the period for making an appeal to the Sheriff has expired or, if an appeal has been made, it has either been abandoned or the Sheriff has confirmed the Panel's decision.
- 16.6 The School Closure Review Panel may refuse to consent to the closure Proposal, refuse consent and remit the Proposal back to the Council as the Education Authority or grant their consent to the Proposals subject to conditions or unconditionally.
- 16.7 The 2010 Act, as amended, gives Ministers and School Closure Review Panels the right to call on advice from Education Scotland in relation to a closure Proposal at the call-in or determination stage.

DONNA MANSON
SERVICE DIRECTOR (CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES)

November 2017

APPENDICES

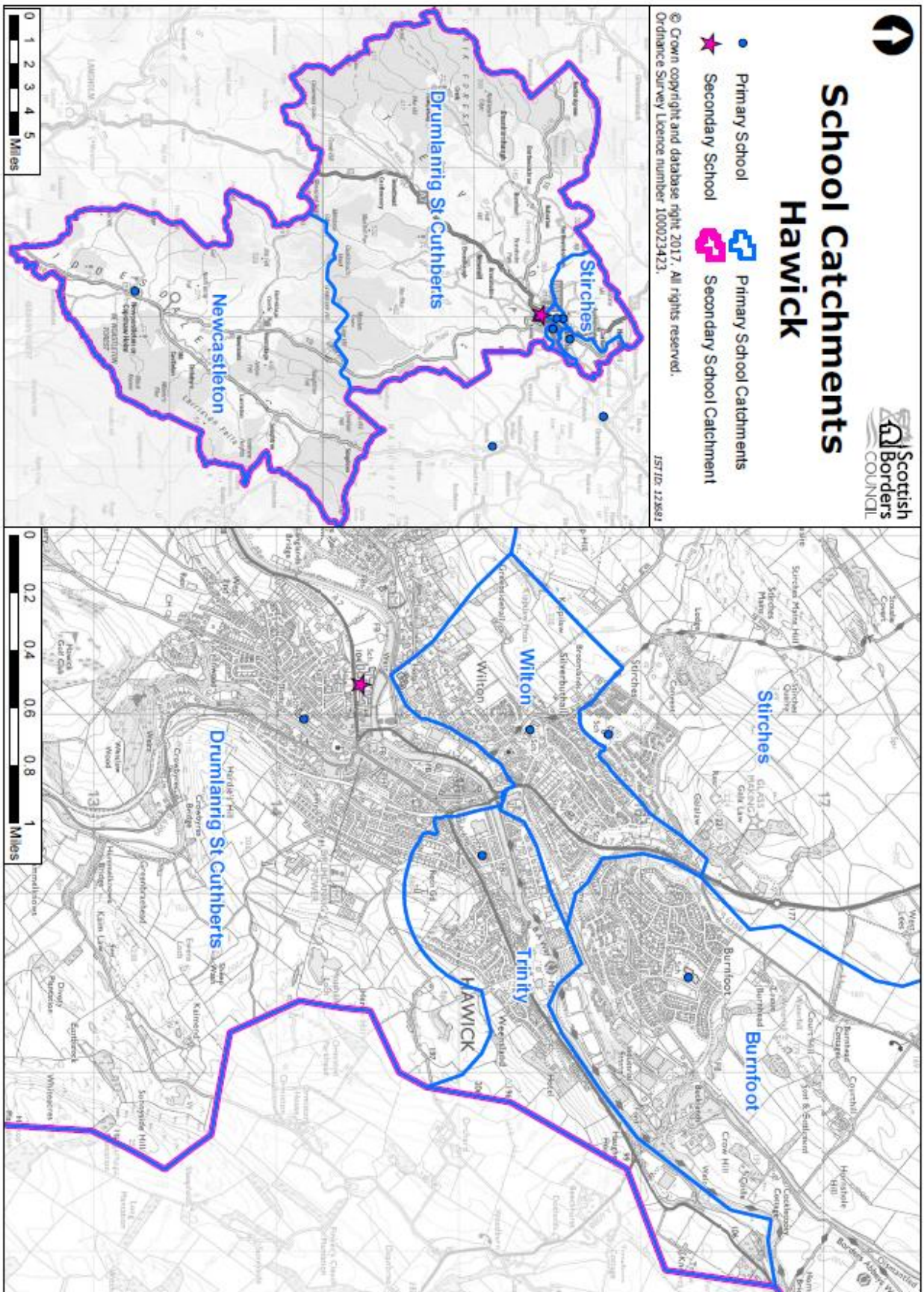
- Appendix 1** Hawick Catchment Plan
Appendix 2 Consultation Response Form
Appendix 3 Financial Templates Showing Current Revenue Costs for School Proposed for Closure

Note

This consultation is being conducted having regard to the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended.

The 2010 Act's principal purpose is to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other major changes to schools. These consultation processes are expected to be robust, open, transparent and fair, and seen to be so. They are also expected to be consistent across Scotland.

APPENDIX 1 HAWICK CATCHMENT PLAN



APPENDIX 2

STATUTORY CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Children and Young People's Services
Statutory Consultation - Proposal Response Form



SCHOOL ESTATE CONSULTATION IN RELATION TO PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ST MARGARET'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL IN HAWICK

Detail of the Proposal

It is proposed that, subject to the outcome of this statutory consultation process as set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended:

- St Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick is closed; and
- Children currently attending St Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick are offered places with a catchment primary school based on their home address

The Consultation Period is from 22 November 2017 until 22 January 2018.

SCHOOL - please tick the most relevant box below to indicate which school(s) you are connected with

<i>St Margaret's RC Primary School</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Other</i>	

YOUR INTEREST – please tick the most relevant box below to indicate your interest in the in the School(s)

<i>Parent/carer</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Staff</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Pupil</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Relative of Pupil</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Parent Council Member</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Elected Member/MSP/MP</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Community Planning Partner</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Community Member</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Other</i>	

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS



1. Do you agree with the proposal to close St Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick

Agree

Disagree

Please tell us the main reasons for your views and why you agree/disagree with the above proposal.

2. Do you agree with the proposal to offer the children currently attending St Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick a place in a catchment school in their area, based on their home address?

Agree

Disagree

Please tell us the main reasons for your views and why you agree/disagree with the above proposal.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS



3. Please tell us if you have any further comments or alternative suggestions regarding the proposals

--

DETAILS

Please complete your details below to assist our analysis of the responses

Name	
Postcode	
Email Address	

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESPONSE

I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to elected members and officers of Scottish Borders Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO GIVE US YOUR VIEWS

Your completed form can be handed into your local school or posted to: St Margaret's Hawick School Consultation, Children and Young People's Services, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells TD6 0SA.

You can also give us your views online at: www.scotborders.gov.uk/stmargarets

BY 22 JANUARY 2018

If you have any queries, please email: schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk

APPENDIX 3

FINANCIAL TEMPLATES SHOWING CURRENT REVENUE COSTS FOR SCHOOL PROPOSED FOR CLOSURE

Financial Template

Table 1	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Row 1	Current revenue costs for school proposed for closure			
	Name of School	Costs for full financial year (projected annual costs)	Additional financial impact on receiving school [enter name of school]	Annual recurring savings (column 2 minus column 3)
Row 2	St Margaret's RC Primary School Hawick			
Row 3	<i>School costs</i>			
Row 4	<i>Employee costs - note 1</i>			
Row 5	teaching staff	£85,945	£17,058	N/A
Row 6	support staff	£32,809	0	N/A
Row 7	teaching staff training (CPD etc)			
Row 8	support staff training			
Row 9	Supply costs - note 2	£580	0	N/A
Row 10				
Row 11	<i>Building costs:</i>			
Row 12	property insurance	£742	0	
Row 13	non domestic rates	£7,841	0	
Row 14	water & sewerage charges	£1,774	0	
Row 15	utilities costs	£7,906	0	
Row 16	cleaning (contract or in-house)	£3,664	0	
Row 17	building repair & maintenance			
Row 18	grounds maintenance	£157	0	
Row 19	facilities management costs - note 6	£321	0	
Row 20	revenue costs arising from capital			
Row 21	Other			
Row 22				
Row 23	<i>School operational costs:</i>			
Row 24	learning materials	£2,722	£355	
Row 25	catering (contract or in-house)			
Row 26	SQA costs			
Row 27	other school operational costs (e.g. licences)			

Table 2	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7
	Capital costs	School proposed for closure	Receiving school
	Capital Life Cycle cost - note 7		
	Third party contributions to capital costs		

Table 3	Column 5	Column 6	Column 7
	Annual Property costs incurred (moth-balling) until disposal		
	property insurance		
	non domestic rates		
	water & sewerage charges		
	energy costs		
	cleaning (contract or inhouse)		
	security costs		
	building repair & maintenance		
	grounds maintenance		
	facilities management costs		
	Other		
	TOTAL ANNUAL COST UNTIL DISPOSAL		

Row 28				
Row 29	Transport costs: note 3			
Row 30	home to school			
Row 31	other pupil transport costs			
Row 32	staff travel			
Row 33	SCHOOL COSTS SUB-TOTAL	£144,461	£17,413	
Row 34				
Row 35	Income:			
Row 36	Sale of meals			
Row 37	Lets			
Row 38	External care provider			
Row 39	Other			
Row 40	SCHOOL INCOME SUB-TOTAL	£144,461	£17,413	
Row 41				
Row 42	TOTAL COSTS MINUS INCOME FOR SCHOOL			
Row 43				
Row 44	UNIT COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR (based on 14 pupils)	£10,318		

Table 4

Non-recurring revenue costs	
TOTAL NON-RECURRING REVENUE COSTS	

Table 5

Impact on GAE - note 5	
GAE IMPACT	



Statutory Consultation regarding Proposal to Close St Margaret's RC Primary School, Hawick

Minutes of Public Meeting on 5 December 2017 at St Margaret's RC Primary School, Hawick

Attendance:-

Carol Hamilton, Executive Member for Children and Young People
Donna Manson, Service Director for Children and Young People
Father Edward Wanat, Parish Priest from Saint Mary's and St David's RC Church, Hawick
Katarzyna Gajewska, member of SBC staff and translator
Moira Robertson, Head teacher of St Margaret's

18 people (including 2 children) – parents/carers, press and community members

5 elected members

1 member of St Margaret's staff

7 Council Officers

Meeting

Carol Hamilton welcomed everyone and introduced the meeting.

Donna Manson introduced the Council officers and talked through the Council's presentation. A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes as **Appendix 1**.¹

The proposal for closure is being made following a sustained decline in the school roll. Council officers have been monitoring the position and were disappointed to see this continued decline.

The Council cannot see evidence of any future increase in demand for places at the school

The Council is responsible for providing education under a statutory framework. The Council is then held accountable through an inspection framework administered by Education Scotland.

The Proposal Paper for the consultation gives the Council officers views on the proposals. Tonight is an opportunity for us to hear your views and answer your questions.

We have held preliminary meetings with parents and carers; and would like to thank them for their engagement with us.

We have received several questions during our meetings with the parents and carers:

- **Would we have to attend the catchment school?**
 - *Council Response:* We would support you in your decision regarding your child's school. You would be entitled to make a placement request if you wish your child to attend another school. It is Council policy to (as far as possible) say yes to placement requests.
- **Would there be capacity at other schools in the town for our children?**
 - *Council Response:* There is currently capacity at each of the catchment schools this year. If this proposal proceeds arrangements would be made to ensure that classes are arranged to accommodate all the children in the new school year.
- **How would we decide which school to send our children to?**

¹ Copies of the presentation were available at the meeting in English and Polish for attendees. Katarzyna Gajewska provided full translation during the meeting. The presentation (in both English and Polish) will be added to the Council's Consultation website page.

- *Council Response:* We would support you as you make your decision. Visits to schools could be arranged along with meeting with teachers to assist with your decision process. The Council works with each of our schools to ensure that standards are maintained and we constantly strive for improved performance and attainment.
- **Why has a nursery (Early Learning and Childcare setting) not been introduced at St Margaret's and why have there been no plans to start one?**
 - *Council Response:* ELC provision in the Borders is provided through a blend of local authority, private and voluntary providers. There are currently 6 local authority operated and 4 private and voluntary provisions within Hawick, which currently meet demand within the town. We have been unable to identify a demand for ELC at St Margaret's which would sustain a viable ELC setting;
- **What arrangements will be made regarding our children's future religious instruction?**
 - *Council Response:* We have had several meetings with the Church and its representatives regarding religious instruction over recent weeks. We would continue to work with the Church to ensure that instruction would be provided in a form that both the Church and parents are happy with.

We would now like to hear your views comments and questions regarding the proposals:-

Questions and Comments during the meeting:

- **Comment from a parent:**

I feel there is nothing we can do and nothing you can do, I think it will just happen

Answer from Donna Manson:

Thank you for your comment. We have been working with the denominational schools across the region to try and develop sustainable schools. We started our School Estate Review almost 2 years ago - this comprised a review of the Roman Catholic schools where we held meetings with the parents and carers of the schools and the Parent Councils of the 4 schools. Through this review progress has been made; e.g. Halyrude School has come through quite challenging times and now has a rising roll; St. Joseph's Selkirk roll has stabilised and is now going up; St Margaret's Gala roll is steady and we have identified the need for nursery provision at the school which we will open next year. We have also changed the leadership structure of the schools, responding to the concerns of the parents/carers. While we have made definite progress implementing our plan to develop sustainable schools, unfortunately we are where we are today with this school where the roll has continued to fall.

- 2 **Question from a parent:**

Why are there no Scottish Children at the school? We don't have enough children coming to the school.

Answer from Donna Manson:

It would appear that parents have been making a choice not to send their children to this school. I do not consider this is based on nationality. Families choose schools for different reasons, such as proximity to grandparents, affinity to certain schools and logistics of travel etc., there are often many factors in their decision. Families in Hawick will make decisions for various reasons. If families make a placing request within Scottish Borders it is our policy (as far as possible) to say yes. We want to support the families in Hawick with their decisions. Families can appeal decisions if a placing request is refused. This would go to Councillors to ask why decisions were made.

Councillor Ramage commented:

Some families make the decision as they wish to go to bigger schools as they consider there will be educational and social benefits.

Comment from a member of the Community:

I have asked a family why they moved from St Margaret's and they said is simply because as they want their children to go a bigger school for the educational benefits and socialisation skills.

- 3 **Question from a member of the Community:-**
When the numbers reduced, why was nothing done to increase numbers? When you reduced the school to 1 teacher, the pupil number fell. 2 years ago, we had 35/37 pupils and 2 teachers, why did you not try to build up the school?
Donna Manson Answered:
 There is a Scottish Government formula that allocates monies for each school. Teacher numbers are driven by class sizes. The reduction in numbers of teachers at a school is not driven by cost cutting by the Council but directly correlates to pupil numbers.
- As part of our School Estates Review, we spoke to the heads and parents in all our schools with a roll under 50 and asked what is it you can do to build your school? Some of our schools have made good progress and have carried out work in the community to build the schools, whereas some schools have been unable to make progress with numbers.
- 4 **Question from a member of the press:**
Dumfries & Galloway Council have recently withdrawn proposals to close 3 rural schools and now cannot consult on these schools for 5 year. They are working to build these schools up. Why are we not trying that here?
Donna Manson Answered:
 Work has been done with RC schools over recent years and we have seen 3 out of the 4 schools develop in this time – some schools have taken steps and have grown over this time period. Things have not developed in the same way for St Margaret’s school over this period. Halyrude RC School has seen an increase in their role in this period. That has not happened here for the RC school in Hawick; people have made other choices about what school they send their children to. There are educational benefits for the children attending a larger school. The children benefit from a larger peer group and collaborative and group work.
- 5 **Question from a member of the press:**
Why did this report come out just before the enrolment process and why was it a recommendation for closure before the consultation? This is putting the cart before the horse!
Donna Manson Answered:
 I take full responsibility for the paper and its contents. We are following a statutory process. This is a statutory consultation where there is a requirement to make a proposal which is then consulted upon; all comments and questions made during the consultation will be responded to in a report at the end of the period. The proposal is not linked to enrolment, no children enrolled in P1 last year. We have been working with 4 denominational schools for the 2 years pre-consultation and there have been different outcomes at each of the schools.
- 6 **Question from a member of the community:**
This is a question for the Headteacher – How do you share your workload with the 2 other schools? The report mentions that if the school closed that a positive would be that the Headteacher could that could work more at the other schools. How many hours does she spend at St Margaret’s, Hawick?
Moir Robertson (Headteacher of St Margaret’s) answered:
 I spend roughly a third of my time in each school. I am in all 3 schools for assembly on Mondays and split time between each school roughly a day and a half a week in each school.
- 7 **Question from a member of the community:**
I am concerned that there was no mention about culture of a denominational school and about the benefits of a religious school. There was only one comment (in section 6) that mentions consultation with the church.
Donna Manson Answered:
 When we started the denominational school review 2 years ago, we worked very closely with the RC Church’s Education Representative, Patricia Carroll. We met with her regularly and she was heavily involved with our plans regarding leadership changes, school roll, curriculum and school activities. We have worked closely with the Church and will provide details of the meetings and engagement with the

Church and the parents/carers in the Consultation Report which will be published at the end of the consultation period.

8 **Question from a member of the community:**

I am concerned about the participation of the children in the consultation process regarding the potential closure of their school. In the 'Participants not Pawns' Guidance issued by Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People it stated that there should a real effort to get them to take part, dealing appropriately with issues relating to language, culture and religion. What are you doing to ensure that the children really get a chance to take part?

Donna Manson Answered:

We are very sensitive to the needs off the children and are very familiar with that Guidance. We met with the staff during the pre-consultation process, who then worked with us to present to the children what was about to happen and met with the children to chat things through. The formal consultation process requires us to meet with the children and discuss the proposal. This is being done in conjunction with the school staff and we will ensure that appropriate support is given to the children during this process. The people involved in this process are trained in this type of work and all the discussions will be fully documented and will form part of the Consultation Report that will be published and will be publically available at the end of the consultation period.

9 **Question from Councillor Turnbull:**

What is the process for the transition for the pupils to the other schools?

Donna Manson Answered:

We cannot pre-empt what the decision will be regarding the school's future. There is an interim period where Education Scotland will come in and speak to the children, with staff supporting them about what could happen. Once the Council makes a decision there is a period where Scottish Ministers can call the decision and consultation process in for review by the Schools Closure Panel. During this time we will be working with families and discussing matters with them. Some families may want this contact and support, others may not - it is offered to all of the families. If the decision is made to close the school, this needs to be a positive experience for the children and we will work with them to find the best way to assist them in this time e.g. organising theme days and activities to support them. We will ensure that they get a chance to engage with other children in other schools - this is important. The team will handle this properly and professionally but we will respond to what the children need with teachers and others supporting them. Individual transition plans will be used so that each child has a positive experience in their transition to a new school, while also ensuring that they keep on track with their learning.

10 **Question from a member of the community:**

This question may not be appropriate given balance of probability – but what would happen to the building if it was to be no longer used as a school?

Lesley Munro (Lead Officer School Estates SBC) answered:

If the decision is made to close the school we are certainly not keen to have the building empty. It will be made safe and secure, it is an Education SBC building at the moment and then it will be passed to the SBC's Estates Team.

All options for the building will be considered, which will include:

- capital receipt and sale;
- community asset transfer;
- lease

SBC's main aim is to be supportive of community aspirations

Councillor McAteer commented:

There is a lot of interest in this site for community and commercial use

11 **Question from a member of the community:**

Does the land and building belong to SBC?

Donna Manson answered:

It is our understanding that we own the land although we will carry out a review to clarify the full title

position. A plan is attached to these minutes confirming the Council's ownership as **Appendix 2**.

We need to be sensitive here this is currently a school and no decision has been made regarding its future. That is why the process requires extensive independent review to ensure that everyone acts properly. It would be unfair for only local Councillors to be asked to make such a decision; that is why Education Scotland are involved to consider the Educational Benefits; then a proposal goes to Full Council after an extensive report on the Consultation is prepared containing all the comments made during the consultation and responses to them. Ultimately the decision then has to be reviewed by the Scottish Ministers.

12 **Comment from a member of the Press:**

What a waste of time this meeting is. It is cut and dried. It is a done deal. Does the audience support this? Do Councillors support this? They are trying to sell the land! It's all about money!

Donna Manson Answered:

Your comments are noted. We are following a statutory process. Any closure requires a decision of the full Council. We are following the correct process as it would be unfair to local Council members to be put in the position of having to decide. The proposal is about educational benefits for the children.

We will make contact with every family through the Head Teacher to ensure they get a chance to respond to the consultation and families will have the opportunity to meet the inspectors if they wish.

Donna Manson thanked everyone for coming and encouraged everyone to take part in the consultation process. Response forms were available in both English and Polish at the meeting and on the Council's Consultation webpage as detailed in the presentation.

Special thanks were given to Katarzyna for all her assistance with translation.



**St. Margaret's RC Primary School
Public Meeting
Tuesday 5th December 2017**



**School Estate Consultation in relation to
the proposal to close St. Margaret's RC
Primary School in Hawick**

The Proposals

- St. Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick is closed
- Children currently attending St. Margaret's are offered places with a catchment primary school based on their home address

STATUTORY CONSULTATIONS

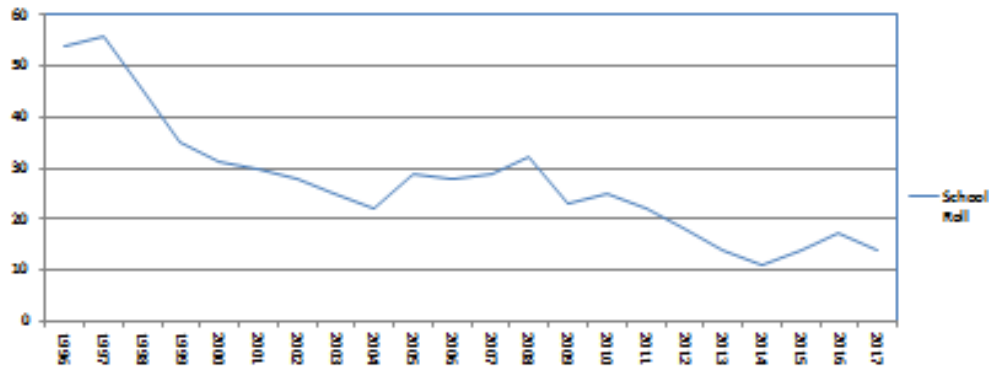
- Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 sets out the consultation process that local authorities must follow when proposing a permanent change to any school
- This includes:
 - Publishing a proposal paper including an Educational Benefits Statement
 - 6 week consultation period (minimum of 30 school days)
 - Holding a public meeting
 - Education Scotland meeting with parents, pupils and staff and report on Educational Benefits
 - Publishing a consultation report responding to issues raised during the consultation

STATUTORY CONSULTATION (cont'd)

- Council make a decision after a 3 week consultation period following the publication of the consultation report
- Scottish Ministers have 8 weeks to call in a proposal regarding closure for referral to Schools Closure Panel
- If Schools Closure Panel do not support closure a future closure proposal cannot be consulted on for a minimum of 5 years
- Denominational Schools closures also require specific consent from Secretary of State. This can only be granted if satisfied regarding provisions for religious instruction.

REASON FOR THE PROPOSAL

Historic School Roll - Number of Pupils 1997-2017



- St Margaret's has capacity for 100 pupils
- The School roll is currently 14
- The school roll has been < 20 since 2012
- The school roll is not projected to grow - no P1s this year

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSAL

- Sustained and continued reduction in school roll
- Concerns regarding inclusion and integration into the community
- Curriculum for Excellence – constraints to opportunities for full range of curricular and learning opportunities
- Constraints to team and group work
- Seeking to strengthen social and emotional development
- Seeking to improve transition to High School
- Large school building significantly underutilised
- No full PE facilities

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS TO PROPOSAL

- Opportunities for children to develop a wider, more diverse peer group within the community
- Opportunities to enhance integration and inclusion in the community
- Opportunities for increased team and collaborative working
- Exposure to a wider learning experiences
- Improved transitions to High School
- Help to improve social and emotional development
- Increased opportunities to participate in team/group activities, including sports and the arts

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM MEETINGS WITH PARENTS:-

1. Would we have to attend the catchment school?

Council Response: We would support you as you make your decision regarding your child's school. You would be entitled to make a placement request if you wished your child to attend another school.

2. Would there be space at the schools for our children?

Council Response: There is currently capacity at each of the catchment schools this year. If the proposal proceeds arrangements would be made to ensure that the classes are arranged to accommodate all the children in the new school year (2018/2019).

3. How would we decide which school to send our children to?

Council Response: We would support you as you make your decision. Visits to schools could be arranged, along with meetings with teachers to assist with your decision process. The Council works with each of our schools to ensure that standards are maintained and we constantly strive for improved performance and attainment.

4 Why has a Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) setting not been introduced at the school and why have there been no plans to start one?

Council Response: ELC provision in the Borders is supplied through a blend of local authority, private and voluntary providers. There are currently 6 local authority operated and 4 private and voluntary ELC provisions in Hawick which currently meet demand within the town. We have been unable to identify a demand for ELC at St Margaret's which would sustain a viable ELC setting.

5. What arrangements would be made regarding our children's religious instruction?

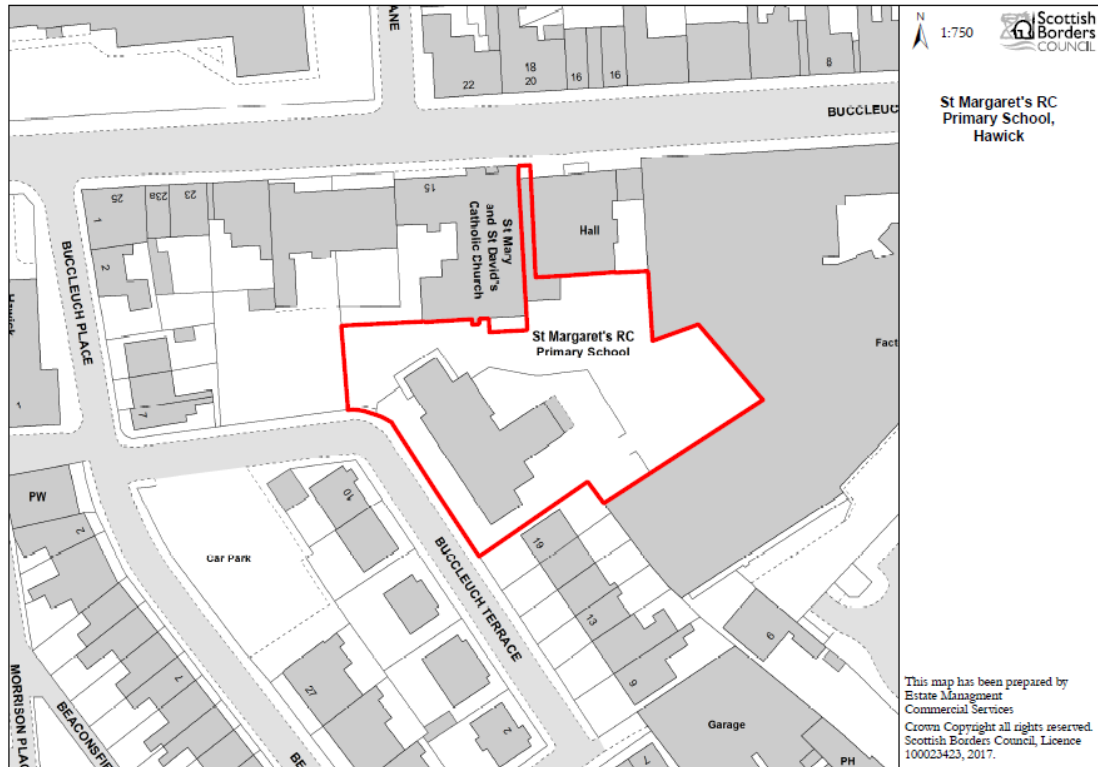
Council Response: We have had several meetings with the Church and its representatives regarding this over recent weeks. We would continue to work with the Church to ensure that a satisfactory proposal can be made to you to ensure that this instruction will be provided.

NEXT STEPS

- **This is a chance for you to have your say . Proposal Papers and Response Forms available here today and at www.scotborders.gov.uk/stmargarets**
- **Separate meetings will be held with children and staff to hear their views and answer their questions**
- **Consultation Period open until 22 January 2018**
- **Education Scotland will visit the school and meet with pupils, parents and staff**
- **Consultation Report will be published for further comments in February 2018**
- **Report on Consultation Process will go to Council in March 2018**

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Appendix 2 - Plan of site



END OF MINUTES

Appendix 3 Meeting with Pupils 6 December 2017

- Kevin McCall (Senior Lead Officer, Children and Young People SBC) and Gillian Sellar (Solicitor – SBC)
- The pupils were split into 2 groups P2-4 and P5-7.
- The pupils were supported by their Headteacher, Moira Robertson.

The pupils were asked:

- What they thought about the proposals and how it made them feel.
- What they would not like about potentially having to go to a new school; and
- If there was anything they might like about going to a new school

The children were very engaged and articulate and obviously attached to the school, the staff and each other.

Their comments included:

- *I don't want the school to close. If it does close I will be sad as the school is small and everyone is very kind. There is no swearing and I like to learn different things as a mixed group.*
- *I like the idea but would be a little sad as I won't see the teachers anymore. I would be happy to make more friends.*
- *I don't want the school to close as there is so much kindness here. Small is best.*
- *I am not sure if I would be working at the right level at a new school as here I sometimes get to work at the level above. (Reassurance was given that if the school does close, that the teachers would work together to make sure everyone would be working at the right level for them)*
- *What will happen to the computers and all other stuff? (Reassurance was given that this will be properly taken care of if the school was to close)*
- *I will be sad if the school closes – I wanted to be here from P1-P7*
- *There is nothing good about big schools*
- *Will we get to take all the toys?*
- *What will happen to this building? (Reassurance was given that if the school closes that this will be managed appropriately)*
- *Will the school close this year? (Reassurance was given that the proposal was being consulted on a no decision had been made. There is a long process and more people will come to speak to them to listen to their views and to how they feel. A big report will then be written containing everyone's views and questions and they will all be answered. Once the report has been prepared all the Councillors will read over all the information and then make a decision. Then the Report goes to the Scottish Government who have a final decision)*
- *Why is the school closing? I was told that the school would stay open as long as there was one pupil (Pupils were told that no decision had been made and about the process that proceeded the proposal – 2 years ago the Council met with parents of the 4 Catholic Schools in the Borders as everyone was worried that the schools were getting smaller and smaller and that is this continued that some might close. Since then there has been good work carried out to stabilise the schools, with a new leadership structure introduced and 2 schools have seen an increase in rolls, unfortunately this has not been the case for St Margaret's)*
- *It will be good to meet friends*

- *It will be good as there will be more to learn*
- *It will be bad as I have been here a long time*
- *My parents are worried*
- *I've heard that there is lots of bullying at other schools*
- *It will be shame to leave the garden as we have worked really hard in the garden*
- *I am somewhere between sad and good*
- *We have had some great trips and I will miss that*
- *It would be very hard for the P6s as they would only have 1 year left and they have been here for a long time*
- *We won the Sumdog competition it is a shame that could be the last time we do that together*

It was agreed that if the children had more questions or wanted another chance to speak to the Council officers, that officers would return again in January to speak with the pupils again (as some of them were a little bit upset about maybe having to move school). It was agreed that they would like more time to think about what questions they had and what they thought about the chance that their school might close and that they may have to move to another school.

Moira Robertson held another session with the children at the start of January and they confirmed that they were happy with what they had said and asked in December and did not consider that they needed a follow meeting with the Council Officers.

Appendix 4 – Meeting with Staff 6 December 2017

Kevin McCall (Senior Lead Officer, Children and Young People SBC) and Gillian Sellar (Solicitor, SBC) met with staff to discuss the Proposals:-

- All members of staff were encouraged to engage in the Consultation Process as this was their chance to respond in their own words and have their say on the Education Team's proposal.
- It was confirmed that all comments and questions will be responded to and that all comments and responses will form part of the Consultation Report which will go to Full Council for a decision and will then be submitted to the Scottish Ministers for their decision process.
- Staff were advised that we are now in the Statutory Process, which has a prescribed timetable that must be adhered to. A decision will not be made until all the information and responses have been considered. The Scottish Ministers have the final say

The Comments and Questions included:

Timing

There was concern about the proposed timetable as the Consultation Report was not going before Council until end of March 2018. After that the Scottish Ministers would have 8 weeks to decide whether to call in the decision. It was considered that last term of a school year is always very busy and challenging and the staff were anxious that, if the school was to shut, they would not have time to give the children the support that they would need and to tidy up the school for closure. There was also anxiety expressed about the time of year as this time of the Common Riding.

The Council Officers advised that SBC (if a decision to close was made) was very aware that enhanced transitional support (in some cases more than enhanced transitional support) would be required for the children and that this would be given. Similarly staff would be supported, if the school was to close in all that needed to be done to close the school and support and assist the children. The physical tidying and closure of the school would not take priority over the children and that this could be done at a later stage.

It was asked when the children would be likely to move to their new school if the closure proceeds.
It was agreed that the start of a new school year would be the optimum position.

Religious Instruction

It was asked what arrangements would be made regarding Religious Instruction if the school was to close.
Council Officers advised that discussions with the church are underway and would be ongoing. There are a variety of options and the Church is keen to support in different forms as required. This will be led by the families as it was important that they could choose what would work for them - not all the children go to the Polish School (there is a charge).

Catchment Schools/ Transition

There were also queries regarding placement requests

Council Officers advised that as far as possible SBC's policy is to grant placing requests. It was confirmed that SBC will work with parents and assist with the decisions to work out what is best for the families and the children.

Capacity in the other schools was also queried

Council Officers confirmed that work has been done to look at this and that there is and will be

capacity.

There were queries regarding the assimilation of the children into a new school, in the event St Margaret's closes

Council Officers advised that they would be given as much support as possible with their integration into their new school and that SBC would work to ensure that the transitions went as well as possible.

Redeployment

Queries were asked about redeployments and what would happen to the staff, in the event that the school closes. The staff were mindful of their wish to minimise this disruption for the school but also wanted to be secure in their own positions.

Council Officers advised that HR would provide full support to staff in the event that a decision was made to close the school.

History of the School

It was asked what would happen with all the historic photos, press cuttings and other information regarding the school. It was agreed that this was important to the community and the town. It was important to capture this history.

Council Officers advised that (if a decision is made to close the school) this would be considered carefully with the Archaeological Society, the library etc. and a solution would be devised to ensure that this was appropriately retained and preserved.

Staff were advised how to contact HQ with any other queries, concerns or questions.

Appendix 5– Report from HMIE dated February 2018

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Scottish Borders Council to close St Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments contained in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*. The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Scottish Borders Council's proposal to close St Margaret's RC Primary School in Hawick, with effect from August 2018. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all legislative obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

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

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the site of St Margaret's RC Primary School and Drumlanrig St Cuthbert's Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation Process

2.1 Scottish Borders Council undertook the consultation on its proposal with reference to the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* and the amendments in the *Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014*.

2.2 The council undertook a pre-consultation process whilst reviewing its school estate in 2016. This was promoted through letters, school mail, press releases, social media, posters and newsletters, with consultation events held across the region. As part of this there was a meeting with parents of children who attended St Margaret's RC Primary School. Meetings were also held between council officers and church representatives regarding the proposal to close St Margaret's RC Primary School and the educational benefits were discussed.

2.3 The formal consultation was begun as the school roll had continued to fall, resulting in a single P2 to P7 class with 14 children. This consultation took place between 22 November 2017 and 22 January 2018. A public meeting was held in St Margaret's RC Primary School on 5 December 2017. Members of the public were encouraged to respond to the proposal in a range of ways including written and online submissions. There were nine responses, four of which were from people who had a direct connection with St Margaret's RC Primary School. Five responses agreed with the proposal and four disagreed with it. School staff who spoke to HM Inspectors reported that the online response system was awkward to use and it would not let them proceed unless they indicated that they supported the proposal or that they were against it. Several staff would have preferred a third 'don't know' option as they were neither strongly for or against the proposal.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 The council considers that there are strong educational benefits associated with the proposal. It believes that being part of a larger school community will provide children with the opportunity to develop a wider and more diverse peer group within the community. It thinks that this will provide opportunity for interaction with a larger number of peers, allowing access to a wider range of views, and the opportunity to experience a wider range of teachers and learning experiences. It further believes that being part of a larger school community will enhance children's learning and provide them with opportunities to experience a broader curriculum. There is a strong case for children from St Margaret's RC Primary School benefitting by being part of a larger school and having a wider peer group. Children have very few peers of the same age, being part of a single class of 14 pupils from P2 to P7. They currently have to travel to a neighbouring school for physical education because they lack appropriate facilities in their own school. Overall, this aspect will be of significant educational benefit to children if the proposal moves forward.

3.2 The council believes that attending a primary school which has an early learning and childcare setting will allow children to learn with their peers from an early age. However, many schools across the country do not have nursery classes and this does not necessarily place children at a significant disadvantage. Overall, this aspect will be of more limited educational benefit to children.

3.3 The council thinks that attending a larger catchment school will provide more opportunities for children to participate in team sports and other activities, including benefitting from a wider range of solo and group musical and artistic opportunities. The current size and makeup of the school roll makes team sports difficult to organise and run. Local physical education teachers are clear that this puts children in St Margaret's RC Primary School at a disadvantage. Whilst these children undertake musical and artistic activities in their school, they will benefit from being part of a wider peer group, allowing them to come together in larger groups. Overall, this aspect will be of educational benefit to children if the council proceeds with the proposal.

3.4 The council considers that having a wider range of peers, to have discussions with, will help to develop children's awareness of the world of work, developing social and employability skills. Children from other local schools are clear that working in pairs and in groups is a very important aspect of their learning across the curriculum and they think that children from St Margaret's RC Primary School would benefit greatly from this approach. Overall, this aspect will be of educational benefit to children if the proposal moves forward.

3.5 Children who attend St Margaret's RC Primary School who spoke to HM Inspectors are sad at the prospect of their school closing. They can see advantages in being part of a larger school but will miss being in the same class. They are concerned about what will happen to the records of their achievements in the school such as certificates and trophies if the school closes. They would like the opportunity to visit the schools which they could transfer to with parents and classmates so that they can make an informed choice. In its final proposal paper, the council should ensure that appropriate time and opportunity is made available for enhanced transition procedures to take place for children from St Margaret's RC Primary School.

3.6 Parents of children who currently attend St Margaret's RC Primary School who spoke to HM Inspectors are not convinced that the closure is either necessary or desirable. They have concerns that the proposal paper gives the early learning provision in other schools as a benefit of closure and yet they have been asking for this provision to be put in place in St Margaret's for a number of years. They also have concerns that they have heard of instances of bullying in other schools. The council should ensure that they continue to discuss parents' concerns with them, including why early learning provision was never included in St Margaret's.

3.7 Staff at St Margaret's RC Primary School understand the rationale for the proposal, although they feel that the establishment of an early learning provision several years ago could have helped the school roll to rise. They have justifiable concerns that timings for the council decision-making followed by effective transitions for pupils may be too tight for the school to be closed by August 2018. In its final proposal paper, the council should confirm that appropriate time and opportunity will be available for enhanced transition procedures to take place for children from St Margaret's RC Primary School.

3.8 Children who attend other local primary schools who spoke to HM Inspectors are in favour of the proposal. They are keen to make the children welcome in their

own schools. They think that children from St Margaret's RC Primary School will benefit from a wider range of friends and from a wider range of learning opportunities. They also think that children and their parents should get the opportunity to visit other schools so that they can make an informed choice about where they would like to go next session.

3.9 Parents of children who attend other local primary schools who spoke to HM Inspectors are in favour of the proposal. They feel that the move to a larger peer group will be of benefit to the children who currently attend St Margaret's RC Primary School. They think that it will be important to have high quality transition procedures in place for these children and that the authority should be aware that the children will need ongoing support to help them to come to terms with closure of their school.

3.10 Staff from other local primary schools who spoke to HM Inspectors are generally in favour of the proposal. However, they have a justifiable concern that this will end Catholic education in the local area and they feel that the authority should make it clear how the children from St Margaret's will be supported in their faith journey should the school close.

3.11 Representatives from the Catholic Church acknowledge that the current situation in St Margaret's RC Primary School is not an effective use of council resources and that children are likely to benefit educationally from being part of a larger peer group. However, there is not clarity in the proposal paper about how children will be supported in their faith whilst in a non-denominational school. In its final proposal paper, the council should clarify how children will be supported in their faith journey if their school is closed.

4. Summary

- There is overall educational benefit to the proposal to close St Margaret's RC Primary School. Children who attend this school do not currently have the opportunity to benefit from working in age-appropriate groups and their school is not well-suited to modern learning and teaching across the curriculum. Children and staff currently have to travel to a neighbouring school for physical education because they lack appropriate facilities in their own school. Team sports and other group activities are compromised by the total school roll of 14 pupils from P2 to P7.
- There are a number of aspects which the council should consider when finalising this proposal. There are justifiable concerns that timings for the council decision-making followed by effective transitions for pupils may be too tight for the proposed closure date of August 2018. In its final proposal paper, the council should clarify the timescale for closure and confirm that children and their parents will get the opportunity to visit other schools so that they can make an informed choice about which school they attend next session. It should further confirm that appropriate time and opportunity will be available for enhanced transition procedures to take place for children from St Margaret's RC Primary School. The council should also clarify how children will be supported in their faith journey and to continue to progress with the curriculum for Religious Education in Roman Catholic Schools if their school is closed and be supported in coming to terms with the closure. If the proposal is

progressed, the council should ensure that it continues to discuss parents' concerns with them in the best interests of their children.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
February 2018**



EARLY YEARS AND CHILDCARE: EXPANSION TO 1140 HOURS

Report by Service Director, Children and Young People's Services

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

26 April 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report provides an update on progress in relation to implementing the Early Learning and Childcare Expansion to 1140 hours by 2020 since it was reported to Executive on 7 November 2017. This includes liaison with Scottish Government on the Service Development and Implementation Plan, the 2018/19 financial allocation for the expansion, and the plans for the next phases of the expansion from August 2018.**
- 1.2 The previous report to the Executive Committee in November 2017 outlined the proposed strategic approach to the delivery of 1140 hours funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) for all three and four year olds and eligible two year olds in communities across the Scottish Borders by 2020/21.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **I recommend that Scottish Borders Council:-**
 - (a) **Agree the next phases of the expansion plan from August 2018;**
 - (b) **Agree to increase Partner Providers Payment rates by 25p to £3.90 per hour for 3 and 4 year olds, and to £4.25 per hour for 2 year olds.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Service Development and Implementation Plan was submitted to Scottish Government's ELC Expansion Programme Board on 11 October 2017. Valuable feedback was provided by Scottish Government on 16 November 2017 and this is being used to inform the next stages of the expansion.
- 3.2 A further review of all Councils' Delivery Plan Financial Templates took place following meetings with the Scottish Government Delivery Support teams in February 2018 and the Council's Financial Template was revised and re-submitted on 6 March 2018. The Council is awaiting feedback on this submission, but there are serious concerns that the Scottish Government have communicated that there is a gap of approximately £160m in revenue and £290m in capital funding quantum nationally, based on all Councils' submissions. The Council has submitted a Delivery Plan which requires an additional £11.8m per annum by 2021/22 than current revenue and an additional £9.9m in capital investment requirements over this period. Following the 2018/19 Scottish Government allocation of £1.424m revenue, the Council's current phased expansion plan has a resource gap of £0.6m this financial year. Whilst the full medium term allocation is not yet known, by 2021/22 there will be an overall revenue gap of £2.9m per annum, should the national quantum remain at the level currently being disclosed. The capital allocation is yet to be confirmed.
- 3.3 The resourcing issue described in 3.2 is making the next phase of the expansion challenging. The 2018/19 revenue allocation, in a letter received on 23 February 2018 (Appendix 1), does not match the funding required for 2018/19 within the overall phasing plan. It is only through this phasing plan that the full expansion to 1140 hours will be achieved by 2020/21, in a structured, prioritised, deliverable manner. In this paper an amended phasing plan has been produced for 2018/19 based within the 2018/19 funding allocation received. This means that an additional 6 communities will be offering 1140 hours in the next phase.
- 3.4 Partner Providers
In the expansion phase in 2017/2018 Partner Providers were not included within the offer as national guidance was quite limited and delivery plans were at a very early stage. In the last six months plans have been developed to provide options for families to take funded ELC in either local authority or a variety of funded provider settings. This will be implemented from August 2018.
- 3.5 Childminders
The Framework of Providers for Scottish Borders was open to new providers from 8 November 2017 to 8 December 2017. During this time two information sessions were held by the Early Years Team and a Council Procurement Specialist to support Providers through the process. Eighteen applications were received, all from Childminders. Ten childminders were offered places on the Framework and eight of those have accepted. The Council welcomes the addition of these new childminders and will provide them with support and guidance to enable

them to operate. Those who were unsuccessful have been offered feedback and support to enable re-application.

- 3.6 To ensure community engagement a multi-sector stakeholder group has been set up to assist with the development and implementation of the Service Delivery Plan (known as the Strategic Service Delivery group).

4 FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT

Funding Requirement and Allocation

Revenue

- 4.1 The first allocation of funding for the expansion of the provision was made in 2017/18 with both a capital and a revenue allocation (not included in the original Scottish Government General Settlement allocation letter of December 2016). The formula used for allocation is the pre-school Education GAE % age which gave Scottish Borders Council 2.1% of the national allocation.
- 4.2 For 2017/18, the Council had a Revenue allocation of £482k from a national allocation of £21m with an expectation that the local authority will prioritise investment in ELC services by reference to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. Scottish Borders Council also took into account child poverty data when identifying localities for expansion.
- 4.3 In November 2017, Scottish Borders Council, along with all other local authorities in Scotland was required to submit a draft costed plan for full expansion by 2021/22. Following review, challenge and overall funding considerations, all local authorities were issued with revised guidance and asked to re-submit draft costings (revenue and capital) of the phased roll-out of provision over the next three years by 02 March 2018. The Scottish Government had previously indicated that this was to inform medium-term revenue and capital settlements by May 2018.
- 4.4 Following the site visit of the Scottish Government Delivery Support Team, Scottish Borders Council submitted its revised funding model for the full expansion programme which evidenced that in order to fund expansion on a phased basis between 2016/17 and 2021/22 in line with the Scottish Government's requirements, assumptions and policies, an additional £11.8m of additional recurring revenue funding will be required by Year 5.
- 4.5 The model clearly demonstrated that for financial year 2018/19 specifically, additional recurring funding of £2.099m is required in order to meet the projected costs of the next stage of the rollout of the expansion and associated quality standard costs.
- 4.6 The total allocation for 2018/19 for expansion, lunches and additional graduates is £1.424m. This represents an 2018/19 funding shortfall of £675k.

4.7 Capital

For 2017/18 the Council had a capital allocation of £689k from a national

allocation of £30m funding a new facility at St Boswells. The total capital requirement to fund 8 refurbishment projects, 2 extensions and 3 new-builds within the Scottish Borders is £9.9m, including previously allocated funding. Scottish Government is yet to confirm medium term capital allocations.

4.8 Approach and assumptions

The funding model is based on a modest, prioritised, pragmatic and deliverable implementation plan for the Scottish Borders. The Scottish Government was satisfied with this on their site visit. It allows the expansion to happen in a prudent manner and the delivery of a model that is cost-effective. A hub approach on a cluster basis has been planned in order to deliver required, but moderate flexibility as economically as possible. The hub approach will provide all year-round, full day ELC provision. Additionally, the capital requirement in the Scottish Borders is both relatively small and wholly needs-driven but is likely to be challenged further by the Scottish Government within the context of the quantum available nationally.

4.9 The forecast costs modelled are wholly compliant with the Scottish Government's expectations across a number of key areas. Scottish Borders Council's template submission demonstrates large scale consistency with Scottish Government national funding model/guidance assumptions with regard to:

- (a) Eligibility for ELC.
- (b) Uptake levels (places, lunches, etc)
- (c) Population – NRS2014 statistics used.
- (d) Expected ratios of practitioners to children across each age cohort.
- (e) Expected split of settings across Local Authority, Partner Providers and Childminding settings.
- (f) Additional Support Needs requirement.
- (g) Other assumptions (e.g. number of expected deferrals of five year olds).

4.10 Factored into the model also is the minimum requirement to deliver the Scottish Government's commitment to a Living Wage by 2020/21 using a Partner Provider rate which research suggests will be sufficient to enable providers to pay their staff.

4.11 Following Scottish Government guidance and using the majority of their expressed assumptions and directions, together with the modest and measured plan for the expansion on which the funding model is constructed, the projected total additional cost at 2021/22 of £11.8m per annum (a total of £18.8m per annum compared to £7.0m per annum in 2016/17) is a prudent and unexaggerated financial picture of what it will cost to deliver the 1140 hours in full. This represents 2.78% of initial indicative Scottish Government revenue funding envelope (£425m) announced in late 2017 and updated in early 2018.

4.12 In relation to Capital investment requirement, the Council's plan follows the key principles of maximising existing capacity first, purchasing what we can

secondly (acknowledging rurality limitations in the Borders) and only considering Capital investment as an option of last resort. The financial requirement calculated therefore is the minimum believed to be required, with only 8 settings requiring refurbishment, 2 extensions and 3 new builds in 3 large town clusters. Outdoor capacity has been factored into new builds.

5 NEXT PHASES OF THE EXPANSION

5.1 Free hours entitlement – 600 hours

Currently all three and four year olds, and eligible two year olds, are entitled to 600 hours of free Early Learning and Childcare (Nursery):

Over 38 weeks per year = 15 hrs 50 mins weekly

Over 50 weeks per year = 12 hrs weekly

5.2 Free hours entitlement – 1140 hours

By 2020 all three and four years, and eligible two year olds, will be entitled to 1140 hours of free Early Learning and Childcare

Over 38 weeks per year = 30 hrs weekly

Over 50 weeks per year = just under 23 hrs weekly

5.3 Phasing to 1140 Hours

In Phase 2, August 2017, seven schools were offered 1140 hours. Eyemouth, Burnfoot, Coldstream, Greenlaw, Langlee, Philiphaugh and Kirkhope. Funded providers were unable to offer extended hours during this phase.

Phases 3 to 5 will be by school catchment communities. The order of phasing is based on analysis that created the Scottish Borders Child Poverty Index and factors that relate to rurality, income and employment

Children who live in phased school catchment communities will be able to access 1140 hours. All other children will continue to access their entitled 600 hours.

The programmed expansion plan is shown in Appendix 2. Whilst the order is dictated by the Priority List, the planned phases of expansion take account of our ability to deliver in these areas, recognising factors such as an even spread of communities over the 3 year period, existing capacity in communities (local authority and partner providers), development of the workforce and capital investment requirements.

5.4 In the Delivery Plan submitted to the Scottish Government, the Council planned the following phased expansion programme in 2018/19:

- (a) To continue with the whole of phase 2 on a full year basis, opening up delivery to any funded providers chosen by parents of children living in those catchment communities. (Burnfoot, Philiphaugh, Greenlaw, Eyemouth, Langlee, Coldstream and Kirkhope)

- (b) To introduce the next 5 catchment communities in August 2018. (Yetholm, Coldingham, Walkerburn, Chirnside and Trinity)
- (c) To introduce a further 8 catchment communities in January 2019. (Burgh/St.Margaret's Galashiels, Broomlands, Reston, Howdenburn, Balmoral, Wilton, Tweedbank and Broughton)

5.5 Beyond expansion across catchment communities, in line with Scottish Government's expectations, our early years delivery programme recognised the need for sustained increases to Partner provider rates. Scottish Government have assumed, that by 2021, a rate of £5.31 (for 3 & 4 year olds) and £5.65 (for 2 year olds) would enable Partner Providers to deliver it's hourly living wage commitment. The current rates are £3.65 (for 3 & 4 year olds) and £4 (for 2 year olds). To deliver this our plan proposed increases to both rates of 55p in each of the next 3 years.

5.6 As outlined in 4.5 above, the projected additional cost of delivering the above expansion plan in 5.4 is £2.099m. However, the 2018/19 allocation outlined in 4.6 is £1.424m, a shortfall of £0.675m. In order to allow expansion to the greatest number of communities, as well as recognising the financial pressures that our partner providers currently face, the following revised plan is proposed for 2018/19:

- (a) As planned to continue with the whole of phase 2 on a full year basis, opening up delivery to any funded providers chosen by parents of children living in those catchment communities.
- (b) As planned, to introduce the next 5 catchment communities in August 2018.
- (c) To introduce only one further catchment community in January 2019. (Burgh/St.Margaret's, Galashiels)
- (d) To increase Partner Provider rates by 25p to £3.90 (3 and 4 year olds) and £4.25 (2 year olds).

This revised plan fully allocates the 2018/19 Scottish Government funding allocation as set out in the letter in Appendix 1.

5.7 **Local Authority Staffing**

As a result of the additional phasing nursery settings in August and a further tranche in January 2019, staffing arrangements will require to be considered. Once there is a clearer overview of how each setting will operate and how many children take up the additional hours, an analysis of what is required in each setting will be undertaken. Existing staff may be offered additional hours and there is potential for recruitment also. The Council will also benefit from the Graduate scheme that Scottish Government is funding for Early Years, as well as being able to offer Modern Apprenticeship opportunities.

5.8 **Local Authority Buildings**

As a result of the additional phasing nursery settings in August and a further tranche in January 2019, there may be a requirement for

adjustments to be made to school and nursery accommodation. An analysis of what will be required in each setting will be undertaken and appropriate works will be carried out.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

The 2018/19 funding allocation does not reflect the modest and prudent plan proposed by the Council which was discussed with members of the Scottish Government Programme Team on 22 February and the allocation amount underfunds the 2018/19 revenue requirement of the phased expansion plan by £0.675m. In order to further advance the expansion, a revised plan as outlined in 5.6 requires to now be put in place for 2018/19. The cost of this plan is up to, but within, the additional allocation of £1.424m for the year.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

(a) FUNDING 2018/19

2018/19 Funding Allocation

Expansion on a phased basis between 2016/17 and 2021/22, an additional £11.8m of additional recurring revenue funding will be required by Year 5. For 2018/19, additional recurring funding of £2.099m is required in order to meet the projected costs of the next stage of the rollout of the expansion and associated quality standard costs. £887k of additional funding (over and above £547k 2017/18 recurring) is considerably less than this. Funding has been allocated without reference to need therefore and a reduced plan for expansion and rate increase has had to be developed.

Additional Graduates

The Scottish Government made a commitment to funding 3 new additional graduates and included within the additional funding allocation for 2018/19 is an envelope of £83k in this respect. The actual cost is forecast to be £104k per annum.

Partner Providers

Partner providers have lobbied for sustained increases in the current and future years. There is a risk that the proposed rate increase for 2018/19 will not be in line with need or expectation and we will risk service loss as partners cease trading and stop offering places or at best, reputational loss.

(b) FUNDING FULL EXPANSION

Allocation Basis

If Early Years GAE % is likely to be used for future funding allocations, then this is likely to be around 2.1% of the national envelope. 2.1% of the overall indicative national revenue quantum of £425m is £8.925m, compared to identified need of

£11.8m.

If Scottish Government decides to allocate future years funding based on a proportion of template submissions by local authorities, then this could have an even more profound effect on the level of revenue and capital resources made available to Scottish Borders Council. As previously outlined, the Council took a prudent and evidenced approach to its delivery model cost forecast which was wholly consistent with Scottish Government national funding model assumptions and expectations. Given this and the fact that other authorities may have forecasts costs in excess of need, then a proportionate allocation based on returns would be detrimental to Scottish Borders Council.

The capital requirement in the Scottish Borders is both relatively small and wholly needs-driven. It is likely that that any capital allocation made will not cover this need, regardless of how small or needs-driven it may be. 2.1% of the overall indicative capital quantum of £400m is £8.4m.

(c) DELIVERY OF FULL EXPANSION BY 2020/21

Profile of Funding versus Phased Expansion Plan

Current and historic funding allocations could infer an assumption by the Scottish Government that the majority of the expansion will take place between 2019/20-2021/22. This is clearly problematic in relation to deliverability and workforce planning.

What the Scottish Government ultimately provides may be considerably less than what is required. The delivery of the plan could come at a greatly increased cost to the Council or alternatively, expansion could cease after only a small proportion of the plan has been implemented. This would result in inequality of ELC provision across the Scottish Borders.

Partner Providers and a Living Wage Rate by 2020/21

There is no guarantee of a living wage Partner Provider rate by 2020/21 or even increase to the rate in future years without knowledge of available funding allocation. A 25p increase in 2018/19 already puts the planned profiled increase to deliver a Living Wage rate behind schedule.

6.3 Equalities

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the ELC 1140 Hours Implementation and is available on the SBC Equality Impact Assessment web page 2017. The Assessment will be updated as part of this paper.

6.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposed engagement with families and communities as proposed within this report. However, any capital development will be in line with the School Estate Strategy to ensure

sustainability, which will be considered as proposals come forward.

6.5 **Carbon Management**

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report. However, any capital development will be in line with the School Estate Strategy and will seek to promote environmental responsibility and effective carbon managements as part of any proposals that come forward within this review of the School Estate.

6.6 **Rural Proofing**

Particular regard will be paid to the issue of rurality and rural nursery provision, as it is a key component of ELC development in Scottish Borders Council.

6.7 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration of the Scheme of Delegation as a result of this report.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.
- 7.2 The Corporate Management Team has been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Donna Manson

Service Director, Children & Young People Signature

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Grace Frew	Quality Improvement Officer (01835 825476)

Background Papers: Executive Committee – 7 November 2017

Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee – 7 November 2017

Appendices: Appendix 1: ELC 2018/19 Revenue Funding Allocation Letter
Appendix 2: Programmed Expansion Plan

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Grace Frew can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.

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Local Authority Chief Executives
Local Authority Directors of Finance
Local Authority Directors of Education

Copy to:
Jane O'Donnell, COSLA
Vicki Bibby, COSLA
Lesley Gibb, ADES Early Years Network
Craig Clement, ADES Resources Network

22 February 2018

Dear Colleagues

EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE – 2018-19 REVENUE FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

Further to my letter of 14 December 2017, I am now writing to confirm local authority revenue funding allocations for early learning and childcare (ELC) for the 2018-19 financial year.

The distribution methodologies underpinning the revenue funding allocations have been agreed by the Scottish Government and COSLA Leaders, based on recommendations made by the Settlement and Distribution Group.

The Scottish Government will allocate a total of £76.3 million of revenue funding to local authorities in 2018-19, of which £52.2 million is new funding and £24.1 million is existing recurring baseline funding from 2017-18, to support ELC expansion and the delivery of specific ELC policy commitments. Funding will be paid to local authorities as a specific revenue grant as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement, with the exception of the existing recurring funding totalling £24.1million. This funding will be paid as a separate grant in a single instalment in April 2018.

This funding is allocated as a specific grant to ensure that it is protected for investment in early learning and childcare. Authorities will be required to report to Scottish Government on how this funding has been applied. Arrangements for this will be confirmed as part of the forthcoming agreement on multi-year funding to support the expansion. The intention is for this to be light touch and we will consult with COSLA and the ELC Finance Working Group on this.

There are three main streams of funding:

- ELC expansion – capacity and capability building;
- Lunches; and
- Additional graduate commitment.

Local authority allocations under each stream are detailed at Annex 1.

ELC expansion – capacity and capability building

We will allocate £53.6 million of revenue funding to local authorities in 2018-19 to support capacity and capability building for the ELC expansion, of which £32.6 million will be paid as a specific revenue grant as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement. This funding is allocated to local authorities on the basis of pre-school education grant-aided expenditure (GAE), adjusted to take account of the estimated population of eligible 2 year olds (estimated number of 2 year olds in out of work benefit households, net of the contribution of contribution-based claimant households).

Details of these funding allocations are set out in columns 1 to 4 in the annex to this letter.

The primary purpose of this funding is to enable local authorities to continue to expand the early learning and childcare workforce and to equip existing staff with new skills in order to provide the capacity and capability required to deliver 1140 hours entitlement from August 2020. It is anticipated that authorities will use this investment to phase entitlement in their local area, both within local authority and funded partner settings. As set out in ELC Expansion Planning Guidance for Local Authorities (March 2017), authorities should evidence consideration of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation when making plans for phasing to ensure that those families and communities who stand to benefit most from the expansion benefit first.

Funding can be applied to the following purposes:

- Extended opening hours for existing ELC settings, or opening new settings to build capacity for and phase entitlement to 1140 hours, including revenue implications of any capital expenditure;
- Developing or expanding the involvement of funded providers, including private and third sector nurseries and childminders, in the provision of ELC;
- Enhanced provision for children with additional support needs;
- Implementing or expanding innovative models of workforce deployment and training, both in local authority settings and in funded providers; and
- Developing, introducing or expanding outdoor nursery provision.

Lunches

We will allocate £4.7 million of revenue funding to local authorities in 2018-19 to support delivery of lunches in early learning and childcare settings. The additional funding of £1.6 million will be paid as a specific revenue grant as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

Details of these funding allocations are set out in columns 5 and 6 in the annex to this letter.

Additional graduate commitment

We are allocating a total of £18 million in 2018-19 to support delivery of the commitment to have an additional graduate in nurseries in Scotland's most deprived areas by August 2018. This funding will meet the additional salaries of these graduates. This will see 435 graduates allocated across authorities based on their share of nurseries in the 20% most deprived postcodes (whilst the island authorities do not have a nursery in located in the 20% most deprived postcodes they will each receive one additional graduate).

Local authorities have already submitted Additional Graduate Action Plans which include initial estimates of delivery costs. As I set out in my letter of 14 December 2017, the costs of delivering the commitment in 2018-19 are likely to be lower than £18 million, which was intended to cover full-year costs but a number of authorities have indicated in their Action Plans that they do not plan to start paying these additional salaries until summer 2018.

The estimated part-year costs are around two-thirds of the full year costs and accordingly £12 million will be initially distributed to local authorities on the basis of their share of the 435 additional graduates. We will ask authorities to confirm final cost estimates for 2018-19 as part of a progress update in June 2018 and this will be used as the basis for providing any further revenue funding required to meet the costs of the commitment in 2018-19.

Any of the £18 million that is not required for delivery of the additional graduate commitment will be allocated across authorities using the methodology agreed for ELC expansion funding (see above).

Details of the initial £12 million allocation are set out at column 7 in the annex to this letter.

Multi-year funding package

As you are aware, we are working closely with COSLA and local authorities to agree a multi-year package of revenue and capital funding to support the expansion by the end of April. We will carefully consider any implications for 2018-19 funding as a result of the agreement reached on future year funding requirements.

The 2018-19 Scottish Budget also allocates £150 million capital funding to support the ELC expansion. You will be aware that local government members of the Settlement and Distribution Group agreed that distribution of this funding should only be considered once the multi-year capital funding package is known.

I hope that this information is helpful to you. If you have any questions, please direct them to Alison Cumming, ELC Programme Director on 0131 244 0540 or alison.cumming@gov.scot.



JOE GRIFFIN

ANNEX – DETAILS OF 2018-19 REVENUE ALLOCATIONS

	ELC expansion - capacity and capability building				Lunches		Additional graduates	Total		
	3&4 year olds		2 year olds							
	New	Recurring	New	Recurring	New	Recurring	New	New	Recurring	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Aberdeen City	1,102,744	709,687	88,700	57,848	61,704	119,552	165,517	1,418,665	887,086	2,305,751
Aberdeenshire	1,816,600	1,169,099	78,594	51,257	54,674	105,932	165,517	2,115,386	1,326,288	3,441,674
Angus	665,571	428,338	40,196	26,215	27,962	54,177	82,759	816,488	508,730	1,325,218
Argyll & Bute	525,799	338,385	24,519	15,990	17,056	33,047	82,759	650,132	387,422	1,037,555
Clackmannanshire	323,174	207,984	32,292	21,060	22,464	43,524	193,103	571,034	272,567	843,601
Dumfries & Galloway	921,206	592,855	58,657	38,255	40,805	79,059	275,862	1,296,530	710,169	2,006,699
Dundee City	835,796	537,888	86,616	56,488	60,254	116,743	579,310	1,561,976	711,120	2,273,096
East Ayrshire	659,519	424,443	64,621	42,144	44,954	87,098	413,793	1,182,887	553,686	1,736,573
East Dunbartonshire	590,122	379,782	20,318	13,251	14,135	27,386	55,172	679,748	420,419	1,100,166
East Lothian	609,878	392,496	40,100	26,152	27,896	54,048	82,759	760,632	472,695	1,233,327
East Renfrewshire	566,822	364,786	16,624	10,842	11,564	22,406	27,586	622,596	398,034	1,020,630
Edinburgh, City of	2,613,761	1,682,124	154,948	101,053	107,790	208,842	551,724	3,428,223	1,992,019	5,420,242
Eilean Siar	195,974	126,122	5,717	3,729	3,977	7,706	27,586	233,255	137,557	370,811
Falkirk	900,127	579,289	71,122	46,384	49,476	95,860	220,690	1,241,414	721,533	1,962,947
Glasgow City	2,015,534	1,297,126	170,389	111,123	118,531	229,655	772,414	3,076,868	1,637,904	4,714,772
Glasgow City	3,076,742	1,980,081	371,360	242,191	258,337	500,528	3,089,655	6,796,094	2,722,800	9,518,894
Highland	1,588,410	1,022,244	52,394	34,170	36,448	70,618	165,517	1,842,769	1,127,032	2,969,801
Inverclyde	383,453	246,777	42,452	27,686	29,532	57,217	220,690	676,126	331,680	1,007,805
Midlothian	611,904	393,799	44,487	29,013	30,947	59,960	82,759	770,096	482,773	1,252,869
Moray	564,831	363,505	34,006	22,178	23,656	45,834	55,172	677,665	431,516	1,109,181
North Ayrshire	701,055	451,174	94,058	61,342	65,432	126,774	662,069	1,522,614	639,291	2,161,905
North Lanarkshire	1,830,139	1,177,813	184,977	120,637	128,679	249,316	1,103,448	3,247,244	1,547,766	4,795,009
Orkney Islands	151,014	97,187	5,518	3,598	3,838	7,437	27,586	187,956	108,222	296,178
Perth & Kinross	777,714	500,509	41,098	26,803	28,590	55,393	55,172	902,575	582,705	1,485,280
Renfrewshire	1,011,060	650,682	77,855	50,775	54,160	104,935	717,241	1,860,316	806,392	2,666,708
Scottish Borders	727,941	468,477	39,258	25,603	27,310	52,913	82,759	877,268	546,993	1,424,261
Shetland Islands	202,997	130,641	7,281	4,749	5,065	9,814	27,586	242,930	145,204	388,134
South Ayrshire	581,005	373,914	44,527	29,040	30,976	60,015	331,034	987,542	462,969	1,450,511
South Lanarkshire	1,624,990	1,045,785	134,015	87,401	93,228	180,628	717,241	2,569,473	1,313,815	3,883,288
Stirling	528,004	339,804	28,704	18,720	19,968	38,688	137,931	714,607	397,212	1,111,819
West Dunbartonshire	543,014	349,464	58,006	37,830	40,352	78,183	303,448	944,821	465,477	1,410,298
West Lothian	1,053,103	677,739	86,593	56,474	60,239	116,712	524,138	1,724,072	850,925	2,574,997
Scotland	30,300,000	19,500,000	2,300,000	1,500,000	1,600,000	3,100,000	12,000,000	46,200,000	24,100,000	70,300,000

Programmed Expansion Plan Submitted to Scottish Government

Appendix 3

Session 2018-19		
Priority number	Cluster	Schools
1	Hawick	Burnfoot
4	Selkirk	Philiphaugh
5	Berwickshire	Greenlaw
10	Eyemouth	Eyemouth
13	Gala	Langlee
18	Berwickshire	Coldstream
48	Selkirk	Kirkhope
2	Kelso	Yetholm
3	Eyemouth	Coldingham
6	Peebles	Walkerburn
7	Berwickshire	Chirside
8	Hawick	Trinity

Session 2019-20		
Priority number	Cluster	Schools
20	Gala	St Peter's
21	Hawick	Drumlanrig
22	Peebles	Newlands
23	Berwickshire	Duns
24	Kelso	Edenside
25	Kelso	Ednam
26	Jed	Parkside
27	Selkirk	Knowepark
28	Kelso	Morebattle
29	Hawick	Newcastleton
30	Selkirk	Lilliesleaf
31	Gala	Glendinning
32	Eyemouth	Ayton
33	Peebles	St Ronan's
34	Earlston	Lauder
35	Peebles	Kingsland
36	Hawick	Stirches
37	Gala	Fountainhall/ Heriot
38	Earlston	Earlston
39	Earlston	Newtown

Session 2020-21		
Priority number	Cluster	Schools
40	Kelso	Sprouston
41	Jed	Ancrum
42	Earlston	Gordon
43	Earlston	St Boswells
44	Berwickshire	Swinton
45	Hawick	Denholm
46	Earlston	Melrose
47	Peebles	Priorsford
49	Peebles	Eddleston
50	Eyemouth	Cockburnspath
51	Selkirk	Yarrow
52	Gala	Clovenfords
53	Gala	Stow
54	Earlston	Westruther
55	Peebles	West Linton
56	Earlston	Channelkirk
57	Hawick	new build
58	Gala	new build

Potential to Phase in Jan 19

9	Gala	Burgh / St Mags
11	Kelso	Broomlands
12	Eyemouth	Reston
14	Jed	Howdenburn
15	Gala	Balmoral
16	Hawick	Wilton
17	Gala	Tweedbank
19	Peebles	Broughton

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SCHOOL ESTATE REVIEW SECONDARY SCHOOLS REVIEW – GALASHIELS, HAWICK, PEEBLES AND SELKIRK

Report by Director of Children and Young People’s Services

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

26 April 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides Elected Members with:-

- (a) **A summary of the assessment process that has been undertaken regarding the condition, suitability and capacity of each of the secondary schools in Galashiels, Hawick, Peebles and Selkirk.**
- (b) **A summary of the engagement that Council officers have undertaken with pupils, staff, parents, Parent Councils and the community in each of the school clusters regarding the future vision for learning provision in each of the areas.**
- (c) **Recommendations regarding the creation of a Secondary School Individualised Strategic Plan regarding the future of each of these schools.**

1.2 The proposed Secondary School Individualised Strategic Plans would contribute significantly to the vision and priorities set out in the Council’s Connected Borders Strategic Plan. The secondary school strategy has the opportunity to contribute to: connected communities, eg improved opportunities for learning; enterprising communities, eg workforce; communities of well-being, eg opportunities for intergenerational learning; communities of caring, eg a place where communities can come together to support families.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 I recommend that Scottish Borders Council:-

- (a) **Approves the creation of a Secondary School Individualised Strategic Plan regarding the schools in Galashiels, Hawick, Peebles and Selkirk; which will enable Council officers to**

develop a bespoke strategy for each of these schools in line with the principles of the School Estate Review and the pillars of the Christie Commission, with an update report brought back to the Scottish Borders Council Committee in October 2018.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 On 7 November 2017 the Executive Committee approved a number of recommendations set out in the paper School Estate Review Next Steps 2017/18. This included approval to carry out a detailed assessment of the four secondary schools that have not been rebuilt (Galashiels Academy, Hawick High School, Peebles High School and Selkirk High School) regarding their condition, suitability and capacity. These assessments were to provide a platform for the strategies to be developed through the review process for each school.
- 3.2 At this time the Executive also approved a change to the guiding principles of the School Estate Review. These principles would shape the proposed strategies for each school:
- (a) Increased educational and learning opportunities for all generations within the community;
 - (b) Improved outcomes for the community;
 - (c) Sustainability;
 - (d) A future proofed community learning estate;
 - (e) Affordability.
- 3.3 Any proposal made regarding the four secondary schools will also encompass the four pillars of the Christie Commission:-
- (a) **Partnership** – Developing local partnership and collaboration, bringing public, third and private sector partners together with communities to deliver shared outcomes that really matter to people.
 - (b) **People** - Unlocking the full creativity and potential of people at all levels of public service, empowering them to work together in innovative ways. Help the creation of ways for people and communities to co-produce services around their skills and networks.
 - (c) **Performance** – Demonstrating a sharp focus on continuous improvement of the National Outcomes, applying reliable improvement methods to ensure that services are consistently well designed, based on the best evidence and are delivered by the right people to the right people at the right time.
 - (d) **Prevention** – Reducing future demand by preventing problems arising or intervening early. Promoting a bias towards prevention, helping people understand why this is the right thing to do, the choices it implies as well as the benefits it can bring.
- 3.4 All investment models for the Secondary School Estate are delivered in partnership with the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government has established the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) to help Councils take forward infrastructure projects. SFT operates at arm's length from the Scottish Government and works with every Local Authority across Scotland to drive

forward the Scottish Government's Schools for the Future programme. SFT's role is to efficiently and effectively manage the programme to help Local Authorities achieve the very best value-for-money for their investment in new schools.

- 3.5 The Scottish Government have not yet announced the latest education investment plan, which will include future funding for the Schools for the Future programme. In February 2018, John Swinney Deputy First Minister advised that a detailed plan would be announced later this year. In order to ensure that Scottish Borders Council is in a position to respond to this announcement, the Service Directors are maintaining regular dialogue with SFT and Scottish Government officers regarding our School Estate programme. In seeking to progress an Individualised Strategic Plan for each of the secondary schools, Scottish Borders Council aims to be in a position to bid for investment funding when the Government announcements are made.

4 ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 4.1 Changes to the School Estate are subject to the School (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 (the Act). The Act lays down specific protocols and requirements in relation to the consultation process and engagement with local communities. The Statutory Guidance for the Act confirms that pre-consultation engagement forms an important part of the consultation process. While the pre-consultation process is not prescribed in the Act, it requires that Councils determine the approach they wish to adopt and consider carefully how to engage constructively with communities in advance of a statutory consultation.
- 4.2 In the event that a Council does not comply in full with the Act and the accompanying Statutory Guidance, the integrity of the Statutory Consultation process can be undermined and open to challenge. In the event of a school closure proposal, the Scottish Government will scrutinise every aspect of the consultation process and if they identify that a Council has failed to comply with the Act, or has failed to take account of a material consideration, they may call in the proposal for review. This could ultimately result in Ministerial consent to the proposal being withheld and the Council being unable to commence a further consultation regarding the school for a minimum period of five years.
- 4.3 Taking cognisance of the importance of the pre-consultation phase, Council officers sought to design a process which was robust and fair. In this instance, as the Council was assessing investment opportunities for four schools and the resultant implications on each community, it was therefore essential that each community was given the same engagement opportunities and that all information was assessed on the same basis. Best practice dictated that the Council provided all information and evidence required to inform the community in this pre-consultation process to ensure equal opportunity and the integrity of all information.

- 4.4 A community engagement process was designed to comprise:
- (a) Walk rounds by Council officers of each site with the Senior Management Team of each school and representatives of the Secondary School Parent Council;
 - (b) Presentations by Council officers to each Secondary School Parent Council;
 - (c) Meetings with Headteachers and Secondary School Parent Councils; and
 - (d) Community engagement workshops at each secondary school.
 - (e) The Portfolio Holder was a key participant in every stage of the engagement process. Local Members attended the community workshops.
- 4.5 The community engagement workshops were arranged at each secondary school to allow pupils, staff and community members the opportunity to:
- (a) Consider information regarding the current school building: suitability, condition and capacity;
 - (b) View architect's concepts of new learning provision;
 - (c) Meet with representatives of the Parent Councils to discuss their views and visions for the future of learning provision in the community;
 - (d) See/hear pupils' views of the current schools and their ideas and visions regarding the future learning provision in their community;
 - (e) Discuss the information and comments with Council officers; and
 - (f) Provide feedback, share ideas, make comments and ask questions.
- 4.6 The workshops were communicated to the public through press releases issued on 21 February to all local media, Scottish Borders Councillors, MPs and MSPs. Both ITV Borders and Radio Borders covered the story. A news story was published on the Scottish Borders Council website and was publicised through social media on 21 February, with two further social media pushes – one for each event and one of the day of the event. Letters were also issued to every parent of school aged children in each of the clusters with "Groupcall" text reminders before and after each event.
- 4.7 An on-line engagement form was created to capture opinions, comments and ideas. Paper copies were available at the engagement events. Responses were also asked for in writing, by e-mail or by phone. All responses will be used as part of next steps and key themes have been compiled within a summative document (Appendix 1).

4.8 There have been considerable challenges ensuring adherence to this engagement process as some stakeholders wished to promote a particular viewpoint and/or use the workshop to present specific views and concerns regarding potential changes to the school estate. The Workshops were designed to capture as many views and ideas as possible from across the school and wider community, rather than debate the merits of a specific proposal at this stage. The questions were kept open ended rather than follow the statutory consultation approach which asks questions relating to specific proposals, eg whether there should be a new school or refurbishment. The aim of the workshop was to provide a platform for the sharing of robust information which would then facilitate informed debate and the generation of ideas regarding the future provision of learning in each cluster. Unfortunately in one school community there were inherent concerns about Council consultation processes, based upon historic experiences within the community, and there was also a view within a core group of stakeholders that the National Schools for the Future Programme is not achieving positive outcomes. There were clearly some tensions within some community stakeholder groups which did not evidence the level of community cohesion or joint vision required to proceed to a statutory consultation process. However, it has to be noted that in the Galashiels cluster and the Hawick cluster there were very clear cohesive views that signposted readiness for 'further conceptual work' and 'readiness for detailed consultation' on future plans. In the Selkirk cluster and Peebles cluster further informal consultation work is required to bring together stakeholders in partnership with the Council to explore some of the tensions and provide more detailed information in response to concerns or enquiries in order to arrive at a more unified vision and concept for future education provision in these clusters. Officers will continue to work within each cluster to continue to build engagement and address next steps.

5 ASSESSMENT OF CONDITION

5.1 A detailed assessment of the condition of each of the secondary schools was carried out by Scottish Borders Council surveyors. The surveys were carried out in accordance with Scottish Government guidance, which requires the building condition to be assessed on a five yearly basis. The guidance details how condition should be assessed and stipulates weighting that should be applied to each element to give overall scores:

A: Good	Performing well and operating effectively (physical element carries out function totally as new)
B: Satisfactory	Performing adequately but showing minor deterioration (physical element carries out function satisfactorily, may show signs of age)
C: Poor	Showing major defects and/or not operating adequately (physical element does not carry out function effectively without continuous repair, show signs of age)
D: Bad	Economic life expired and/or risk of failure

5.2 The most recent surveys were carried out in 2016 and 2017 for each of the schools. While the condition varies widely across each of the properties, there are elements in each school which are materially better or worse than other parts of the school, e.g. elements of Galashiels and Hawick are

D rating whereas Peebles has A rated sport facilities following investment in the last 5 years. Based on the Government guidance, the overall Condition Assessment for each school is:

	Overall Condition
Galashiels Academy	C
Hawick High School	C
Peebles High School	B
Selkirk High School	C

6 ASSESSMENT OF SUITABILITY

6.1 A detailed assessment of the suitability of each of the secondary schools was carried out by Turner & Townsend early in 2018. This was carried out in accordance with Scottish Government guidance. This guidance details how suitability should be assessed and stipulates the weighting that should be applied to each element to give overall scores:

A: Good	Performing well and operating effectively (the school buildings and grounds support the delivery of services to children and communities)
B: Satisfactory	Performing well but with minor problems (the school buildings and grounds generally support the delivery of services to children and communities)
C: Poor	Showing major problems and/or not operating optimally (the school buildings and grounds impede the delivery of activities that are needed for children and communities in the school)
D: Bad	Does not support the delivery of services to children and communities (the school buildings and grounds seriously impede the delivery of activities that are needed for children and communities in the school)

6.2 The overall suitability of each school is:

	Overall Suitability
Galashiels Academy	C
Hawick High School	C
Peebles High School	B
Selkirk High School	B

6.3 Each of the schools has elements that are good/satisfactory but also elements of poor/bad. Across the four schools, issues have been highlighted regarding accessibility and safety and security, which will be improved and addressed through the annual school estate block allocation programme.

7 ASSESSMENT OF CAPACITY

7.1 We have assessed the capacity of each of the schools basing this assessment on the current roll of each secondary school and cluster primary schools:

	Capacity- number of pupils could attend	Pupil roll – school session 2017/2018	Current capacity - %
Galashiels Academy	1,217	825	68%
Hawick High School	1,339	852	64%
Peebles High School	1,450	1240	86%
Selkirk High School	729	385	53%

- 7.2 There are no pressures projected on Galashiels Academy, Hawick High School or Selkirk High School with occupancy not projected (based on current cluster primary school rolls) to exceed the following capacities over the next four years:

	Projected Capacity
Galashiels Academy	75%
Hawick High School	70%
Selkirk High School	60%

- 7.3 In Peebles, however, the school roll is currently the largest it has been over the last 20 years. Based on the current primary school rolls within the cluster, occupancy is projected to sit between 90% and 95% in the next four years; therefore it is likely that measures to address roll increases will be required. It also has to be noted that these figures do not take into account any current or future house building in the cluster. Further work is ongoing to ensure these projections are as accurate as possible.

8. NATIONAL CONTEXT

- 8.1 To compare where Scottish Borders schools sit in the National context, the Council has compared the ratings above with the latest information published last month by the Scottish Government indicating the position as at 1 April 2017:

8.2 Condition -

- a) 83% of secondary schools in Scotland were rated either as A or B.
- b) 4 Councils have 100% of their secondary schools rated as A schools (Falkirk (8), Inverclyde (6), South Lanarkshire (17) and Stirling (7).
- c) 59 schools were rated as C.
- d) 2 schools were rated as D – Midlothian and Moray.
- e) At the time of the data release Scottish Borders Council had 5 C rated secondary schools, which was 55% of its secondary schools.

- f) At this time Scottish Borders had the 3rd highest percentage of C rated schools – Moray 63% and South Ayrshire 63%.
- g) Only 3 Councils had more C rated schools than Scottish Borders – Highland (12), Fife (7) and Dumfries and Galloway (6).
- h) Since this data release Scottish Borders Council has opened Kelso High School and works have commenced at Jedburgh.

8.3 Suitability -

- a) 81% of secondary schools were rated either A or B.
- b) 4 Councils have 100% of their secondary schools rated as A - Clackmannanshire (3), Inverclyde (6), South Lanarkshire (17) and Stirling (7).
- c) At the time of the data release Scottish Borders reported 1 C rated school; however the recent assessment has shown there are currently 2 C rated schools.
- d) There were 64 (18%) C rated schools across Scotland at this time.
- e) 6 schools were rated as D.

8.4 Overall, the current 2018 position would be that two of the Council's schools (Galashiels Academy and Hawick High School) are C graded, i.e. 22%. It should be noted that the Council has made significant progress in recent years in improving the school estate.

8.5 The block allocation will address key upgrade issues identified by this current assessment process.

9 ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY

9.1 The Workshops were well attended by a wide range of people across the communities. The Workshops did stimulate a high level of engagement and debate. It was a particularly effective method for the pupils to share their views and comments about the present and the future. The pupils have to be commended upon their contribution and positive engagement. The quality of their engagement, their ideas and the sensitivity displayed throughout was impressive across all school communities and is to be commended.

9.2 Details of each engagement session and the comments and themes that arose at each event are attached in Appendix 1. The events were held as follows:

	Date	Number of Attendees	
		Pupils	Staff/Parents/Community
Galashiels Academy	13/3/2018	382	82
Hawick High School	20/3/2018	514	69

Peebles High School	21/3/2018	370	234
Selkirk High School	26/3/2018	390	80

10 RESPONSE FORMS

- 10.1 An on-line Response Form was created on the Citizen Space platform. The details of website page and links were reported through the press release, social media and Groupcall. Lap tops were available at each engagement event to enable completion of the form and hard copies and details of the link were circulated.
- 10.2 In the period from 18 March to 16 April the Council received in excess of 510 completed forms. These comprised the following:-

	Total On-line Responses
Galashiels Academy	84
Hawick High School	92
Peebles High School	288
Selkirk High School	47

- 10.3 A further 385 forms have also just been received from pupils at Peebles High School. These will now be analysed in full and will be considered as part of the next stage of the proposed Strategic Plan process.
- 10.4 Several themes can be identified across the responses for each school cluster and these are summarised in Appendix 1. The common theme across the four school clusters is that pupils, staff and the community wish there to be positive changes and improvements to both learning opportunities and the learning experience.

11 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 It is the ambition of Children and Young People's Services that all four of these secondary school learning environments are replaced or substantially improved at the earliest possible opportunity. Ideally this timeframe would not stretch beyond 15 years. This aim is to ensure that the secondary school provision across the region is not only graded A for condition and suitability, but will also provide the learning opportunities and experience that young people require to reach their full potential in the Scottish Borders.
- 11.2 It is therefore recommended that a Secondary School Individualised Strategic Plan is created for all the schools to ensure that Scottish Borders Council is in a position to maximise its funding opportunities in line with the Scottish Government's investment programme.
- 11.3 While the assessments of Condition, Suitability and Capacity form part of the School Review process, the guiding principles of the School Estate Review and the 4 pillars of the Christie Commission are key considerations

in this process. These principles will shape the individualised plans for each secondary school as the Council seeks to ensure that the learning provision in each school cluster:

- a) Is a well-designed, accessible, inclusive learning environment for all the community that will drive new thinking and change;
- b) Is an integral part of the community it serves;
- c) Accommodates and provides a range of services, activities and facilities that make a difference to health and wellbeing and will sustain economic growth and bring strength and vibrancy to communities;
- d) Is sustainable with design, construction and operation that is environmentally and energy efficient;
- e) Is efficiently run and delivers value for money;
- f) Is flexible and responsive to changes in demand for school places and evolved in consultation with learners, staff, parents and the community.

11.4 After assessing all the information gathered through the workshops, the on-line response forms and the assessments of the condition, suitability and capacity of each school, it is clear that bespoke solutions are required for each provision:

- a) In Galashiels and Hawick there is strong appetite for a new school and for improved opportunities and experiences. However, further work is required regarding deliverable concepts and an assessment of all possible options. Work will take place to identify all potential stakeholders across the public, third and private sectors to fully involve partners in the creation of an Individualised Strategic Plan for a community learning concept for each cluster. Considering the context of possible future funding announcements by the Scottish Government in 2018 and the overall C assessment of each school, this work needs to progress at a pace and will include ongoing discussions with Scottish Government partners. These two projects will go forward as a priority to the next stage of design and be brought back to Council to report progress in October. It is important to note that partnership funding is essential to any secondary school community learning project of this magnitude and the key to success in obtaining funding is very much arriving at an innovative design for the future with full community support and evidence that the new concept will transform outcomes for young people, their families and the whole community.
- b) In Peebles while over 90% of respondents indicated that they considered that a new school is required to (1) accommodate the projected growth in school roll; (2) provide both the learning opportunities and experiences required in 21st century; and (3) deal with the safety and security and accessibility issues. It was clear that some respondents, in particular the Parent Council, are wary of replacing a school with a new build which might not meet their

expectations or match some of the facilities that they have now. Opposition has already been expressed by local residents to any form of development within the site and this challenge will need to be carefully considered and progressed. Given this juxtaposition, it is proposed that further consultation within the cluster is carried out to discuss all these concerns and to help design a concept that will deliver the best outcome for the children and community of the Peebles cluster. It is also hoped that this consultation will facilitate a platform for all stakeholders to work together to achieve a learning provision to meet the overriding principles of both the School Estate Review and the Christie Commission. This work will need to link into housing developments and the production of accurate medium and long term pupil roll projections.

- c) In Selkirk, while there was strong appetite for change, it was also clear that many respondents also had concerns about the current primary provision in the cluster regarding condition, suitability and falling rolls (valley primary schools). It is therefore proposed that further engagement is undertaken with all the school communities across the cluster to determine what the future of all stages of education should look like across the Selkirk cluster. There was a real interest expressed in exploring other models of learning in the town. It should be noted that this exploration does not make any presumption regarding the rural school provision within the cluster; the concept needs scoped out within each nursery/primary school learning community based upon educational and community benefits of current provision and possible same benefits within a future concept.

11.5 Given the requirement for a bespoke solution for each cluster, it is proposed that approval is given to the commencement of a Secondary School Individualised Strategic Plan. At this stage this will involve:

- a) Carrying out further consultations within the communities to work to establish a deliverable concept for the future of learning in the cluster;
- b) Establishing briefs to enable options analyses to be carried out to establish what options are available in each school cluster regarding location, facilities etc;
- c) Establishing links with local businesses within the cluster to identify opportunities to work together regarding curriculum opportunities;
- d) Identifying and working with other potential stakeholders in the public, third and private sector to help define a concept and a solution for each cluster which will meet the principles of the School Estate Review and the Christie Commission;
- e) Carrying out further analysis regarding to medium and long term pupil roll projections;
- f) Working with Finance and meeting with SFT and Scottish Government officers to discuss the Scottish Government's investment programme.

11.6 While the Secondary School Individualised Strategic Plan is progressed, and in response to issues raised by pupils, it is recommended that works continue at the schools under the School Estate Block Allocation Programme to improve the learning environment: this will include works on the PE Department at Galashiels Academy; ongoing improvements to improve condition and use of space in Hawick High School; the creation of improved social space at Selkirk High School; improved accessibility at Peebles High School.

11.7 A progress report will be brought back to Council in October 2018.

12 IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Financial

The proposed works at Galashiels, Hawick, Peebles and Selkirk will be funded by the School Estates Block Allocation Programme.

Transformation of the Secondary School Estate will require significant additional funding with financial support from the Scottish Government being a pre requisite. The replacement of Kelso High School and the development of the new Jedburgh Intergenerational Campus has attracted funding from Scottish Government to meet 66% of eligible capital costs.

Both schools have been delivered using a revenue funding model which is designed to fund the annual running costs, eg rates, cleaning, power etc, life cycle and financing costs of the building.

For illustrative purposes the additional costs of Kelso High School were £467,000 at 2018/19 prices and the Jedburgh Campus is anticipated to be £1,435,000 in 2020/21 prices. These sums are the additional cost per annum to the Council. Both figures are net of Government financial contributions. The costs of new school provision can be expected to be comparable to the costs of Jedburgh below, but will vary depending on the footprint of the buildings, applicable inflation and the facilities delivered therefrom. It should be noted that these costs exclude costs that will be avoided through not having to maintain old time expired buildings.

Net additional costs (compared to previous Budget):

	Kelso £	Jedburgh £
Running costs, rates, FM etc	192,000	160,000
Lifecycle costs	275,000	300,000
Financing (1)		975,000
Total additional annual Council cost	467,000	1,435,000

(1) The funding model for Kelso required the Council to pay for construction of the new Broomlands and Langlee Primary Schools with financing costs of Kelso met by grant from Scottish Government.

Previous Annual Running Cost Budget for Schools *

	£
Kelso	304,000
Jedburgh Grammar	321,000
Howdenburn	102,000
Parkside	94,000

*Existing buildings are not life-cycled.

12.2 Risk and Mitigations

The main risks to these proposals is the challenge of financing these remaining 'communities for the future – including secondary school learning provision' and managing the additional costs that these improved buildings will bring to the overall fiscal context of the Council. The stakeholder responses and assessment of suitability/condition of the buildings clearly identify the case for improvement when compared to the national context. These risks will be mitigated in the interim through the prioritisation of the annual 'block allocation' allocated to the school estate. The medium term need for significant investment is being mitigated by this ongoing work and preparation of a case for change in each community and ongoing dialogue with the Scottish Government.

12.3 Equalities

Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out in relation to the individual proposals for each school.

12.4 Acting Sustainably

Acting sustainably is embedded within all actions contained within the School Estate Review.

12.5 Carbon Management

Carbon management assessments will be contained within the individual community plans of the next stage of the School Estate Review.

12.6 Rural Proofing

Rural proofing is embedded in the legislation which governs the School Estate Review.

12.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

13 CONSULTATION

13.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to

the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

13.2 Given the likely high levels of public interest, there has been close liaison with Corporate Communications.

Approved by

Donna Manson
Service Director Children & Young People **Signature**

Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Donna Manson	Service Director, Children and Young People

Background Papers: School Estate Review Next Steps 2017/2018 (Executive Committee – November 2017)

Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee, 7 November 2017

Appendices: Appendix 1: Summary of Responses

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Donna Manson can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA

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Tell us what you think about the current suitability, condition and capacity of your secondary school?

GALASHIELS

- The overall view is that the school is dated, tired and run down. It was designed for a 1960's curriculum and is not suitable for modern learning.
- Concerns were raised about the fact that buildings are not fully accessible, with some parts being totally inaccessible to wheelchair users.
- The stairwells and corridors are crowded, the lunch hall too small and there is a lack of social areas.
- Concern was raised about the road running through the campus and the security issues arising from different buildings.
- PE facilities and toilets were highlighted as being in particularly poor conditions. The games hall is not suitable for use in poor weather.
- Many pupils reported problems with heating, with many areas being too hot or too cold.

HAWICK

- Again, the overall view is that the buildings are outdated and run down with a view that many parts are no longer fit for purpose.
- The building is sprawling and difficult to navigate and is not fully accessible with some areas being impossible for wheelchair users to navigate.
- The condition of the building is reported to be having a negative effect on pupils (and staff), affecting morale and sense of worth.
- Concerns were raised about security and safety with so many entrances and exits and with crowding in the lunch hall and corridors.
- Heating and ventilation were highlighted as again being problematic.

PEEBLES

- It was recognised that the new sports facility is excellent, however the majority of respondents considered that most of the rest of the building is tired, outdated and not suitable for 21st century education.
- There was a lot of concern about the size of the school, as many respondents consider that with an increasing population that school will reach capacity soon.
- Again, the issues of security, cramping in corridors and lack of social spaces were consistently raised. Time taken by pupils to navigate around the disjointed, haphazard mix of buildings, was highlighted as impacting on learning time.
- Accessibility has been highlighted as a significant concern. Music, for example, cannot be offered as a subject to anyone in a wheelchair without an unacceptable route through the car park having to be taken to access the department.
- The maths tower was highlighted as being the worst condition and most unsuitable building.

SELKIRK

- Feedback showed that the building is felt to be tired and in need of modernisation and upgrading with some parts needing replaced.
- The building is not felt to meet the needs of modern learning and teaching.
- Issues common to other schools such as heating and ventilation issues, limits on social spaces, canteen facilities being too small and accessibility to some areas were again raised in Selkirk.
- The proximity of the A7 and the narrow pavements were highlighted as being of concern.
- The responses suggested that there is a feeling that Selkirk does not have the same facilities as other Border schools.

What would you like to see in the future?

GALASHIELS

- The consensus of opinion was for a new school to be built on the existing site.
- It was suggested that better use of the outdoor opportunities on the campus could be made.
- The responses advocated a core facility for the town, in the heart of the community, of which the community could be proud and which would offer opportunities for all ages of learners.
- Opportunities for work experience were viewed to be important.
- Views were strong that the facility should be equipped to support and enhance innovation in learning.
- Some responses suggested that opportunity to incorporate other provisions such as the library, swimming pool and even primary accommodation could be explored.

HAWICK

- There was a very strong demand for a new school to provide a 21st century learning environment for the children.
- Equally strong demand for the school to be more integrated into the community was reported.
- Responses requested more vocational opportunities and improved facilities for sports and arts.
- A new school was believed to be important in inspiring the children and attracting new staff.
- Many responses considered that there is a need for improved social spaces for teenagers out of school hours.
- Many responses placed high importance on a new school being designed to ensure pupils feel safe and nurtured.

PEEBLES

- A significant majority of the responses want to see a new secondary school to replace the existing building.
- Some responses suggested a second High School in the west of Tweeddale could be a solution to capacity issues.
- A small number of responses favoured a refurbishment of the existing building, this view was as a result of concerns relating to a belief that a new school would be detrimental in size and layout.
- Responses highlighted concern that there may be redrawing of catchments for Innerleithen and Walkerburn and while not a proposal, this would be strongly opposed.
- All views wanted to see improved facilities in almost all departments.
- There was strong support for the retention of the new and much appreciated PE facility.

SELKIRK

- There was strong appetite for a new school, however some respondents believed the existing school could be successfully upgraded.
- There is a demand for out of school social spaces.
- Many of those responding urged the inclusion of primary provisions in the review.
- Views that there is scope for a different model, possible including part of the primary stages or the merging of some primaries and a desire to explore this further was expressed.
- Improved ICT and modern facilities featured highly on many of the responses offered.

Tell us what you think about the Education and Learning provision currently available to young people in your secondary school area?

GALASHIELS

- In general responses were very positive about teaching and learning.
- Responses praised a broad range of opportunities for young people with a good balance of academic and vocational offerings.
- The school was viewed to be inclusive and was described as having a positive vibe.
- A few responses alluded to some issues with behaviour, but were clear that incidents were in the minority.
- Some responses suggested that the standard of the facilities gave an unjustified impression of an educational experience which was not as high as schools with newer facilities.

HAWICK

- Although many of the responses referred to low morale caused by previous bad press, most clearly stated that the school is working hard to do the best job for the young people.
- There was clear feedback that the curriculum offering is not yet broad enough and there are some restrictions on subjects available. However there was clear acknowledgement that staff shortages are the reason for this and there is further recognition that this is not an issue unique to Hawick.
- Many responses highlighted the good job being done by staff and regarded that teachers are making the best of conditions that they have.
- Some responses mentioned behaviour, but equally positive work in dealing with any issues was recognised.

PEEBLES

- Almost all the respondents were happy with teaching and learning and noted considerable pride in the attainment levels across the school.
- There was consistent recognition that teaching staff do the best job they can, but there was recognition that the environment, facilities and resources, including ICT can limit this.
- Some responses suggested that there is too much emphasis on academic achievements and highlighted a need for more vocational opportunities.
- Many respondents were parents of primary school age children and were able to report that the reputation of the school was high in the community.

SELKIRK

- Many of the responses believed that teaching was good and that overall the learning experience was positive.
- A significant number of responses referred to the lack of breadth in the curriculum and many would like to see a wider choice of subjects. It was recognised however that staff numbers were a factor in the offering available.
- A lack of some facilities was also seen to be a barrier to offering some opportunities.

What would you like to see in the future?

GALASHIELS

- Most of the responses to this question focused on the physical building rather than learning experiences.
- Suggestions were made to have specialist learning facilities for science, sport, technology and music.
- There is a desire for flexible and multi-use spaces, as well as places for pupils to relax and spend free time as well as improved spaces for study.
- There was a clear desire to see technology permeating learning.

HAWICK

- Many of the responses highlighted real ambition for learning in the future. There is a drive for young people to be inspired to learn and to be given every opportunity to reach their full potential.
- There is an agreed view that the learning experiences offered should be as broad as possible and not just focus on university as a goal. Opportunities should be relevant and vocational.
- Opportunities for drama, theatre and the arts were desired and opportunities to fully use technology to support learning was a strong theme.
- There was consistent feedback that attracting more high quality staff to teach in Hawick will be key in broadening the learning opportunities.

PEEBLES

- Again, the overall majority of the responses focused on how improved and modernised facilities would be key to improving the learning experience.
- A desire to have more open, flexible and modern spaces as well as improvements in technology was consistently noted.
- Many of the responses suggested a desire for a broader curriculum offering to include vocational and FE opportunities.
- As well as breadth in the curriculum offering, many of those responding expressed a desire for more focus on wider interests and achievements and extra-curricular opportunities – beyond sporting – to improve mental wellbeing.

SELKIRK

- As well as many responses requesting improved and broader facilities, there was a consistent view that increased staff numbers could bring wider subject choices.
- A desire to improve links to business and the community in order to broaden pupil experience was expressed by several respondents.
- Again, there was a strong view that ICT has a huge role to play in learning and teaching going forward.
- Some of the young people expressed a wish to have more responsibility and choices in decision making about learning.

Tell us what you think about the Social and Learning Opportunities for young people in your local community?

GALASHIELS

- The overall view is that there are not many places for young people to meet up or socialise.
- Some responded that the only real opportunities are in sporting activities.
- There is a view that there are not enough events held at the school, and in particular a lack of disability sports opportunities.
- Some feel that social opportunities are very limited and nowhere private for young people.
- There is a concern that there are not enough safe places for children to meet.
- There seems to be a distinct lack of social opportunities and this has not helped with anti-social issues within the community.

HAWICK

- The overall view is that there are very few opportunities.
- There is a feeling that there is very little to do socially and absolutely nothing for children with additional needs.
- There seems to be a distinct lack of social and learning opportunities for children attending Hawick High School at the moment.
- There is a concern that youths end up walking the streets as there is nowhere for them to go.
- There are some opportunities in the local community, but they lack diversity for all different levels of abilities.

PEEBLES

- The overall view is that there are a fair range of opportunities, however they are not always accessible due to financial or geographical reasons.
- Some of the responses indicate that there are no social opportunities other than sport or music.
- There is a feeling that there are limited opportunities for young people once they become teenagers.
- Some feel that social opportunities are not visible or communicated to everyone who may benefit.
- Lack of transport for young people attending events was a common theme.

SELKIRK

- There is an overall view that there are limited options for young people in the community.
- There is a feeling that there are significant barriers which are linked to social inequality so not everyone can achieve their full potential.
- Some feel that there are more opportunities than ever before, but young people need to be encouraged to take steps towards using the facilities.
- There is a concern that many opportunities are not accessible to all.
- A general comment was made about more options for sport for all genders.

What would you like to see in the future?

GALASHIELS

- There is an overall view that community facilities should be linked to the school.
- There is a need for disability sports clubs.
- Respondents would like to see modern sports and community facilities which could be accessed by both adults and children.
- People would like to see areas where youths can socialise safely to get them off the streets.
- A central hub at the heart of the community providing learning and social opportunities, as well as providing employment experience for young people.

HAWICK

- There is a strong view that local businesses should be involved in future opportunities for young people.
- People would like more opportunities for young people to integrate in their local communities.
- A common theme is the involvement of local community groups within the school to encourage young people to participate in new things.
- There is a view that the school should be used outside of the school day as a central point for information about local groups in the community.
- Some of the respondents would like opportunities for vocational learning with the support of industry, creating valuable work experience for our young people.

PEEBLES

- There is a view that local businesses should be involved in the school to equip the pupils with learning for the world of work.
- There is a strong view that there are already good links in the community and these should be continued and enhanced.
- People would like to see safe spaces for youths to socialise and interact with each other.
- Some respondents would like a community hub within the school to encourage young people to do new things.
- Some would like to see more involvement between the Primary Schools and the High School to encourage young people to interact with each other.

SELKIRK

- There is a strong sense of the need for community involvement in Selkirk.
- People would like to see more opportunities for young people to have work experience and gain employment.
- There should be more vocational opportunities for young people than there is currently.
- There is a concern that facilities may be made available, but still not affordable for all to access.
- People would like to see up to date advice for youngsters in terms of technology.

Thinking about future provision of secondary schools, would you like to see something on the existing site, or a new site, please tell us your reasons why?

GALASHIELS

- The predominant view was that current site would be the most suitable site, as it is:
 - A central location for the town and close enough for community access to facilities.
 - Large and could accommodate other facilities.
 - Well located for access and transport links.
 - An attractive location which would provide an attractive learning environment.
- Other views were that the school should be located on a site:
 - Closer to the centre of town; or
 - Closer to Tweedbank/Netherdale/Kingsknowes.

HAWICK

- The majority view was that the current site would be the most suitable as it is:
 - Close to the town centre with sport facilities close by.
 - There are good transport links.
 - The site is large enough to accommodate other facilities.
- Others considered that a new site would be preferable to start afresh and minimise disruption, with some suggesting that a more central site would be preferable. The potential sites suggested included:
 - The Haugh
 - Wilton Centre
 - Galalaw
 - Site near Burnfoot
 - Ground in front of the Convent.

PEEBLES

- The majority view was the current site would be the most suitable as it is:
 - Centrally located and easily accessed from the town.
 - Where the new sports hall is located.
 - Probably the only site a school could be located given the infrastructure, topography and flood risks within the town.
 - Attractive site with great views.
- Many considered that the current site was too small for redevelopment and that it was not well located for buses and access.
- Other sites suggested included:
 - Kittlegairy
 - Cavalry Park
 - March Street Mill
 - Victoria Park
 - Haylodge Park.
- Some respondents suggested that a second Secondary School should be considered in either West Linton or to serve the south side of the cluster.

SELKIRK

- Many considered a new site should be identified as the current site:
 - Is too close to the A7.
 - Is too small.
 - Has limited outdoor space for sports, recreation or outdoor learning.
- Some suggested the Old Mills at Riverside as a location or a site to the west of the town.

If your ideas were to be developed, how could we get the community behind us to take these forward?

GALASHIELS

- There were several suggestions including:
 - Media campaign – TV, radio and social media
 - Posters and leaflets
 - Involve pupils and primary parent councils
 - Engagement events, meetings with community groups
 - Involve local businesses
 - Engage and seek feedback at every stage
 - Set up working parties from across the community to support the parent council

HAWICK

- There were several suggestions including:
 - Community engagement meetings and focus groups
 - Media campaigns – TV, radio and social media
 - Public forums ; contact with all community groups
 - Engage with local businesses
 - Leaflet communities
 - Make the process accessible – with multiple venues for idea sharing and information flow
 - Create a vision and make it real for people

PEEBLES

- There were several suggestions including:-
 - More public consultation and the public voting for options.
 - Make the school more integrated into the community with more community facilities forming part of the school
 - Ensure there is a forum for all voices, not just a vocal minority. Encourage community stakeholders to work with the Council
 - Media campaign – TV, radio and social media
 - Engage with local community groups with targeted communication with key stakeholder and key user groups, particularly primary school and nursery parents
 - Demonstrate the benefits of the proposals – costs benefits analysis and pros and cons of new versus renovation
 - Involve the community at all levels of the process – initial concept to opening, tendering for work
 - Videos

SELKIRK

- There were several suggestions including:
 - Community engagement meetings and focus groups
 - Media campaigns – TV, radio and social media
 - Public forums ; contact with all community groups
 - Leaflet communities
 - Surveys and votes

Please tell us if you have any final comments or suggestions?

GALASHIELS

- Many comment highlighted wider economic development needs of the town and the links to a new school campus with all the opportunities this would bring.
- It was highlighted that there has been talk of a new school in Gala for a few years.
- Respondents were particularly keen to end the situation where there is a “split” in the community where high numbers of families opt to send children to a school with newer and more up to date facilities.

“We need a new school with international ambitions that embodies new thinking, ambition, architectural merit and a centre for learning for the next 100 years. It should be connected to the world and grounded in Galashiels and the Borders....”

HAWICK

- Responses from Hawick consistently referred to a new school being an opportunity for the whole town and a benefit to the whole community.
- Many comments were made about the need for young people to experience a sense of pride and to be inspired.
- The need to build for the future and to be modern in thinking was highlighted in several responses.

“The possibility of a new high school with a huge emphasis on community is such an exciting prospect. I actually don’t mind where they put a new school as long as we get one! ...Let’s give them (pupils) a High School to be proud of and that will inspire them and future generations to be the best they can be.”

PEEBLES

- There majority of comments referred to the need to modernise – to think and plan for the future.
- There was acknowledgement of the wide range of views which will exist in a community of this scale, however, respondents further urged that the needs of the young people be key in future decision making.
- Some comments were made in relation to the process and mistrust of Scottish Borders Council in previous consultations

“The school remains a high achieving school for results and pupil engagement.....I can only imagine how much more success could be achieved with a more modern environment.”

SELKIRK

- The responses from Selkirk consistently referred to the potential benefit to the town and wider community.
- There was a view that Selkirk as a community needs to be promoted and offered any opportunity to grow and flourish.
- A number of concerns were raised about the potential impact any changes to the education model might have on the rural schools in the cluster and there was a clear message that the education provided in these settings is valued highly.

“The delivery of education needs to be re-envisioned to make it fit for the current and future generations.”

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