

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**  
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES  
**Public Consultation Report**

November 2016

The following provisions are affected by the Proposals:

- Spectrum support provision at Wilton Primary School
- Spectrum support provision at St Ronan's Primary School
- The new build Additional Support Needs (ASN )School in the village of Earlston

The following schools are affected by the Proposals: (a) Wilton Primary School; (b) St Ronan's Primary School; (c) Earlston Primary School; (d) Earlston High School;

**Consultation period:**

**9am, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016 to 5pm, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

This Public Consultation Document has been issued by Scottish Borders Council's Children and Young People's Services in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) act 2010 as amended.

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## 1.0 SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS FOR THIS CONSULTATION REPORT

### Committee Decision

- 1.1 This Consultation Report has been issued as a result of a decision by The Scottish Borders Council's Executive Committee on 16 August 2016 to formally undertake the process.

### Proposal Paper

- 1.2 A copy of the Proposal Paper was made available free of charge in these locations –

- Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA
- Wilton Primary School, Wellfield Road, Hawick TD9 7EN
- St Ronan's Primary School, St Ronan's Road, Innerleithen, EH44 6PB
- Earlston Primary School, Earlston, TD4 6HF
- Earlston High School, East End, Earlston, TD4 6JP
- Hawick Library, North Bridge Street, Hawick, TD9 9QT
- Innerleithen Library, Buccleuch Street, Innerleithen, EH44 6LA
- Earlston Library, based within Earlston High School, East End, Earlston, TD4 6JP

and was published on the Scottish Borders Council website:

[www.scotborders.gov.uk/asnschool](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/asnschool)

A copy of the proposal paper is in [Appendix A](#).

### Promotion

- 1.3 The publication of the Proposal Paper was advertised in the various Borders newspapers, on the week commencing 22 August 2016, providing the dates for the consultation period and the public meetings. Future parents were notified from information the Council has on nursery attendance and to those parents who live in the catchment areas who choose not to have their children attend Wilton or St Ronan's Primary Schools.
- 1.4 Formal notice of the proposal was sent by Letter or email to:
- the parents/carers of the children who attend the spectrum support classes at Wilton Primary School and St Ronan's Primary School;
  - the Parent Councils of the affected schools;
  - the parent/carers of the pupils of the affected schools;

- the parent/carers of any children likely to attend the new school or any affected school within two years of the date of the publication of the Proposal Paper;
- the pupils attending the spectrum support classes and the affected schools insofar as the Education Authority considers them to be of a suitable age and maturity;
- the staff (teaching and other) of the spectrum support classes and the staff at the affected schools;
- any Trade Union which is representative of the staff;
- the Community Council of Earlston; Hawick and Innerleithen;
- Community Planning Partnership named partners
- the constituency Member of the Scottish Parliament;
- the constituency Member of Parliament;

### **Length of Consultation period**

1.5 The consultation for the proposal ran from Friday 26 August 2016 and ended on Monday, 10 October 2016 (both dates inclusive). This period allowed for the statutory minimum of 30 school days. There were 16 written representations in respect of this statutory consultation, these representations are summarized and responded to in section 7 below. Some of these representations also contained responses in respect of the non-statutory consultation into the naming of the new school. However in addition there was a written representation from the Auld Earlston Group relating solely to the non-statutory consultation into the naming of the new school. The responses regarding the naming of the school are not summarized in the report as this issue will be progressed separately from this statutory process.

### **Public meetings**

1.6 Public meetings were held on:

**Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016, 7.00pm – 9.00pm, in Wilton Primary School  
(number of attendees 16)**

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016, 7.00pm – 9.00pm, in Earlston Primary School  
(number of attendees 18)**

**Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016, 7.00pm – 9.00pm, in St Ronan's Primary School  
(number of attendees 0)**

Notes were taken at each meeting and views were sought following a presentation being given. Copies of the meeting notes are included as Appendix B and a copy of the presentation as Appendix C. 34 members of the public attended these meetings in total.

### **Meetings with Pupils and Staff**

- 1.7 Meetings were held with pupils (considered to be of a suitable age and maturity) and staff in the affected schools. Where appropriate pupils in the spectrum support classes had their views represented by their parents and staff. A record of questions, responses and views is included as Appendix D.

### **Involvement of Education Scotland**

- 1.8 Education Scotland was notified in advance of this Statutory Consultation process being approved and they agreed to the timelines. On completion of the Statutory Consultation period, a copy of the Proposal Paper was sent by Scottish Borders Council to Education Scotland. Education Scotland also received a copy of all relevant additional materials, minutes of public meeting, written representations and replies received and sent by the Council following the consultation period.
- 1.9 Education Scotland has prepared a report on the educational aspects of the proposal, based on the representations and documents mentioned above as well as their interviews with pupils, parents, staff, and associated schools. In preparing their report, Education Scotland visited the affected local schools and made reasonable enquiries of people there as they considered appropriate. This can be found at Appendix E and also on the Education Scotland Website. <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/>
- 1.10 Issues raised in the Education Scotland Report with regards to Spectrum Support provision at Wilton and St Ronan's Primary School being discontinued and the building of a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) School in the village of Earlston and the Authority's responses are set out in section 8 of this Consultation Report.

### **Preparation of Public Consultation Report**

- 1.11 The Council has reviewed the proposal having regard to the Education Scotland Report. This Consultation Report has been prepared by Scottish Borders Council Children and Young People's Services team as a result. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats. It will be available on the Council web-site and from Council Headquarters, public libraries in the vicinity of the affected schools, as well as the affected schools, free of charge. Anyone who made written representations during the consultation period will also be informed about the report.

- 1.12 This Consultation Report will be published at **9am, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016** and is available for further consideration for a period of three weeks from that date (15 days), until **5pm, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016**. 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:

Additional Support Needs School  
Children and Young People's Services  
Scottish Borders Council Headquarters  
Newtown St Boswells  
Melrose  
TD6 0SA; or

Email Address: [schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk); or

Web Address: [www.scotborders.gov.uk/asnschool](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/asnschool)

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.

Those sending in a response, whether by letter or electronically, should know that their response will 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”. Otherwise, it will be assumed that the person making the response agrees to it being made publicly available.

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, Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

## Decision

- 1.13 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 15 December 2016.

## Distribution

- 1.14 A copy of the Consultation Report will be made available free of charge for public consultation from **9am, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016 to 5pm, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2016** in these locations –

- Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA
  - Wilton Primary School, Wellfield Road, Hawick TD9 7EN
  - St Ronan's Primary School, St Ronan's Road, Innerleithen, EH44 6PB
  - Earlston Primary School, Earlston, TD4 6HF
  - Earlston High School, East End, Earlston, TD4 6JP
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  - Innerleithen Library, Buccleuch Street, Innerleithen, EH44 6LA
  - Earlston Library, based within Earlston High School, East End, Earlston, TD4 6JP
- and published on the Scottish Borders Council website:  
[www.scotborders.gov.uk/asnschool](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/asnschool)

## 2.0 THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The Proposals subject to statutory consultation as set out in the proposal paper are:

**That subject to the outcome of this statutory consultation process as set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended:**

- 1) Spectrum support class provision at Wilton Primary School is discontinued;**
- 2) Spectrum support support provision at St Ronan's Primary School is discontinued;**
- 3) That the new additional support needs build in the village of Earlston is established as a school;**
- 4) That the naming of that school is consulted upon simultaneously as a non-statutory consultation part of this proposal process;**
- 5) That children from the new school and children from Earlston Primary School and Earlston High School will have the opportunity to build curricular and facility links creating educational benefits for all children**

2.2 As stated in the proposal paper the proposal therefore also has implications for:

- Wilton Primary School
- St Ronan's Primary School
- Earlston Primary School
- Earlston High School

2.3 The original proposed date for the implementation of the Proposal to establish the new school was January 2017. However, there was to be flexibility as the staff will transition the children to the new build according to their needs. The original proposed date for discontinuation of spectrum support provision at St Ronan's Primary School and Wilton Primary School was April 2017.

2.4 However having listened to consultee responses, in particular the opinions of staff that it would be desirable for the children to all move together as soon as possible to the new school to allow them more of the school year to settle into their new environment, the Council intends to adjust its implementation timetable. The Council intend to establish the new Additional Support Needs (ASN) build in the village of Earlston as a school in early January 2017 and immediately thereafter commence transitional arrangements for the pupils and staff currently utilising the Spectrum Services at Wilton and St Ronan's Primary School during January and February 2017. The week commencing after the February 2017 school holiday is the current intended date for all pupils being moved to the new school on a long term basis. Subject to Scottish Government approval having first been granted, the Council intend to also proceed with discontinuing Spectrum Support provision at Wilton and St Ronan's Primary School on the week commencing after the February 2017 school holiday.



### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council's commitment to inclusion for all and progress that has been made to date on this within our schools is set out on pages 11 and 12 of the Proposal Paper.
- 3.2 Scottish Borders Council does not currently have "special" or "ASN" schools. However, we have a wide range of enhanced learning provisions which are designed to meet the needs of our learners with complex and profound needs.
- 3.3 Nationally, almost all children with ASN are expected to receive their Early Learning and Childcare in a local setting with support. In the Scottish Borders that does happen in the main.
- 3.4 In 2013 the Council identified the need to develop a full time purpose built specialist education and care centre for young people with complex needs, both physical and learning within the Scottish Borders. At the Executive Committee on 17 January 2013 it was agreed to develop a central Borders Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision. It was recommended that the location be in the Central Borders to increase accessibility and to reduce travelling times for children. The aim of the Additional Support Needs provision is to offer a service that will reduce the number of children who access very specialist provision out of the Scottish Borders and prevent the need for children to be educated outside the authority, as well as provide an enhanced level of provision for our children with the most profound and complex needs within the Scottish Borders. It was considered that Earlston was the most appropriate location for this.
- 3.5 The current provision within the Scottish Borders for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder is located across two sites:
1. A portacabin in the grounds of Wilton Primary School in Hawick (P1 – 3 pupils), currently caters for 5 pupils;
  2. A wing of St Ronan's Primary School in Innerleithen (P 4- 7 pupils) , currently caters for 10 pupils;
- 3.6 The current provisions have not been designed to meet the needs of pupils with complex needs and offer a poor quality learning environment. The fabric and condition of the resource in Wilton Primary School is particularly poor.
- 3.7 The Authority's proposed solution is set out in section 2 above. The Authority's detailed reasoning for this solution is set out within the Proposal paper. The Authority consider that discontinuing the current provision and instead providing Additional Support Needs provision at the new purpose built school in Earlston will have strong educational benefits for the affected children. This view is endorsed by Education Scotland in their Report.

## 4.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS

4.1 The requirements for consulting on proposed school closures are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014:

- The proposal document was issued at 9.00am Friday 26 August 2016, and is attached as [Appendix A](#) ;
- Copies were also available to view at the locations identified in section 1.2;
- A notification was placed in all of the various Borders papers;
- A notice of consultation appeared on the Scottish Borders Council website on Friday 26 August 2016 and remained for the duration of the consultation;
- Public meetings were held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016, Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016 and 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016
- The Consultation period ended at 5.00pm Monday, 10 October 2016; Education Scotland were involved and produced a report over a three week period (see [Appendix E](#))
- This Public Consultation Document will be published at least three weeks before a final decision is taken by the Scottish Borders Council at a Full Council Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

## 5.0 PUBLIC MEETINGS

5.1 Public Consultation meetings were held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2016 at Wilton Primary School, Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016 at Earlston Primary School, & Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016 at St Ronan's Primary School.

5.2 Attendance at the public meetings comprised of 16 attendees at Wilton Primary School, 18 attendees at Earlston Primary School and 0 attendees at St Ronan's Primary School.

5.3 Attendance at the meeting by Council Officers was as detailed in the note from the public meeting attached as [Appendix B](#).

5.4 A presentation was given at each meeting which is attached as [Appendix C](#).

5.5 Key points raised at the meetings were:

Pointed Raised	Authority Response
All attendees were very positive about the facility being provided and valued the investment	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Earlston primary school and high school excited to be welcoming this new purpose built school to their community and looking forward to establishing close links.	<u>Noted.</u>

Earlston community are very supportive of the schools in their village.	<u>Noted</u>
When will the new school open?	<u>The Authority intend to open the school and have a transitional period during January 2017 and early February 2017 to try and ensure a smooth transition. Subject to Government approval being obtained, the Authority intend to fully implement the proposal after the February 2017 School holidays by discontinuing spectrum class support provision at St Ronan's and Wilton Primary Schools and pupils instead having this provided at the new ASN School.</u>
Reassurance sought about the relationship between the new school and mainstream settings.	<u>The Authority can confirm that the school nearest home will always be the mainstream school and wherever the child is enrolled for mainstream, that school takes control of the Child Support Plan but works jointly with the spectrum staff to support the child and parents.</u>
Concerns whether curriculum being offered to their children in the current provision would be continued.	<u>Concerns Noted. Authority can confirm that Curriculum currently being offered such as swimming and riding will continue. Location of the delivery of this may change and how best to deliver it for each child will be discussed on an individual basis.</u>
Whether at the new school there would be children attending with a broader range of difficulties than currently?	<p><u>The Authority can confirm that for the reasons set out in the Proposal paper it considers there to be considerable education benefits of the new school catering for all ASN needs.</u></p> <p><u>The establishment of this school is a great enhancement to the current provision in Scottish Borders. The School shall provide a safe, secure managed environment with staff who are highly trained, who focus on meeting challenges and accept that some children don't fit into a simple box.</u></p> <p><u>The Authority can confirm that There may therefore be children attending with a broader range of difficulties than currently, however the new school will be properly equipped to meet these.</u></p>

<p>Capacity of the building being 50 was questioned, given there are 3 classrooms that can accommodate about 8 children in each depending on the activity.</p>	<p><u>The Authority can confirm that the new school has 3 classrooms that can accommodate about 8 children in each depending on the activity. The Authority therefore acknowledges that the School will not have capacity to accommodate 50 pupils within it at once. However in terms of day to day capacity pupils attend for distinct morning and afternoon sessions. There is therefore capacity to support approximately 50 children at the ASN school on each school day.</u></p> <p><u>In addition the School is a flexible resource which the Authority intends to make available beyond the school day to:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>National Groups to use as it is a safe environment with purpose built playground which could provide a chat/social session for parents and children.</u></li> <li>• <u>Spectrum Outreach Teachers to bring some children together on occasion</u></li> <li>• <u>Other groups with suitably supervised children.</u></li> </ul>
<p>Whether staffing provision would be maintained?</p>	<p><u>The Authority can confirm that the existing staff from Wilton and St Ronan’s Spectrum Support Provision will be relocated to the new purpose built school in Earlston.</u></p>
<p>Will staffing ratios be maintained?</p>	<p><u>The Authority can clarify that its current ratios are better than other local authorities/organisations. The required ratio of staff to children during a day depends on the child’s needs and the activity that they are doing.</u></p> <p><u>The Authority does not anticipate changes to staffing ratios, but will be seeking to ensure that the resource is more mobile and equitable. If rolls do change, a more flexible allocation of staff may be needed.</u></p>
<p>Concern about transition planning</p>	<p><u>The Authority notes the concern and agrees that good transition planning is very important. Transitional plans will be put in place and individual families will be involved in ensuring these are well designed.</u></p>

<p>Concerns over how transport would be provided for each child from home and between the new ASN School and their principal school.</p>	<p><u>Noted. The Authority are preparing a detailed plan for transport door to door for each of the individual children, and a backup plan with transport particularly for those with additional needs. The Authority shall discuss the individual timetable with each family prior to the implementation of the proposals.</u></p>
<p>Concerns over what would happen when weather affected travel.</p>	<p><u>The Authority acknowledges the potential difficulties when weather affects travel. Localised decisions will be made working in partnership with bus companies and taxi services to ensure minimum disruption wherever possible.</u></p> <p><u>The Authority has a resilient schools plan in place across the Borders to maximize the number of schools that can remain open. In terms of the plan in severe weather teachers will attend the most local school that they can walk to.</u></p> <p><u>In severe weather Additional Support Needs Pupils would generally attend their mainstream local school, however authority recognizes this may not be appropriate in every individual case. The Authority is committed to improving arrangements for each ASN Pupil by developing an Emergency Plan for each.</u></p>
<p>Questions over the planned management structure.</p>	<p><u>The Authority acknowledge that there is a need to look very carefully at this, at what other specialist schools have in place and what we currently have before making a decision about this.</u></p>
<p>General support for the centralized location of purpose built School, but some concern of this causing difficulty for outlying areas.</p>	<p><u>The Authority as detailed in the Proposal paper considers that the centralized location in Earlston is the best location for Borders children as a whole. The Authority acknowledge the risk of this causing difficulties for outlying areas and will seek to minimize these through strong individual planning for each child in particular in respect of travel.</u></p>
<p>Is there going to be a nursery provision?</p>	<p><u>The Authority can confirm that that there is no barrier to providing nursery provision but the individual children's needs would have to be considered. Transport for the child would also need to be taken into account and as currently, there would be discussion with families to find the best model for the child whether it be local provision or specialist provision.</u></p>

Concerns regarding whether there were safe walking links between the new school and the existing primary and high school.	<u>Noted. The Authority can confirm that the new school would be right next to the primary school and a five minute walk from the High School. The walk to the high school is through a safe pedestrian route and there are plans for a new playground area to be shared with the new school and the primary school. This would allow the children to be outside in a safe environment.</u>
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## 6.0 MEETINGS WITH PUPILS AND STAFF

- 6.1 Meetings were held with pupils (considered to be of a suitable age and maturity) and staff in the affected schools. Where appropriate pupils in the spectrum support classes had their views represented by their parents and staff. A record of questions, responses and views is included as Appendix D.
- 6.2 Key points raised at the meetings were:

<b>Pointed Raised</b>	<b><u>Authority Response</u></b>
All Spectrum staff very positive about the new school. They think the facilities it will provide are going to be excellent and are very excited about being able to work in this environment.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Staff recognised opportunity & benefits of working within a bigger team, at one location where everyone can work flexibly, and support each other.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Staff considered that additional spaces provided in the new school will be a huge help in supporting the pupils when they are experiencing difficulties.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Staff identified that many of the pupils will benefit from shorter journeys which may help pupil tiredness levels.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
More central location may encourage older pupils who currently do not travel from Hawick to Innerleithen due to distance to continue in Spectrum Support.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>

<p>Bringing the children back together will have benefits however staff are aware that there may need to be some planning around this to help pupils cope.</p>	<p><u>Noted and agree. The Authority is taking steps to plan for this and this will be further developed during the transitional period.</u></p>
<p>The staff from St Ronan's would prefer if all staff and pupils from both provisions were to start at the same time.</p>	<p><u>Noted and agree. The Authority intend to implement all aspects of the proposal together so staff and pupils from both current provisions start at the new ASN school in Earlston at the same time.</u></p>
<p>Staff identified there was a need to have time to work together to ensure that everything is set up very carefully so the pupils arrive to familiar organisation and resources.</p>	<p><u>Noted and agree. The Authority intend to have a transitional period during January 2017 and early February 2017 to ensure that this is done properly.</u></p>
<p>Not a priority for the pupils needs, to have extended transition work and visits in advance, proposed that move be as soon as possible (e.g. February) to allow a longer time up to the Summer holidays for pupils to become used to the school.</p>	<p><u>Noted and largely agree. Subject to Government approval being obtained the Authority intend to implement the proposal after the February School holidays.</u></p>
<p>The Principal Teacher of Spectrum sees clear benefits of managing one combined team at one location to enable more effective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delivery of the service</li> <li>• use of her time.</li> <li>• consistent management of staff cover</li> <li>• accessible staff development and training to the full team.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Noted and Agree.</u></p>
<p>The Principal Teacher of Spectrum highlighted the need to bring the existing teams together and to build positive relationships with Earlston Primary School early in the move period.</p>	<p><u>Noted and Agree.</u></p>
<p>Staff in both existing provisions raised some specific queries relating to the HR processes and policies around transfer.</p>	<p><u>Noted. The Authority has collated these and passed them to the HR advisor attached to the service. Staff groups will be meetings with HR advisors from early December 2016 both in group and individual consultations formats about the mechanics of transferring bases.</u></p>

## 7.0 REPRESENTATIONS

7.1 There were 16 written representations made during the initial consultation period in respect of the Statutory consultation proposals. Some of these representations also contained responses in respect of the non-statutory consultation into the naming of the new school. However in addition there was a written representation from the Auld Earlston Group relating solely to the non-statutory consultation into the naming of the new school. The responses regarding the naming of the school are not summarized in the report as this issue will be progressed separately from this statutory process.

7.2 The key points raised within the written representations made during the initial consultation period in respect of the Statutory consultation proposals regarding discontinuing Wilton Primary School Spectrum Support are:

<b>Pointed Raised</b>	<b>Authority Response</b>
Sub-standard accommodation. Portacabin is now completely unsuitable for purpose.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
The class is not big enough to meet the needs of the children. The staff are amazing teaching in such confined space.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Not central. Funding needs to be spent right across the borders and not just Wilton primary.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
It would be ideal to have the whole department based in the main school but space is limited so a purpose built place is the best solution.	<u>The view that the the whole department based in the main school would have been ideal is noted. However for the reasons details in the Proposal paper the Authority consider that a purpose built place is the best solution both for the pupils with these needs at Wilton Primary School and for pupils with ASN needs throughout the borders.</u>
Only if same provision for children with ASD specifically rather than more general additional support needs is provided at Earlston.	<u>The view that if provision at Wilton Primary School is closed that the new school should only be for children with ASD is noted. However for the reasons set out in the Proposal paper the Authority consider there to be considerable education benefits of the new school catering for all ASN needs.</u>



Insufficient information about the new school and how their child's day to day school day will work.	<u>Noted. The Authority shall continue to liaise with all affected parents and endeavour to ensure that they have sufficient information, regarding current, transitional and final implementation arrangements.</u>
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7.3 The key points raised within the written representations made during the initial consultation period in respect of the Statutory consultation proposals regarding discontinuing St. Ronan's School Spectrum Support are:

<b>Pointed Raised</b>	<b>Authority Response</b>
Not central	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Not a purpose built space	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Good class but unfortunately only takes a limited number of children. Every child with complex needs should be entitled to specialist teaching.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Better that all pupils are educated in a new purpose-built facility so they can all be together with a strong and properly trained staff team who fully understand their needs and can provide a high quality education for them.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>

7.4 The key points raised within the written representations made during the initial consultation period in respect of the Statutory consultation proposals in respect of the creation of a new ASN School at Earlston are:

<b>Pointed Raised</b>	<b>Authority Response</b>
Desirable to create a centre of good practice which covers all Borders with Pupils accommodated in a purpose built school, Staff able to work together and Parents able to come together.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>

Easier to share views from a central resource and meet the needs of the children as one large skilled team.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
To bring the two classes together will be less stressful when its time to move from younger to older classes.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Time together for all spectrum children.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Desirable that is identified as a school to learn in and be part of the community like any other school, rather than label it with a title such as spectrum support.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Location is very central and easy to access.	<u>Noted and agree.</u>
Earlston, middle of nowhere.	<u>The view that Earlston is in the middle of nowhere is noted, however it is the Authorities view that for the Borders as a whole it is very central and easy to access.</u>
Concern regarding transition of moving to new school being a massive change in child's school life that could disrupt them immeasurably.	<u>The Authority acknowledge that for the children effected the move to the new school will be a big change and that it will be important to manage the transition for each child well. The Authority is currently carefully planning how it can manage the transition for each child to ensure that it is as smooth as possible.</u>
Concern regarding Transport for kids who do split placement a concern as previous problems with transport in the past.	<u>The Authority acknowledge the challenge of ensuring that good transport provision is in place for each child who do a split placement. The Authority is currently carefully planning how to achieve this. The Authority will continue to keep this issue under review during the transitional period, to ensure a sound travel plan is in place for each child at the point of implementation.</u>
Concern that new school will have no hydro therapy pool	<u>Noted and acknowledged that the New ASN school will not have a hydrotherapy pool. This is not part of the existing provisions at the affected schools. However there is already Hydro provision within the Scottish Borders and the Authority will continue to work to provide access to this where appropriate.</u>

## 8.0 EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

- 8.1 In line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was provided by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal. This report is attached as [Appendix E](#).
- 8.2 Issues raised in the Education Scotland Report with regards to Spectrum Support provision at Wilton and St Ronan's Primary School being discontinued and the building of a new Additional Support Needs (ASN) School in the village of Earlston and the Authority's responses are set out below:

### HM Inspectors considered:

"3.1 Overall, the proposal has many potential educational benefits for current and future learners. At Wilton Primary School, the spectrum support class is located in demountable hut accommodation. At St Ronan's Primary School, the spectrum support class is located in an upstairs classroom, with children accessing toilets downstairs. The proposal will lead to improvements in the quality of learning environments within a building specifically designed to support the needs of children attending autistic spectrum classes, including for any users of the building with mobility issues."

**Authority Response:** Noted and agree.

### HM Inspectors considered:

"3.2 The current provision is split over two sites, with Wilton Primary School hosting predominantly P1 to 3 depending on individual needs, and St Ronan's Primary School hosting P4 to 7. Learners will benefit from continuity in education, attending P1 to 7 without having to move school, instead of the current split site arrangement in different towns."

**Authority Response:** Noted and agree.

### HM Inspectors considered:

"3.3 Stakeholders at Wilton Primary School and St Ronan's Primary School who met with HM Inspectors, including those who are directly involved with the spectrum support classes, all reported many positive benefits to children which could arise from the new, purpose built and specifically designed learning environment in the new school at Earlston. Staff of Wilton and St Ronan's Primary Schools spectrum support classes who are more directly affected than others, are very positive about the proposed improved learning

environments for children. Several, however, have concerns regarding increased travel times and changes to the length of their working day due to the location of the new school being in Earlston. Stakeholders are also keen for greater clarity regarding timescales for the full proposal to take place and for reassurance around children's continued access to specific learning opportunities, such as swimming. In taking forward its proposal, the council will need to work closely with staff from Wilton and St Ronan's Primary School spectrum support classes to provide greater clarity regarding travel arrangements and curricular issues."

**Authority Response:**

- a) Note and agree that there are many positives benefits to children that arise from the proposal.
- b) Acknowledged that for some staff the location of the new school being in Earlston will mean an increase in Travel time and as a result an increase in their overall working day. However any relocation of school provision will have such an effect to some extent. The Council has sought to minimize this effect by sitting the school in Earlston which is a central location within the Borders that is a similar distance from Wilton and St Ronan's Primary School. The travel distances of 24 and 23 miles respectively and approximate travel times of 36 and 39 minutes are not an unreasonable potential increase in the rural context of the Scottish Borders. The Council would also clarify that for other staff who did not live so locally to their existing schools the proposals may mean a decrease in Travel time and as a result an decrease in their overall working day. Importantly, in terms of environmental impact, as highlighted within other consultation responses locating the school at Earlston will result in reduced journey times for many of the pupils.
- c) Clarification is provided below regarding current intended timescales for the full proposal to take place.
- d) The Council can confirm its continuing commitment to ensure children's continued access to specific learning opportunities, such as swimming and horseriding to the same

extent as currently provided. The location of the provision of these specific learning opportunities may be altered from current provision due to the new school being located in Earlston.

**HM Inspectors considered:**

“3.4 Stakeholders at Earlston Primary School and Earlston High School are very positive about the new additional support needs school being located in the village of Earlston. They can see many opportunities for partnership working for children, young people and staff in each of the schools. Stakeholders in these schools also sought clarity on timescales for the full proposal to be implemented. In taking forward the proposal the council will need to work closely with all stakeholders regarding timescales for the full proposal to be implemented.”

**Authority Response:**

- a) Note and agree that there are many opportunities for the children that arise from the proposal.
- b) Note and agree that the Council will need to work closely with all stakeholders regarding timescales for the full proposal to be implemented. The building of the new Additional Support Needs (ASN) School in the village of Earlston is scheduled to be completed before Christmas 2016. The Council intend to commence transitional arrangements for the pupils and staff currently utilising the Spectrum Services at Wilton and St Ronan’s Primary School during January and February 2017. Subject to Ministerial approval having first been granted the Council intend to fully implement the proposal immediately after the February 2017 School holidays. Going forwards the Council will keep updated all stakeholders regarding any changes to the timescales for the full proposal to be implemented.

## **9.0 INACCURACY IN THE PROPOSAL PAPER**

- 9.1 During the preparation of this Consultation Report the Council noted on reviewing the Proposal Paper that while the proposals are accurately stated on page 2 of the Proposal Paper, they are not stated in an identical manner on page 11 under the heading Proposals. On page 11:
- 9.1.1 the five proposals bullets have not been numbered and due to a formatting error the second and fourth bullets for the Proposals have been deleted, however the text for the second and fourth bullets remain fully stated.
  - 9.1.2 there is an inaccuracy in the wording order in respect of the second bullet as it erroneously states “Spectrum class support” rather than “Spectrum support class” as intended.
- 9.2 The Council consider that the issue outlined in 9.1.1 is purely an immaterial formatting error and does not amount to an inaccuracy. The terms of the proposal remain clear despite the formatting error.
- 9.3 The Council acknowledge that the issue outlined in 9.1.2 does amount to an inaccuracy on page 11 of the Proposal paper. However the Council does not consider the inaccuracy to be material to the Proposal paper. The proposals, including bullet 2, are clearly stated at page 2 of the Proposal paper and expanded upon in detail throughout the Proposal Paper. Despite the inaccuracy on page 11 of the Proposal paper, the proposals, including bullet 2, remain readily understandable when the Proposal Paper is read as a whole. The Council has accordingly considered that no action is required in respect of this inaccuracy.

## **10.0 COMPLIANCE**

- 10.1 Throughout this consultation, Scottish Borders Council Children and Young People’s Services team has given due regard to the provisions of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 and Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 10.2 The statutory consultation process was robust and provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to identify key issues. Any areas of concern are responded to within sections 5, 6, 7 and 8. This document seeks any further views or alternatives to this proposal.
- 10.3 Based on the documents and information presented, along with the Education Scotland report a recommendation will be made to the Council at its meeting on 15 December 2016 to make a final decision on the proposal to discontinue Spectrum Support provision at Wilton and St Ronan’s Primary School and the establishment of the new Additional Support Needs (ASN) build in the village of Earlston as a school, taking due cognisance of any further views or alternatives to this proposal expressed during the consultation period on this Consultation Report.

10.4 If the Council decides to:

10.4.1 establish the new Additional Support Needs (ASN) build in the village of Earlston as a school, then it can proceed to implement this without further procedure.

10.4.2 progress discontinuing Spectrum Support provision at Wilton and St Ronan's Primary School, Scottish Government will be notified of the decision within 6 working days. Once the Scottish Government has been notified there will be a further three week period for any further representations to be made to them and then a further five weeks for Government to decide whether to approve the decision or call it in. The Council cannot proceed with discontinuing Spectrum Support provision at Wilton and St Ronan's Primary School, unless the Scottish Government approve the decision.