



PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES
CONSULTATION REPORT

**REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION RELATING
TO THE PROPOSAL TO CLOSE FORTEVIOT PRIMARY SCHOOL**

12 SEPTEMBER 2018

This Consultation Report has been issued by Perth and Kinross Council in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

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PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

This report has been prepared following consultation on the Council's proposal that:

- Education provision at Forteviot Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- The pupils of Forteviot Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Forgandenny Primary School, from 1 July 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter; and
- The delineated catchment area of Forgandenny Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Forteviot Primary School from 1 July 2019.

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- (a) Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period;
- (b) Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting held on 26 April 2018; and
- (c) Education Scotland's report on the proposal.

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a consultation report prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the above proposal.

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide a record of the total number of written responses made during the Statutory Consultation period;
- Provide a summary of the written responses;
- Provide a summary of oral representations made at the public meeting held on 26 April 2018;
- Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
- Provide the full text of Education Scotland's report and a statement of the Council's response to this report;
- State how the Council reviewed the above proposal following the representations received during the Statutory Consultation period and the report from Education Scotland;
- Provide details of any omission from, or inaccuracy in, the [Proposal Paper](#) and state how the Council acted upon it; and

- State how the Council has complied with Sections 11A to 13 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 when reviewing the above proposals.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Forteviot Primary School has been mothballed since October 2016. This was as a result of very low numbers of primary age pupils living in the catchment area and parental choice to send children living in the catchment area to other schools. The previously agreed arrangements to mothball the school have continued during this period as there has been no increase in the number of children in the catchment area.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 2 November 2016, the Lifelong Learning Committee of Perth and Kinross Council approved [Report No 16/485](#) by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services). It approved the development of an options appraisal in relation to the future of Forteviot Primary School.
- 2.3 On 24 January 2018, Lifelong Learning Committee considered the [options appraisal](#) and agreed to commence formal consultation on a proposal to close Forteviot Primary School ([Report No 18/14](#) refers) in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 The 2010 Act makes special arrangements in relation to rural schools, and establishes a presumption against the closure of rural schools. The result of this is that education authorities must have special regard to a number of factors before formalising a proposal to close a rural school and in consulting on and reaching a decision as to whether to implement a rural school closure proposal.
- 2.6 These duties are outlined in the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010 and the accompanying Statutory Guidance](#).
- 2.7 Lifelong Learning Committee reports and the Proposal Paper referred to above are available on the Council's website www.pkc.gov.uk.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The main considerations relating to the proposal are fully explained in the [Proposal Paper](#), and the main points are highlighted as follows:

- 3.2 Perth and Kinross Council works to enhance quality of life, make best use of public resources and ensure continuously improving services. Perth and Kinross Council's Corporate Plan "Securing the Future" aims to ensure that individuals, families and communities experience the best possible outcomes from a range of services.
- 3.3 Perth and Kinross Council has a strong identity and clear priorities which everyone works together to achieve, creating areas which are vibrant and successful; safe, secure, healthy and sustainable environments; educated, responsible and informed citizens; confident and active communities; and places where people are nurtured and supported, giving every child the best start in life.
- 3.4 The Council's Transformation Strategy 2015-2020 'Building Ambition' and Organisational Development Framework were approved by Council on 1 July 2015 ([Report No. 15/292 refers](#)). They detail how Perth and Kinross Council will deliver transformation over the next five years. Accompanying the strategy is a programme of major reviews which are considered to be key drivers and enablers of transformation across the organisation.
- 3.5 On 24 August 2016, Lifelong Learning Committee ([Report No. 16/347 refers](#)) approved principles to be used as a basis for the transformation review, 'Securing the Future of the School Estate'.
- 3.6 This approach reflects the Single Outcome Agreement National Outcome 15 that "Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs", and the Local Outcome that "Our services will be responsive, of high quality and continually improving". This report also links with the School Estate Management Plan, Education and Children's Services Policy Framework Maximising Resources and with the Education and Children's Services objective to develop the range and quality learning experiences for all.
- 3.7 Forteviot Primary School is a single teacher school serving the village of Forteviot and surrounding area and is a feeder primary school for Perth High School currently. Bertha Park High School is the associated secondary school for Forteviot from August 2019. Forteviot Primary School is located approximately 2.7 miles from Forgandenny Primary School and pupils have been zoned to Forgandenny Primary School since the school was mothballed in October 2016.
- 3.8 The capacity of Forteviot Primary School is 50 pupils. The Forteviot Primary School roll at Census 2013 was 24 pupils and at Census 2016 was 5 pupils, with only 3 of these children living in the catchment area.
- 3.9 There were 14 pupils in total who lived within the catchment area for Forteviot Primary School at Census 2016, however 11 of these pupils attended schools outwith their catchment area as a result of successful placing requests made by their parents. By September 2018, the number of pupils living within the catchment area for Forteviot Primary School was 7.

- 3.10 Forteviot Primary School and Forgandenny Primary School had a close relationship prior to the mothballing as the result of a shared headship. Whilst a shared headship provided a means of improving cost effectiveness, it did not address the wider population issues within the Forteviot area.
- 3.11 There has been a downward trend in the number of pupils under the age of 16 years living in the catchment area in recent years and the number of pre-school pupils in the catchment area is very small. Members of the community noted during the pre-consultation that the dynamics of the village had changed over the years with fewer families coming to live in the area which was considered to be due to the lack of employment and affordable housing.
- 3.12 In January 2018, there were 3 years out of the last 6 years where there were no children under 1 year old, living in the Forteviot catchment area, registered with GPs.
- 3.13 The provision of primary education within Forteviot needs to be considered in the context of the needs of the pupils and the local community, both now and in the future.
- 3.14 Information was collated on pupil numbers, house building, finances, the school, travel arrangements, environmental impact and the local area and community to inform the options. As part of the review, a pre-consultation exercise was carried out with the local community to inform the options appraisal for Forteviot Primary School. This allowed the community to consider options for the future of Forteviot Primary School and was an opportunity for the community to provide views on these options and identify any additional options which the Council should consider.
- 3.15 Future pupil projections have been considered using aggregated GP registration data and both Forgandenny Primary School and Forteviot Primary School pupil numbers are projected to remain static over the next 4 years. There are very low numbers of pre-school children in the Forteviot catchment area over the next 4 years with no house building planned in the area. Pupil projections in the catchment area do not indicate that the potential pupil numbers will increase in the future and there is no suggestion going forward that this is likely to change.
- 3.16 At January 2018, the highest projected occupancy level, including house building, for future years at Forteviot Primary School is 8% in 2020/21 and at Forgandenny Primary School is 79.1% in 2020/21.
- 3.17 This presents a diminished and unsustainable school pupil population for Forteviot Primary School with no foreseeable prospect of an increased, stable pupil population based on a significantly reduced birth rate over a sustained period of time.
- 3.18 The low pupil roll at Forteviot Primary School presented challenges in providing a breadth of social and emotional experiences required to meet the social and emotional needs of pupils.

- 3.19 The proposal for pupils from Forteviot to attend Forgandenny Primary School has strong educational benefits for pupils from the Forteviot catchment area.

It will increase pupils' resilience through being part of a larger school community and will also help promote their social and emotional development by providing greater challenge as well as the opportunity to be part of a wider, age-appropriate peer group.

- 3.20 Prior to Forteviot Primary School being mothballed, a number of parents had already made placing requests for their children to be educated in Forgandenny Primary School.
- 3.21 Pupils from the Forteviot Primary School catchment area have been zoned to Forgandenny Primary School for 2 years. Forgandenny Primary School offers high quality learning experiences across the four contexts of learning that encourages high levels of achievement and provides a wide range of opportunities for children to achieve their full potential as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.
- 3.22 The Council has engaged with stakeholders and has considered other uses for the premises prior to formulating this proposal. The details of the other options are detailed in this report in Section 4.
- 3.23 Parents still retain the right to make a placing request for another school of their choice as outlined in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, as amended.
- 3.24 The permanent discontinuation of education provision at Forteviot Primary School with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter with the pupils of Forteviot Primary School catchment area permanently receiving their education at Forgandenny Primary School, from 1 July 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter will have the following benefits (based on Forgandenny Primary School as children from Forteviot Primary School catchment area have been attending the school since October 2016).

3.25 **Learning and Teaching**

- The Education Scotland inspection report, which was published in August 2016, stated that Forgandenny Primary School provides a "...rich and broad curriculum which is firmly grounded in the principles of Curriculum for Excellence."

This is recognition that the school provides high quality learning experiences across the four contexts for learning. Contexts for learning are very relevant to the children and are explored by them through tasks and activities which they find engaging. An example of this would be the whole school project "The Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design" that had a strong focus on science, technology and engineering.

Education Scotland highlighted in this report that pupils at Forgandenny were ambitious and eager to do well at school and in the future.

- Literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing are the central aspects of all learning, and while planning learning is a shared activity, which is led by class teachers, the pupils are involved at a high level with the planning.

Work is differentiated to adapt to pupils' needs and pupils benefit from being able to work on co-operative learning tasks with others. Class teachers plan effectively so that tasks and activities are matched to children's varying needs. Support staff are skilled and very well deployed to meet identified needs for individuals and groups of children.

- Forgandenny Primary School has support from a Pupil Support Teacher, allowing group work to take place if required, which not only benefits pupils with Additional Support Needs, but all other pupils, who can work in these groups, and benefit from short term support.
- At Forgandenny Primary School, there are pupils of all age groups within the school which affords all pupils the opportunity to work in groups, at peer level and across all stages in the school and in mixed sex groups. It also allows the sharing of ideas, peer support, informal mentoring and relationship building, all of which contribute to the whole school experience for all pupils.
- A collegiate approach to professional engagement amongst all staff is evident within the school. They come together regularly to review and improve practice as a school, with partner services and other schools in the Local Management Group. Access to peer support and development allows staff to engage in professional learning opportunities more readily, enabling them to deliver a high quality of teaching to the pupils, with the benefit to the pupils of having committed, enthusiastic and forward thinking teachers.
- Having three composite classes that straddle over early, first and second levels of curriculum for excellence, means that at Forgandenny Primary School there is a collaborative approach to teaching, which creates links in learning across stages on a termly basis, creating a wealth of opportunities for collaborative/co-operative learning, for all pupils.
- Outdoor learning was also highlighted by Education Scotland as an important strength. Work with Strathallan School and links with the Parish Church were cited as effective partnerships which enhance the curriculum.

3.26 Environment for Learning

- The original building built circa 1840 is traditional, part two storey building with sandstone walls under pitched slate roofs. The building was extended circa 1960 with a single storey traditional building with render and stone walls.
- The school grounds and adjacent park at Forgandenny provide a wide range of opportunities for the pupils to experience a range of team and individual sports, such as football, cricket, netball and athletics in the summer term.

- There is a shared break out space at Forgandenny Primary School, allowing children to work outwith their classrooms, independently, on progressing school improvement through their committee work, such as the Penguin Parliament, which is the pupil council.
- Forgandenny Primary School has a small kitchen area for use of all pupils, contributing to their learning in health, wellbeing and social skills.

3.27 Experiences and Opportunities

- Forgandenny Primary School has pupils of both sexes at each stage, allowing all pupils to interact and socialise with groups of children their own age and sex, at appropriate levels. The benefit to pupils is that they are given opportunities to widen their social circle, allowing them to foster positive relationships and tolerance.
- Pupils from Forteviot have already become an integral part of the school community at Forgandenny Primary School.
- Pupils are given a range of opportunities to be involved in improving their school, such as being Buddies, where older children work with younger ones, and Responsibility Groups, which focus on Global Goals, to help improve the environment. Most recently the school achieved its second Eco Schools Scotland Green Flag.
- At Forgandenny parents play a key role in the leadership and ethos of the school. The Parent Forum organises a range of social and fundraising events to support the school. In addition, the school has an active Parent Council. Parents are welcomed into school and encouraged to be involved in their children's learning, including attendance at pupil-led events. The positive relationships fostered with parents with the school, allows them to further support their children in their learning at school.
- Forgandenny Primary School involves children in the formal parental consultation evenings with the aim of opening up learning conversations between teacher, parent and pupil
- After school there are sports activities run by parents and the close proximity to Strathallan School allows pupils the opportunity to participate in a range of after school clubs.

This provides the pupils with activities that are local to them, reducing travel times and reliance on parent transport, but also giving them opportunities to build on school relationships by continued interaction with their peer group. The benefits of healthy activities and sports have an impact on the pupils' health and wellbeing, which in turn improves their readiness to learn.

- The local park is used for the school's Daily Mile, providing all children and staff in the school the benefit of daily exercise and fresh air, which in turn helps to improve focus, concentration and behaviour in class and embeds physical activity into the school's approach to Health & Wellbeing.
- Transition from P7 to secondary school is supported by the larger number of pupils in Forgandenny Primary School, offering peer support and friendship groups.

In summary:

- Re-designating the Forteviot Primary School catchment area to Forgandenny Primary School will allow all pupils access to a school with learning groups across all stages.
- The range of learning experiences for children will be wide and varied, with classroom learning being supplemented by learning groups across stages and between classes, bringing with that the opportunity to share learning experiences between the youngest and oldest pupils, as well as within the immediate peer group.
- All pupils will have access to peer support, helping to develop their social and interpersonal skills, both in the classroom and in the social activities available at the school.
- The children and parents of Forteviot Primary School will have access to an educational establishment which has a well-planned and committed approach to taking forward improvement. There is sufficient capacity at Forgandenny Primary School to fully meet the needs of the Forteviot Primary School children without having a detrimental impact on the learning of the existing pupils of Forgandenny Primary School.

4. OPTIONS CONSIDERED

A number of options were considered for the future of Forteviot Primary School as part of the Options Appraisal:

a) School remains open but continue with mothballing of Forteviot Primary School – pupils attend Forgandenny Primary School.

The school has been mothballed since October 2016.

Leaving the school open but with continued mothballing of the school is only a reasonable option if there are likely to be changes within the catchment area in the next 2-3 years which would result in an increase in the pupil roll.

Pupil numbers are not projected to increase in the next 4 years. There has been a downward trend in the number of people under 16 living in the catchment area in recent years.

The number of children of pre-school age living in the catchment area is very small, and in recent years there have been occasions where there have been no P1 age children in the catchment area. There are no significant housing or other developments which are likely to impact positively on the size of the pupil population in the next 2-3 years.

If the school remains mothballed, the building would remain out of use awaiting a potential reopening or final closure. While the school is mothballed, there is a possibility of it reopening, which could be viewed as a positive. However, continued mothballing creates continued uncertainty for parents and the community. In addition, there are no opportunities to progress alternative uses for the building, which may include community asset transfer, lease or sale of the building, all of which may benefit the wider community. Therefore, on balance, it is considered that continued mothballing is more likely to be a negative than a positive, in terms of community impact.

If Forteviot Primary School was left mothballed on an indefinite basis, Perth and Kinross Council would incur annual costs to maintain the building. Unoccupied buildings can deteriorate more rapidly than operational premises and can become a focus for opportunistic crimes and/or targets for vandalism whether the premises are located in urban or rural areas.

In summary, on the basis that there is no indication that pupil numbers will increase in the next 2-3 years, mothballing is not considered a good use of resources and would prevent the building being used to benefit the community. Therefore, continued mothballing is not viewed as a reasonable alternative.

b) Consider closing school – pupils attend Forgandenny Primary School.

Forgandenny Primary School currently accommodates pupils from Forteviot Primary as a result of the mothballing. Pupil numbers at Forgandenny are projected to remain static for the next 4 years. Forgandenny Primary has capacity to continue to accommodate the projected pupil numbers should Forteviot Primary School be closed. This option is considered to be reasonable and further detail is provided in relation to educational benefits, travel, environmental impact, community impact and financial impact.

Forteviot Primary School and Forgandenny Primary School already had links with each other prior to the mothballing and pupils who moved there in October 2016 following the mothballing are now settled at Forgandenny Primary School.

Travel arrangements for pupils and staff have been in place since October 2016 and there are no known issues. Some of the pupils have a shorter distance to travel.

There are environmental benefits to Forteviot Primary School pupils being transferred to Forgandenny Primary School in that they are being transported by the Council rather than travelling individually as they did through placing requests.

Pupil numbers at Forteviot Primary School have been reducing year on year since 2009/10 due to a reduction in school age children living in the catchment area. Community feedback is that there is limited employment in the area compared to previously and that housing is not affordable for families.

These are factors which are likely to have had an impact on the number of children living in the catchment area. Pupil numbers have also decreased due to parents requesting placements at other local schools. These placing requests out of the area have in the past been offset to some degree by placing requests into Forteviot Primary School; however this has not been enough to sustain the roll latterly.

If the school was to close there would be no significant impact on the community in terms of access to facilities for community events: other facilities such as the hall are available within Forteviot for community use and are currently well used by the community. The school was not used for lets latterly.

It is not considered that the closure of the school would have a negative impact on the sustainability of the community. Forteviot is located 7 miles south west of Perth and is approximately 2.7 miles from Forgandenny and approximately 3.2 miles from Dunning. The community currently travel to access health, retail and leisure facilities.

The Council has received requests from a business for the use of the school should it close. Closure of the school would provide opportunities for the building to be used for the benefit of the community, either for business or residential use, or for community use if a suitable plan was identified.

Pupil numbers at Forgandenny Primary School (not including Forteviot Primary School pupils) have been reducing over recent years and the positive impact of Forteviot pupils on the school roll supports the sustainability of Forgandenny Primary School which is also in a rural location and is a rural school.

It is considered that closure of the school is the most appropriate response to the issue of decreasing numbers of young children living in the catchment area. This, coupled with parents choosing to place their children at other primary schools, has led to the school being mothballed.

There is no indication that the roll will increase in future years as pre-school children numbers are very low and are likely to remain so. This option also has the benefit of supporting the sustainability of Forgandenny Primary School, which is approximately 2.7 miles from Forteviot Primary School and is also a small rural school. There is no evidence to indicate that this option would have an adverse impact on the community, travelling arrangements or the environment.

c) Consider closing school – pupils attend alternative primary school to Forgandenny Primary School.

The closest alternative to Forgandenny Primary School for Forteviot pupils is Dunning Primary School which is approximately 3.2 miles away from Forteviot Primary School. This is the only neighbouring school which could reasonably be considered as an alternative, as it is the closest school other than Forgandenny Primary School. It would not benefit pupils to attend any school other than the nearest neighbouring school in terms of increased travel time. Dunning Primary School has a capacity of 125 pupils compared with the capacity of 50 pupils at Forteviot Primary School. The pupil roll at Dunning Primary School at Census 2017 is 117; therefore there is not enough capacity at Dunning Primary School to accommodate all 13 of the primary children who reside in the Forteviot Primary School catchment area as at Census 2017. It would not be good practice to make changes to a catchment area where the number of available places in the school was such that all pupils residing in the area could not be accommodated at that school.

Dunning Primary School is close to capacity and could not accommodate all of the Forteviot catchment pupils at this point. The roll at Dunning Primary School will continue to be high and therefore this is unlikely to be an option which could be considered in the near future.

The pupils from Forteviot Primary School have settled in well to Forgandenny Primary School. Forteviot Primary School and Forgandenny Primary School had a close relationship prior to the mothballing, including a shared headship, joint outdoor learning, workshops, P7 trips and shared transition days for secondary school. The pupils also live nearer to Forgandenny than Dunning and have less distance to travel.

Prior to mothballing, parents from Forteviot have generally chosen to request places at Forgandenny Primary School rather than Dunning Primary School. There are 9 pupils who reside in the Forteviot catchment area at Forgandenny Primary School (Census 2017). Two of these pupils went to Forgandenny Primary School when the school was mothballed but the remainder attended Forgandenny following successful placing requests.

Pupils attending Forgandenny Primary School from Forteviot make Forgandenny Primary School, which is a small rural school, more sustainable by increasing pupil numbers.

In summary, it is therefore considered that the option of closing Forteviot Primary with the pupils attending another neighbouring school, other than Forgandenny, is not a reasonable alternative. Dunning Primary School cannot accommodate all the pupils from Forteviot. Dunning is also further to travel for most pupils in the Forteviot catchment.

d) Catchment area is reviewed to determine whether this would increase the school roll sufficiently to ensure the future sustainability of the school.

A catchment review can, in principle, be a reasonable option in some cases to increase the potential roll, and therefore sustainability, of a school.

An in-depth analysis is required in each case to ascertain if a sustainable increase in school roll could be achieved and a detrimental impact on neighbouring schools is not created as a result.

Following a mapping exercise it is considered unlikely that the catchment area could be made more sustainable by implementing any of the options examined. This is primarily because there are only small numbers of pupils living outwith the main settlements surrounding the catchment area which are Forgandenny, Dunning and Bridge of Earn. In addition, the pupils who do live outside the main settlements live closer to other schools.

There are limited numbers of pupils living in the catchment areas surrounding Forteviot Primary School catchment area and the boundaries would have to be moved in a number of directions to make a new catchment potentially sustainable. It is also likely that the majority of current primary school pupils would continue to attend their current school, so in the short term there would be little benefit to the Forteviot roll.

In January 2018, if all new P1s from the combined adjusted catchment areas proposed within the options appraisal attended Forteviot Primary School, this would equate to 10 pupils in the next 4 years. However, even with an additional 10 pupils, the school roll would only be 13 pupils by 2021.

In addition, a number of the potential boundary changes would have a detrimental impact on pupils in those catchment areas in relation to increased travel distance. In some cases pupils would have to travel past existing primary schools to reach Forteviot, therefore not accessing their nearest primary school.

A suggestion was made from members of the community that pupils from Oudenarde could be accommodated at Forteviot Primary School. There are currently 56 primary school pupils living in Oudenarde who are zoned to attend Inch View Primary School in Perth, although a number of these pupils attend a number of different schools as a result of successful placing requests. Oudenarde pupils are currently accommodated at Inch View Primary School until a new school is built at Oudenarde.

Accommodating children from Oudenarde at Forteviot Primary School would create a number of practical difficulties. These include increased distance and travel time. The most significant difficulty would be that Forteviot Primary School cannot accommodate the current number of primary pupils living in Oudenarde, let alone increasing numbers through further planned housebuilding at Oudenarde.

In summary, it is unlikely that increasing the catchment area in a number of directions will create a sustainable catchment for Forteviot Primary School, due to the small numbers of children living in these areas. Furthermore, these changes would likely be detrimental to those children as a result of increased travel distance. A number of schools adjoining the Forteviot catchment are also rural schools, and so there is also a risk that the sustainability of the rolls for some of those schools would be adversely affected if their catchment area were to be reduced.

e) Immediate re-opening of the school was not considered to be a reasonable option, given the very small number of children resident in the catchment area. If the school were to re-open in August 2018, the maximum pupil numbers from the catchment would be 2. It is highly unlikely that any of the pupils from the Forteviot Primary School catchment area would return to the school were it to re-open, based on feedback from the pre-consultation sessions. Even assuming all new P1 pupils living in Forteviot catchment area were to attend Forteviot Primary School if it were to re-open, the school roll would only reach between 2 and 4 pupils for the period 2018 - 2022. This was therefore not included as an option for consideration.

f) In developing the Options Appraisal for Forteviot Primary School, Perth and Kinross Council undertook a robust process of consultation work and consulted face to face with key stakeholders which allowed opportunities for parents, staff pupils and the wider communities to consider and discuss the alternatives with the Council and provide valuable feedback to the Council on the aspects of the alternatives which were reasonable and not reasonable as well as the opportunity to explore other alternatives. This ensured the opportunity for any other alternatives or suggestions to be communicated to the Council in order that the Options Appraisal was comprehensive and inclusive of the key stakeholders' views. This also ensured further opportunity to provide representation of any other alternatives providing the Council with confidence that the Options Appraisals and assessment of alternatives was robust and comprehensive. The statutory consultation process also provided an opportunity for consultees to suggest other alternatives to the proposal during the statutory consultation process. No other alternatives were notified to the Council during this process.

5. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 5.1 On 24 January 2018, Lifelong Learning Committee considered the [options appraisal](#) for Forteviot Primary School and agreed to commence formal consultation on a proposal to close Forteviot Primary School ([Report No 18/14](#) refers) in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 5.2 An electronic link to the Proposal Paper was issued by letter on 16 March 2018 to those individuals and bodies listed under Distribution within the document. The Proposal Paper was also published on the Council's website: www.pkc.gov.uk

- 5.3 The Proposal Paper made clear to consultees that the consultation period would run from Monday 19 March 2018 until Thursday 17 May 2018 – a period of at least 30 school days.
- 5.4 The proposal on which consultation took place was that:
- Education provision at Forteviot Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;
 - The pupils of Forteviot Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Forgandenny Primary School, from 1 July 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter; and
 - The delineated catchment area of Forgandenny Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Forteviot Primary School from 1 July 2019.
- 5.5 The requirements for consulting on a relevant proposal relating to schools are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.
- A Proposal Paper was published on Monday 19 March 2018. A copy of this document was available free of charge to the consultees listed within the document.
 - The Proposal Paper was published on the Perth and Kinross Council website www.pkc.gov.uk and was available in paper copy upon request.
 - An advertisement ran in the Courier and Advertiser and the Perthshire Advertiser on 16 March 2018.
 - One public meeting was held to discuss the proposal on Thursday 26 April 2018.
 - The Consultation period ended on Thursday 17 May 2018.
 - Education Scotland's involvement consisted of: the options appraisal and proposal document being sent to them, and visits to the site of Forgandenny and Forteviot Primary Schools, including discussion with relevant consultees. They also received a copy of all written representations and minute of the public meeting. They then prepared a report on the educational aspects of the proposal. This is attached as Appendix 4.
- 5.6 The following schools are affected by the proposal:
- Forteviot Primary School
 - Forgandenny Primary School
- 5.7 In accordance with statutory requirements and good practice, the following persons were consulted:
- The Parent Council (if any) of the affected schools
 - The parents of the pupils and children at the affected schools
 - The parents of children expected to attend the affected schools within 2 years of the date of publication of this proposal document
 - The pupils at the affected schools

- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools
- The trade union and professional association representatives of the above staff
- The Community Council
- Relevant users of the affected schools
- Elected Members of Perth and Kinross Council
- Lay Members of Lifelong Learning Committee
- The Constituency MSPs and List MSPs covering the Constituency
- The Constituency MP
- The Director, Housing & Environment, Perth and Kinross Council
- Tayside Contracts
- LiveActive Leisure
- Education Scotland

5.8 The number of letters issued with details of the Proposal Paper was 151.

5.9 During the consultation period, representations were sought from interested parties, either in oral or written form or electronically. A generic email account was set up by the Council to receive enquiries on the proposal or representations.

5.10 This Consultation Report is the Council's response to the issues raised during the consultation period on the Proposal Paper.

5.11 This Consultation Report was published on the Council's website for a period of no less than 3 weeks prior to final consideration by Lifelong Learning Committee on 31 October 2018.

6. THE PUBLIC MEETING

6.1 The public meeting was held in Forgandenny Primary School on Thursday 26 April 2018. Three parents and two community members attended. A full note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1 which details the questions and issues raised at the meeting.

6.2 The small number of attendees at the public meeting and the questions and issues raised, indicate that there were no significant issues raised by parents or members of the public regarding the proposal.

7. RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

7.1 In all, two online response forms were received. Both responses agreed with the Council's proposal. Both responses were only partially completed and did not contain the respondents' names, addresses or respondent groups. No written representations were received. The details of the respondents are contained within the Summary of Consultation Responses, attached as Appendix 2.

7.2 In summary, the oral responses can be grouped broadly as follows:

- Comment that by the time the proposal would be implemented, Forteviot would have been part of Forgandenny Primary School's catchment area for 3 years.
- Clarification was sought regarding the number of P1 pupils due to start at Forgandenny PS in August 2018.
- Queries were raised regarding the impact additional Forteviot catchment pupils would have on the availability of spaces for younger siblings of placing requests attending Forgandenny PS. It was stated that there will be an effect on the community if siblings don't get into the school and they would be losing part of our school family. Siblings may be removed if the younger ones don't get a place. This could also affect childminders in the area.
- Clarification was sought on the maximum number of P1 pupils who can be accepted into P1 at Forgandenny PS and what would happen if there was no room at Forgandenny or Dunbarney Primary Schools.
- Clarification was sought on whether there was a plan to move Forgandenny Primary School to Forteviot Primary School if there were too many pupils at Forgandenny Primary School and whether there were any plans to extend Forgandenny Primary School.
- Clarification was sought that the 17 houses planned for the Forgandenny catchment area had been accounted for and whether the Planning Department check school capacities before granting planning permission.
- Clarification was sought on whether Forteviot Primary School was owned by Dupplin Estate and what would happen to the building if the proposal was implemented.
- Clarification was sought on why only some people in the village have received letters about the consultation, whether prospective parents and the Community Council had been written to and whether Strathallan School could be included as statutory consultees.
- Clarification was sought regarding whether Forgandenny PS would be allocated an additional classroom assistant if the number of P1 pupils increased.
- Clarification was sought on whether the whole catchment boundary was to change and it was stated that the proposed new catchment area will be huge.
- Clarification was sought on whether Forteviot PS could be used for children living in Oudenarde.

- 7.3 In summary, 151 letters were issued inviting comments and participation in the consultation. Three parents are known to have participated in the consultation to make their views known.
- 7.4 Specific consultation meetings took place with pupils and staff at Forgandenny Primary School and full details of these is attached as Appendix 3.

8. EDUCATION AUTHORITY RESPONSE TO WRITTEN AND ORAL REPRESENTATIONS

8.1 Clarification was sought that by the time the proposal would be implemented, Forteviot will have been part of Forgandenny catchment for 3 years.

Yes. Forteviot Primary School was mothballed in October 2016, so if the proposal is to be implemented at the start of the new school session in August 2019, that will be almost three years that Forteviot pupils have been zoned to Forgandenny Primary School. The positive aspect of this is that the Council has been able to see how the pupils have been integrated into Forgandenny Primary School.

8.2 Clarification was sought regarding the number of P1 pupils from Forteviot due to start at Forgandenny Primary School in August 2018.

Since the proposal paper was written, one Primary One pupil for the year 2018/19 from Forteviot catchment has become known to the Authority. There is no knowledge of any others as they have not been enrolled in a Perth and Kinross school. The confirmed P1 intake at Forgandenny Primary School in August 2018 was 14 pupils which consisted of 10 catchment pupils and 4 placing requests.

8.3 Queries were raised regarding the impact additional Forteviot catchment Primary Ones have on the availability of spaces for younger siblings of placing request pupils looking to attend Forgandenny Primary.

At the time of the public meeting taking place, placing requests had not yet been finalised for August 2018, therefore parents who had applied had not received a decision. As the pupils in the Forteviot Primary catchment area are within the temporarily zoned catchment for Forgandenny Primary, then they are not placing requests. Every parent making a placing request, for any school, is taking a risk that it may not be granted. The priority for the Local Authority is to ensure that there is sufficient space within a school for catchment pupils. Thereafter, the Admissions Policy does recognise that those who make a placing request where there is an older sibling already attending the school are given priority among other placing requests.

The majority of pupils in the Forteviot Primary catchment attended Forgandenny Primary School prior to the school being mothballed, so there was no sudden influx of pupils after mothballing.

Last year, all category 2 placing requests who had an older sibling already attending the school were allocated places in Forgandenny Primary School but some category 3 placing requests who did not have an older sibling in attendance at the school were not granted places.

8.4 Clarification was sought on the maximum number of Primary One pupils who can be accepted at Forgandenny Primary School.

It was confirmed that there is no cap on the primary 1 intake.

There is a degree of flexibility and numbers would depend on the composition of classes and the allocation of classroom space.

Having 3 classrooms in school helps with this flexibility. Small rural schools are experienced at managing fluctuating numbers and ages of children and taking account of that in setting class structures.

8.5 Clarification was sought on where pupils would attend school if there is no room at Forgandenny or Dunbarney Primaries.

There is sufficient capacity at Forgandenny and Dunbarney Primary Schools for catchment pupils. In addition, there is a procedure for reserving places in schools, which can only be allocated to category 1 pupils living in the catchment area. The purpose of a reserved places policy is to ensure that sufficient space is maintained in a school for catchment pupils. The number of reserved places is reviewed annually for each school.

8.6 Clarification was sought on whether there was a plan that if there were too many pupils at Forgandenny, the school would move to the Forteviot building.

That has never been considered and would not be a workable plan as Forteviot Primary School building is smaller than Forgandenny Primary School.

8.7 Clarification was sought that the 17 new houses planned for in the Forgandenny catchment area, had been accounted for.

Future housebuilding plans have been considered as part of the pupil projections for Forgandenny Primary School. There is a legal duty to educate children in their local school wherever possible, and there is flexibility in how the classes in the school are structured (see paragraph 8.4).

8.8 Clarification was sought on whether there are any plans to extend Forgandenny Primary School.

There are no plans to extend Forgandenny Primary School. There is no requirement to consider a building extension based on pupil projections.

8.9 Clarification was sought on whether the Planning Department check on school capacities before granting planning permission.

Yes. As well as developer contributions for larger developments, there are also regular meetings between staff in Education & Children's Services and Planning, where these issues are discussed.

- 8.10 **Clarification was sought regarding a new development planned for the area and whether the Local Development Plan (LDP) allows for this.**
The LDP has been considered in determining projected pupil figures.
- 8.11 **Clarification was sought on whether Forteviot Primary School was owned by Dupplin Estate.**
No, the school building belongs to Perth & Kinross Council. The playing fields are leased from the estate, however the building is not.
- 8.12 **It was queried why a meeting like this was not held last year.**
We were not in a statutory consultation period last year. Mothballing of a school is an option open to the local authority in limited circumstances and with parental agreement, where existing pupils are affected. This was discussed and agreed with the affected parents. There is no requirement to carry out a statutory consultation at that point. However, now there is a formal proposal to close Forteviot Primary, this has to be consulted on.
- 8.13 **Clarification was sought regarding why only some people have received letters inviting them.**
As part of a statutory consultation, there are categories of people who are statutory consultees who have to be consulted with and those are the people who have been written to directly. The wider public who may not be statutory consultees are invited as part of the public notices and social media advertising so they can also participate. The Community Council is also a statutory consultee.
- 8.14 **It was queried that if there was an influx of 20 children, would Forteviot Primary be opened up again.**
Not necessarily. It would depend on where they lived, their stage in school and other factors.
- 8.15 **Clarification was sought on whether other schools are closing?**
Yes, there are schools closing in other local authority areas, as well as proposals to close some other schools in Perth & Kinross.
- 8.16 **Clarification was sought regarding had prospective parents been contacted, and the wider community, other than by letter and using social media?**
Yes, prospective parents that are known to Perth & Kinross Council have been contacted, as they are statutory consultees.
- 8.17 **A query was raised that the Community Council did not receive a letter**
A Community Councillor was in attendance at the meeting and it was confirmed that a letter was sent to the Community Council as the Community Council is a statutory consultee.
Post meeting note: The distribution of letters was checked following the public meeting and it was confirmed that the letter was emailed to Earn Community Council on 16 March 2018.

- 8.18 **Clarification was sought regarding teachers at Strathallan Independent School who may come to the school, can be prospective parents, but haven't been offered a job yet How would they be consulted with?**
They would be treated in the same way as anyone else moving into the catchment area. Prospective parents who do not yet live in the catchment area can participate as members of the wider public at this stage.
- 8.19 **A query was raised regarding whether the statutory consultation list can include Strathallan.**
If there are parents there whose children attend Forgandenny Primary School, they would have received a letter as part of the statutory consultation. If not, they would be made aware by the publicity used for the wider community. There is no requirement, or reason to include an independent school as a specific consultee. Independent schools in the catchment area of a Perth and Kinross school are not statutory consultees.
- 8.20 **A query was raised regarding whether the road at the side of the school is a Council road. Why is it never gritted?**
Perth & Kinross Council categorises and prioritises all roads for gritting and ploughing purposes. It is likely that in terms of the road network across Perth & Kinross, the short lane would be a low priority.
- 8.21 **Clarification was sought on if there is an excess of new Primary One pupils, will the school be given an additional Classroom Assistant.**
It would depend on the school roll, which dictates the numbers of teacher and primary school support staff. In addition to this, there are also Pupil Support Assistants who are allocated to schools depending on the educational needs of individual pupils.
- 8.22 **A query was raised regarding when will we know when placing requests have been allocated.**
The relevant parents are informed in writing by 30 April in the year for which the request is made.
- 8.23 **Clarification was sought on whether the whole boundary is being changed.**
No, there is no review of Forgandenny's existing catchment area, other than the subsuming of the existing Forteviot catchment area. Boundaries with other schools are unaffected.
- 8.24 **Clarification was sought on what will happen to Forteviot Primary?**
Education & Children's Services would declare it surplus to educational requirements. There are a number of possible options for use of the building such as community asset transfer and sale on the open market.
- 8.25 **Clarification was sought on whether Forteviot could be used for Oudenarde children?**
This was addressed in the Proposal Paper and discounted as a viable option. There are currently 57 primary aged pupils living in Oudenarde, which would take both Forteviot and Forgandenny over capacity.

It was noted that some households in the Oudenarde development rely on public transport, which would limit their involvement in the school community, due to the lack of transport between the communities.

8.26 Clarification was sought on whether Oudenarde children are being treated differently to others in adjacent communities.

When Bertha Park High School opens, Oudenarde, along with Dunbarney and Forgandenny, will feed to that secondary school.

9. EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

9.1 In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was produced by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal.

9.2 Education Scotland visited Forgandenny and Forteviot Primary Schools week commencing 21 May 2018 to speak to relevant consultees. Education Scotland did not attend the public meeting held on 26 April 2018 in connection with the Council's proposals.

9.3 The Education Scotland report is reproduced in full (Appendix 4).

9.4 The report supports the proposal and is summarised below:

- Education Scotland acknowledges that the Council has presented a comprehensive account of the educational benefits of closing Forteviot Primary School. Since the mothballing of the school in October 2016, children from the Forteviot catchment area and formerly on the school roll at Forteviot Primary School have been educated at Forgandenny Primary School.

This has enabled Forteviot children to access learning with groups of learners at all stages within a primary school. It has supported a greater number of learning opportunities across and between classes. It has provided Forteviot children with the opportunity to benefit from peer support from a wider group of peers and to develop their social and interpersonal skills in a broader range of appropriate contexts. Transition to secondary school has been strengthened, supported by a wider group of peers and friendship groupings. There has been no noticeable detrimental impact on children's education following their transfer to Forgandenny Primary School. As pupils of Forgandenny Primary School, children have benefited from established school partnerships such as those with Strathallan School. These provide access to digital learning and sports facilities, enhancing the curricular experience and supporting children's achievement and health and wellbeing. Children have also been able to benefit from Forgandenny Primary School's well-established involvement in both outdoor learning activities and sustainable education initiatives.

- Education Scotland notes that many parents had already exercised their right to placing requests for other schools prior to the mothballing, due to concerns about the falling roll and a reduction in opportunities for children to socialise with peers. In addition, the Forgandenny Primary School building has been rated more positively than the Forteviot building in relation to both suitability and condition and a closure decision would mean financial savings could be secured in line with the council's drive for best value.

The proposal further secures a long term sustainable school roll and future for the Forgandenny school community and the proposed enlarged catchment area. Overall, HM Inspectors consider that there are many clear and well-founded educational benefits to the proposal.

- Education Scotland notes that children who met with HM Inspectors were positive about the proposal overall.

Those travelling the 2.7 miles, or six minutes, on average, from the Forteviot catchment were anxious to know if transport would continue to be provided for them once their school was closed. They expressed a desire for consistency in the council's approach, in that should Forteviot Primary School be closed then other schools with similarly small rolls should also be considered in the same way.

- Education Scotland notes that staff who met with HM Inspectors believe that there has been no negative impact for Forteviot children resulting from the move to Forgandenny Primary School. They identify a number of advantages, including a more positive learning experience overall.

They had some concerns, that with land in the catchment area now zoned for housing, the Forgandenny building and grounds would not have sufficient capacity in the future to cope with the increased demand from catchment families.

They also recognised the potential impact on families, given that with an increased school roll, any future placing requests were less likely to be successful and therefore some siblings might not be able to be educated alongside their brother or sister.

- Parents who met with HM Inspectors expressed similar views to staff. While no concerns had been raised by their children, as parents, they did have a concern over what might happen to the existing school building at Forteviot and were keen that the rich potential of the setting was capitalised upon for the benefit of the community. Some parents highlighted that the site at Forgandenny was limited in size, with restricted space both indoors and out, compared with the Forteviot site, despite Forteviot only having two classrooms and that the space currently available might be further compromised in the future, if temporary accommodation or an extension was required to accommodate an increased number of pupils.

- Education Scotland indicates that as the proposal will lead to the closure of an accessible rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of the factors to which it should have special regard. Prior to formulating the proposal, the council had given appropriate consideration to any reasonable alternative to closure and evaluated these accordingly as outlined in their options appraisal paper.

In undertaking their options appraisal, the council gave well-balanced consideration to any potential impact of the closure on the local community, the environment and children, young people and other school users. A pre-consultation exercise was carried out with the community to help inform the options appraisal. Information on pupil numbers, house building and financial implications were also sought and presented as part of this exercise.

- Education Scotland advises that Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to permanently discontinue education provision at Forteviot Primary School, making consequent changes to catchment areas, is of clear educational benefit. Since the mothballing of the school in October 2016, the Forteviot pupils have become well-integrated into Forgandenny Primary School, benefiting from being educated alongside a larger peer group at every stage. The children have adjusted well to the move and to the minimal additional travel involved and overall there has been no detrimental impact.
- Education Scotland notes that alternative options to closure have been very well-considered. With a declining and unsustainable school roll and facilities now requiring significant investment, potential savings can be secured as a result of the closure, minimising the impact of any cuts to education services and contributing to the Council's vision of best value and that no significant objections to the proposal as it stands were received.

9.5 **Perth and Kinross Council's Response to Education Scotland's Report**

The Council welcomes the report from Education Scotland and accepts its findings and notes that pupils, parents and staff have raised no objections to the Council's proposal.

In response to the findings contained within the Education Scotland report, Perth and Kinross response is as follows:

9.5.1 **In finalising the proposal, the council should reassure children and their families about future long term travel arrangements for children in the Forteviot catchment area.**

If the proposal was accepted, this would result in all pupils who live within the catchment area of Forteviot Primary School continuing to be provided with free home to school transport to Forgandenny Primary School where their home address is more than 2 miles from Forgandenny Primary School.

This will include all pupils who attended Forgandenny Primary School as a result of a successful placing request from Forteviot catchment area, made prior to mothballing.

This would be in accordance with the Council's Home to School Transport Policy. This policy states that all primary school pupils attending their catchment school, who live more than 2 miles from their catchment school, will be entitled to free home to school transport.

9.5.2 It should also continue to engage with the Forteviot community regarding any future plans for the Forteviot Primary School building.

Perth and Kinross Council will continue to engage with the local community regarding future plans for the Forteviot Primary School building.

10. RURAL SCHOOL – COMPLIANCE WITH SECTIONS 11A TO 13 OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

10.1 Forteviot Primary School is an accessible rural school, and the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 therefore requires the Education Authority to have special regard to the following factors:

- The likely effect on the local community as a consequence of the proposal; and
- The likely effect caused by different travelling arrangements that may be required.

10.2 Effect on the Local Community

Community Impact – Loss of the school

10.2.1 At the community drop-in session held as part of the options appraisal process, the community described some of the challenges of living in a rural community, primarily the lack of employment and affordable housing. They linked this to the lack of young families living in the area or moving into the area. It is true that pupil numbers are falling, and that the reasons identified by the community are likely to be the main factors leading to a drop in the numbers of children living in the catchment area.

However, it also seems to be the case that families who do live within the catchment area are more mobile and exercising their right to choose other schools for their children.

10.2.2 The community did not suggest that the lack of a school would deter new families from moving into the area. It is clear that families living in the catchment area are travelling to access education as well as other services and so it appears to be an accepted part of life within the community.

10.2.3 In 2017, the Council closed schools in Calvine (Struan Primary School) and Enochdhu (Straloch Primary School) after they had been mothballed for 5 years. The evidence from both areas was that families were not deterred from moving into the area by having to travel to a neighbouring village.

There are clear parallels with Forteviot in that the communities already travelled to other local communities to access services. Neither school/community was as accessible as Forteviot, which is close to Perth and has good road links, which will be a factor in promoting sustainability of the community.

10.2.4 The Kinross-shire Almond and Earn Action Partnership has been working with communities across the two wards to highlight key inequalities people face in Kinross-shire, Almond and Earn. The group's remit is to identify opportunities for public services to support communities in developing solutions to the challenges they face. The Partnership's Local Action Plan published in October 2017 has put a series of actions in place to explore which buildings and public spaces can be made available for community groups to use. This action was informed by a growing demand from many community groups who need facilities to meet and run activities in.

10.2.5 The outcome which the Action Partnership is aiming to achieve with this action is to build resilience within the communities of the two wards and to get more people involved in local activities in the community in which they live.

Evidence shows many people in the ward feel isolated; as the area is rural, people often have to travel great distances to take part in activities they enjoy and sometimes transportation to groups is not always possible for people without access to a car. By creating new opportunities for people to get involved in the Action Partnership, it aims to get more people participating in activities locally which can improve people's health and wellbeing. This work already being undertaken across the wider community will contribute effectively towards ensuring the sustainability of the community. This is more likely to be effective for the sustainability of the community as a whole, than to maintain the school in the community. Particularly, given that many parents living in the area were already content with having to travel for school.

10.2.6 The evidence indicates that there will be little effect on the sustainability of the community if the school were to close.

Community Impact - Use of the Building

10.2.7 Community events in Forteviot are generally held at the village hall and the school was not particularly well used latterly by the community.

Within the village there is also a church and a bowling club, so there is not a lack of facilities for the community to meet or hold events. It is likely that the village hall will continue to be the main focus for community activity.

10.2.8 The closure of the school may result in additional facilities being made available to the community if the building is sold or leased for community use.

10.2.9 The suggestions received for the building at the community drop-in session were: community activities, business centre, sports, specialist school, cultural purposes, a community project and artisan workshops.

10.2.10 The Council has received enquiries from members of the community for the use of the building should it be closed.

10.3 Travel Arrangements

10.3.1 As Forteviot Primary School is a rural school, special regard was paid to the rural school factors. These were considered fully in the Options Appraisal stage and were a focus of the pre-consultation with the community.

10.3.2 The travel distance from Forteviot Primary School to Forgandenny Primary School is approximately 2.7 miles with a travel time of 6 minutes. The current travel arrangements for pupils living in Forteviot catchment area have been in place since Forteviot Primary School was mothballed in October 2016. There have been no issues with the travel arrangements. Taking this option forward would not affect the travel arrangements for current pupils and future pupils are unlikely to have hugely different travel arrangements.

10.3.3 Travelling for primary school education is common across Perth & Kinross because of the geography of the area. Prior to the mothballing of Forteviot Primary School, pupils journeyed between approximately 2 and 5.5 miles each way. Since attending Forgandenny Primary School, journey distances are between approximately 1 and 8.2 miles each way. So, for some pupils in the Forteviot catchment area, travel distance to school has in fact decreased.

10.3.4 Staff in Perth and Kinross tend to travel throughout the area to work in schools. Many staff do not live within the catchment area of the school they work in. A distance of 2.7 miles is a relatively short distance to travel in rural Perth and Kinross. It is therefore considered that there is very limited impact on staff travelling arrangements.

10.3.5 The community requires to travel to access other services such as GP and dental surgeries, shops and post offices. Forgandenny Primary School is closer than most other facilities which the community require to access.

10.3.6 As the school is not generally used by the community, there should be no impact on travelling arrangements for any other users of the school's facilities. In any event, the distance is relatively small and the local community is used to travelling to access other services.

11. ALLEGED OMISSIONS OR INACCURACIES

11.1 Section (10) (3) of the 2010 Act also places a requirement on the Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission within the Proposal Paper which has either been identified by the Council or raised by consultees.

This section of the 2010 Act also requires the Council to provide a statement on the action taken in respect of the inaccuracy or omission, or, if no action was taken, to state that fact and why.

- 11.2 In the course of the consultation exercise, there were no areas identified by respondents as being inaccurate or omitted from the Proposal Paper during the consultation period.

12. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

- 12.1 Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 states that: After the Education Authority has received Education Scotland's report, the Authority is to review the relevant proposal having regard (in particular) to:

- (i) written representations received by the Authority (from any person) during the consultation period,
- (ii) oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meeting, and
- (iii) Education Scotland's report.

- 12.2 Following receipt of the Education Scotland report, two online representations and oral representations made at a public meeting held during the consultation period, officers reviewed the proposals.

- 12.3 The feedback from the consultation was considered by officers where all the questions and comments raised were considered in detail. Data and factual information was checked where required and advice and input was sought from other Council Services where needed to consider the issues raised. This ensured that the Council met the requirements to review the proposal under section 9(1) and 13(5) of the 2010 Act.

- 12.4 Officers of the Education Authority have listened carefully to the points made at the public meeting and have considered equally carefully the Education Scotland report and the online representations.

The proposal was reviewed to consider whether any of the representations led to the Council to reconsider other options as being reasonable alternatives to the proposal to close Forteviot Primary School. None of the representations led officers to conclude that any of these options should be reconsidered as reasonable alternatives.

The Educational Benefits were reviewed in respect of the Education Scotland report and representations made.

There were no factors included in the Education Scotland report or representations made requiring any aspect of the Educational Benefits to be reconsidered.

There were no aspects included in the representations made which provided a different conclusion in relation to the rural school factors.

Having reviewed the Education Scotland report and feedback from consultees, officers concluded that the basis of the original proposal continues to be the most appropriate response to the falling and unsustainable school roll of Forteviot Primary School.

It is considered that the proposal addresses the issue of the falling and unsustainable school roll and remains the best solution to ensure the children and parents of Forteviot Primary School will have access to an educational establishment which has a well planned and committed approach to taking forward improvement. There is more than enough capacity at Forgandenny Primary School to fully meet the needs of the Forteviot Primary School children without disrupting the learning of the Forgandenny Primary School children.

13. OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS TO SCOTTISH MINISTERS IN TERMS OF SECTION 15(4) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

- 13.1 When the Education Authority has made 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 six working days of that decision.

The Scottish Ministers have an eight week period from the date of that final decision to decide if they will call-in the proposal.

- 13.2 Within the first three weeks of that eight week period, the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Until the outcome of the eight week call-in process is known, the Authority cannot proceed to implement the proposal.
- 13.3 If the Scottish Ministers call-in the proposal, they must refer the proposal to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels who may refuse to consent to the proposal or grant their consent to the proposal subject to conditions or unconditionally.
- 13.4 Recipients of this Consultation Report, and other readers, should note that the legislation allows for any person to make representations to Scottish Ministers within three weeks of the Council taking their final decision to implement a closure proposal.

Perth and Kinross Council's Lifelong Learning Committee will take the decision on whether or not to implement this closure proposal at its meeting on 31 October 2018.

If the decision is taken to implement the closure proposal, any representations to Scottish Ministers, therefore, in this context need to be with the Ministers within three weeks of this date. Therefore, any representations must be made to Scottish Ministers by 22 November 2018.

- 13.5 Anyone wishing to make representation to Scottish Ministers during the three week period referred to above should do so by email to schoolestate@gov.scot or in writing to:

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

14. LEGAL ISSUES

- 14.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 throughout this statutory consultation.
- 14.2 The Council is mindful of its duties in respect of equality and the Equality Impact Assessment did not identify that any parent, child or young person would be treated less favourably as a result of this proposal. Pupils would have access to a wider peer group of both sexes at Forgandenny Primary School which is a positive impact.

In terms of Socio Economic Impact, the assessment identified that there may be a small disadvantage for some parents who would have further to travel when attending meetings or events in school. However, the identified benefits significantly outweigh any disadvantage. It is also not considered to be a significant disadvantage as parents are already travelling to access all other services outside Forteviot village. In addition, a number of pupils from Forteviot catchment area were already attending Forgandenny Primary School as the result of successful placing requests prior to Forteviot Primary School being mothballed.

- 14.3 Under the terms of the Schools (Scotland) (Consultation) Act 2010, it is a legal requirement that the Council should not reach any formal decision without waiting until a period of three weeks starting on the day on which this Consultation Report is published in electronic and printed form has expired.
- 14.4 As it is the intention that this Consultation Report should be published, both electronically and in written form, if required, on 14 September 2018 until 5 October 2018, this meets the statutory requirement to publish this report for more than three weeks before consideration of the proposal by Lifelong Learning Committee.

15. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no staffing implications relating to the proposal. Appropriate arrangements were made for staff at Forteviot Primary School when the school was mothballed in October 2016 and these arrangements have been in place since then.

16. CONCLUSION

- 16.1 The Council now has 4 broad options to consider, namely:

- (a) adopt the proposal;
- (b) withdraw the proposal;
- (c) amend the proposal in some way which allows the proposal to proceed; or
- (d) amend the proposal significantly and undertake a further consultation exercise on a new proposal.

- 16.2 In withdrawing the proposal, the Council would be failing to recognise or respond to there being no opposition from parents, staff and pupils towards the proposal and there is no support from statutory consultees, and the wider community, to keep the school open.

Education Scotland has identified that the proposal has many clear and well-founded educational benefits for young people. This includes the larger number and wider range of peers in Forgandenny Primary School. This allows children to access learning with groups of learners at all stages within a primary school and to develop their social and interpersonal skills in a broader range of appropriate contexts.

- 16.3 If the Council adopts the proposal, it is understood that the educational benefits set out in the Proposal Paper would materialise.

- 16.4 The key points that have been highlighted during the consultation period are as follows:

- The Council's proposals have been generally supported by parents/carers, staff and the wider community.
- The report from Education Scotland acknowledges that the proposal has led to clear and well-founded educational benefits for pupils.

This includes the larger number and wider range of peers in Forgandenny Primary School, which allows children to access a learning environment where there are groups of learners at all stages of school, further allowing them to develop their social and interpersonal skills in a broader range of appropriate contexts.

- The Council, having had special regard to the rural school factors, does not consider that the proposal will adversely affect the sustainability of the community, or that there will be an adverse effect from the premises no longer being available for community use.

17. RECOMMENDATIONS

17.1 On the basis of the feedback received and taking account of the educational and social benefits of the proposal, it is concluded that the following proposal is the most suitable option and it is recommended that the Council:

- Approves that Education provision at Forteviot Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- The pupils of Forteviot Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Forgandenny Primary School, from 1 July 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter; and
- The delineated catchment area of Forgandenny Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Forteviot Primary School from 1 July 2019.

Sheena Devlin
Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)
12 September 2018



**Perth & Kinross Council
Education and Children's Services
Statutory Consultation Public Meeting**

Minute of meeting held on Thursday 26 April 2018

at 7.00pm Forgandenny Primary School

Present

Sheena Devlin	Executive Director of Education & Children's Services
Sharon Johnston	Head of Education – Early Years & Primary
Karen Robertson	Service Manager - Business Services
Carol Taylor	Service Manager – Resource Management

In Attendance

Councillor Caroline Shiers	Convener, Lifelong Learning Committee, Perth and Kinross Council
Lorna Hamilton – Minute	Perth and Kinross Council

Five members of the public.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Sheena Devlin opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the public in attendance. Councillor Shiers introduced the panel members, Karen Robertson and Carol Taylor and the roles they had. Sharon Johnston joined the meeting later.

2. Format of meeting

Sheena Devlin explained the format the meeting would follow. She explained that she would stop at intervals during the presentation to take questions. For ease of reading, all questions and comments are detailed at section 5 and 6 respectively.

3. The proposal

Sheena Devlin explained the consultation proposal to the attendees:

The Council proposes that:

- Education provision at Forteviot Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;
- That the pupils of Forteviot Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Forgandenny Primary School, from 1 July 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter; and

- That the delineated catchment area of Forgandenny Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Forteviot Primary School from 1 July 2019.

4. **Presentations**

Sheena Devlin and Karen Robertson gave presentations explaining the proposal in further detail.

Sheena Devlin explained the background to the school estate review and why schools were included as part of the review. She gave details of the pre-consultation that took place with members of the community and the current arrangements in both Forteviot and Forgandenny Primary Schools.

As part of the presentation, it was advised that there were no prospective Primary One pupils in the current Forteviot Primary catchment area. A short discussion then took place about numbers of Primary One pupils in the area.

Sheena Devlin continued with the presentation. The mothballing of the school attracted a lot of interest. She explained that some schools may need to continue to be used for educational purposes, however once a school was declared surplus by Education & Children's Services, then the building was handed to colleagues in the Estates team, and they would do whatever was necessary.

Karen Robertson then expanded on the issue of travel. At the time of the mothballing of Forteviot Primary, there were nine pupils attending Forgandenny Primary as placing requests, with their parents responsible for transporting them to school.

These pupils then became entitled to school transport, if they were over two miles from Forgandenny Primary School, thereby reducing the additional traffic.

Sheena Devlin then went through the educational benefits and explained that these should not be read with the inference that education at Forteviot Primary was negative in any way. It was an articulation of the learning and teaching experience enjoyed by all pupils at Forgandenny Primary. Sometimes with single class schools, such as Forteviot, the pupils can miss out on working with others across all stages. For some Forteviot parents, the desire was for their children to learn with a larger mix of peers.

Sheena summarised the educational benefits and then handed over to Karen Robertson.

Karen Robertson presented on the statutory consultation process including the legal framework which ensures consistency across the country, consideration by Lifelong Learning Committee, the, statutory consultation period and representation from interested parties as the first part of the consultation process.

Statutory consultees are:-

- The Parent Council
- The parents of the pupils at the affected schools
- The parents of children expected to attend an affected school within 2 years of the date of publication of this proposal document
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools
- The trade union representatives of the above staff
- The Community Council
- Relevant users of the affected schools
- Elected Members of Perth and Kinross Council
- The Constituency MSP and List MSPs covering the Constituency
- The Constituency MP
- Tayside Contracts
- LiveActive Leisure
- Education Scotland

There was also a public notice published, as well as the use of social media which would enable the wider community to comment.

She also explained how documentation is available publicly, where it can be found and the different methods available for people to submit their views, including the online form and the generic email account. Input from as many people as possible was encouraged.

Karen Robertson then went on to explain the next stages of the process which includes the involvement of Education Scotland, the preparation and publication of the consultation report and the decision made by the Lifelong Learning Committee.

Sheena Devlin then explained that there has been no decision made, as we cannot pre-empt any decisions or conditions being made by Education Scotland or the Scottish Government. Perth & Kinross Council has gone through the consultation process before, for other schools, and not been called in by the Government, but that cannot be taken for granted in this case.

Karen Robertson explained that there is another consultation ongoing in Perth & Kinross, as well as the Forteviot consultation.

Sheena Devlin then opened up the meeting to any further questions, comments or observations from the floor.

5. Questions

Q. Will that take it to three years that Forteviot will be part of Forgandenny catchment?

A. Yes. Forteviot was mothballed in October 2016, so by the start of the new term in August 2019, that will be almost three years.

Q. We heard there were three Primary Ones from Forteviot Primary catchment coming in. We've worked out that there are eight Forgandenny catchment pupils and three from Forteviot. Isn't that right?

A. Since the proposal paper was written, there has been one Primary One pupil from Forteviot catchment that is known to the Authority. There is no knowledge of any others as they have not been enrolled.

Q. What effect would the additional Forteviot catchment Primary Ones have on the current category two pupils at Forgandenny Primary?

A. Placing Requests have not yet been finalised, therefore parents who have applied will not have received a decision. As the pupils in the Forteviot Primary catchment area are within the temporarily zoned catchment for Forgandenny Primary, from October 2016, then they are not placing requests. Every parent making a placing request, for any school, is taking a risk that it may not be granted. The majority of pupils in the Forteviot Primary catchment attended Forgandenny Primary School prior to the school being mothballed, so there was no sudden influx of pupils after mothballing. Last year, all category 2 placing requests were allocated places in school but some category 3 placing requests were not.

Q. Is there a cap on the number of Primary Ones who can be accepted?

A. There is no cap, there is a degree of flexibility and numbers would depend on the composition of classes and the allocation of classroom space. Having 3 classrooms in school helps with this flexibility.

Q. What happens to pupils if there is no room at Forgandenny or Dunbarney Primaries?

A. There is a procedure for reserving places in schools, which can only be allocated to category 1 pupils living in the catchment area. In addition, there is sufficient capacity at Dunbarney Primary School.

Q. Is it true that there was a plan that if there were too many pupils at Forgandenny, the school would move to the Forteviot building?

A. That has never been considered. Forteviot Primary School is smaller than Forgandenny Primary School.

Q. There are 17 new houses planned for in the area, have these been accounted for?

A. There is a legal duty to educate the children in the area wherever possible, and with composite classes, there is the flexibility to accommodate pupils from within the catchment area.

Q. Are there any plans to extend Forgandenny Primary School?

A. There are no plans to do so. Potential pupils from new builds are calculated at 0.27 pupils per house, so there is no requirement to consider a building extension. For information, an extension would cost at least £1/2m.

Q. Does the Planning Department check on school capacities before granting planning permission?

A. Yes. As well as developer contribution for larger developments, there are also regular meetings between staff in Education & Children's Services and Planning, where these issues are discussed. The development at Oudenarde was a much larger scale which was why a new school was part of the plans.

Q. There is a new development planned for the area. Does the Local Development Plan (LDP) allow for this?

A. There are no plans to change the LDP, but Carol Taylor agreed she would look further into this.

Q. Isn't Forteviot Primary School owned by Dupplin Estate?

A. No, the school building belongs to Perth & Kinross Council. The playing fields are leased from the estate, however the building is not.

Q. Why was a meeting like this not held last year?

A. We were not in a statutory consultation period last year. Mothballing of a school is a power delegated to the local authority and there was no requirement to consult at that point. However, now there is a formal proposal to close Forteviot Primary, this has to be consulted on.

Q. Why have only some people received letters inviting them?

A. As part of a statutory consultation, there are categories of people who are statutory consultees who have to be consulted with and those are the people who have been written to directly. The wider public who may not be statutory consultees are invited as part of the public notices and social media advertising so they can also participate.

Q. If there was an influx of 20 children, would Forteviot Primary be opened up again?

A. Not necessarily, it would depend where they lived, their stage in school and other factors.

Q. Are there other schools closing?

A. Yes, there are schools closing in other local authority areas, as well as proposals to close some other schools in Perth & Kinross.

Q. Have prospective parents been contacted, and the wider community, other than by letter and using social media?

A. Yes, prospective parents that are known to Perth & Kinross Council have been contacted, as they are statutory consultees.

Q. The Community Council did not receive a letter, they should have?

A. A letter was sent to the Community Council as it is a statutory consultee.

Post meeting note: The distribution of letters was checked following the public meeting and it was confirmed that the letter was emailed to Earn Community Council on 16 March 2018.

Q. What about teachers at Strathallan who may come to the school, can be prospective parents, but haven't been offered a job yet? How would they be consulted with?

A. They would be treated in the same way as anyone else moving into the catchment area. Prospective parents who do not yet live in the catchment area can participate as part of the wider public at this stage.

Q. Can the statutory consultation list include Strathallan?

A. If there are parents there whose children attend Forgandenny Primary School, they would have received a letter as part of the statutory consultation. If not, they would be covered by the publicity used for the wider community. There is no requirement, or reason to include them as a statutory consultee.

Q. Is the road at the side of the school a Council road? Why is it never gritted?

A. Perth & Kinross Council categorises and prioritises all roads for gritting and ploughing purposes. It is likely that in terms of the road network across Perth & Kinross, the short lane would be a low priority.

Q. If there is an excess of new Primary One pupils, will the school be given an additional Classroom Assistant?

A. It would depend on the school roll, which dictates the numbers of teacher and primary school support staff. In addition to this, there are also Pupil Support Assistants who are allocated to schools depending on the educational needs of individual pupils.

Q. When will we know when placing requests have been allocated?

A. The relevant parents will be informed in writing by 30 April 2018.

Q. Has the whole boundary changed?

A. No, there is no review of Forgandenny's existing catchment area, other than the subsuming of the existing Forteviot catchment area. Boundaries with other schools are unaffected.

Q. What will happen to Forteviot Primary?

A. Education & Children's Services would declare it surplus to educational requirements. There are options such as community asset transfer and sale on the open market.

Q. Could Forteviot be used for Oudenarde children?

A. This was addressed in the Proposal Paper and discounted as a viable option. There are currently 57 primary aged pupils living in Oudenarde, which would take both Forteviot and Forgandenny over capacity. It was noted that some households in the Oudenarde development rely on public transport, which would limit their involvement in the school community, due to the lack of transport between the communities.

Q. Are Oudenarde children being treated differently to others in adjacent communities?

A. When Bertha Park High School opens, Oudenarde, along with Dunbarney and Forgandenny, will feed to that secondary school.

6. Comments

- The catchment area will be huge.
- Perth & Kinross Council has moved the goal posts. Previously, parents would request Forgandenny Primary as placing requests as they were not being refused.
- Siblings are part of the school "family" and it would feel as if they were being pushed away if they did not get their placing requests granted.
- When we moved to the area, where we are building, when we applied for planning permission we were advised of the requirement for developer's contribution.
- At the time, lots of the placing requests came from Dunbarney Primary rather than Forteviot Primary.
- These plans will affect the community, as they might have a detrimental effect on placing requests.
- So it could all backfire (after the explanation of the stages in the consultation process).

- It takes such a long time to close a school.
- There will be an effect on the community if siblings don't get into the school. We would be losing part of our school family. Siblings may be removed if the younger ones don't get a place. This could also affect childminders in the area.
- It's a shame if younger siblings of existing placing requests can't get in.
- Forteviot would make a good nursery.

Sheena Devlin thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.



Perth & Kinross Council
Education and Children's Services
Forteviot Primary School
Summary of Consultation Responses

The statutory consultation on the proposal to close Forteviot Primary School commenced on Monday 19 March 2018 and closed on Thursday 17 May 2018.

Details of the proposal document were issued to the list of consultees contained within the Proposal Paper. 151 letters were issued with a link to the proposal paper and details of where and how to obtain a paper copy. The Proposal Paper was also published on the Council website. Public Notice adverts were placed in the local press on 16 March 2018.

A specific email address was set up for representations and enquiries. This was in addition to the usual methods of submitting representations. An online response form was set up on the consultation webpage.

Two online responses were received. Both responses agreed with the Council's proposal. Both responses were only partially completed and did not contain the respondents' names, addresses or respondent groups.

RESPONDENT GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Unknown	2
Total	2

These 2 responses are thought to represent 2 separate individuals.

No written representations were received.

The Council held one public meeting to discuss the proposal. The meeting took place in Forgandenny Primary School on Thursday 26 April 2018. Five members of the public attended this meeting. The attendees consisted of 3 parents and 2 community members.

The following points summarise the verbal issues and comments raised at the meeting.

- Clarification was sought that by the time the proposal would be implemented, Forteviot would have been part of Forgandenny Primary School's catchment area for 3 years and it was stated that it takes a long time to close a school.
- Clarification was sought regarding the number of P1 pupils due to start at Forgandenny PS in August 2018.
- Concern was raised regarding the impact additional Forteviot catchment pupils would have on the availability of spaces for younger siblings of placing requests attending Forgandenny PS. It was suggested that Perth & Kinross Council has moved the goal posts as parents would request Forgandenny Primary as placing requests as they were not being refused.

It was noted that siblings are part of the school “family” and it would feel as if they were being pushed away if they did not get their placing requests granted. It was noted that previously lots of the placing requests came from Dunbarney Primary rather than Forteviot Primary and suggested these plans will affect the community, as they might have a detrimental effect on placing requests. It was stated that there will be an effect on the community if siblings don’t get into the school and they would be losing part of our school family. Siblings may be removed if the younger ones don’t get a place. This could also affect childminders in the area. It was also stated that it would be a shame if younger siblings of existing placing requests can’t get in.

- Clarification was sought on the maximum number of P1 pupils who can be accepted into P1 at Forgandenny PS and what would happen if there was no room at Forgandenny or Dunbarney Primary Schools.
- Clarification was sought on whether there was a plan to move Forgandenny Primary School to Forteviot Primary School if there were too many pupils at Forgandenny Primary School and whether there were any plans to extend Forgandenny Primary School.
- Clarification was sought that the 17 houses planned for the Forgandenny catchment area had been accounted for and whether the Planning Department check school capacities before granting planning permission. Does the Local Development Plan allow for new development planned for the area?
- Clarification was sought on whether Forteviot Primary School was owned by Dupplin Estate and what would happen to the building if the proposal was implemented. It was suggested that Forteviot PS would make a good nursery.
- Clarification was sought why only some people in the village have received letters about the consultation, whether prospective parents and the Community Council had been written to and whether Strathallan School could be included as statutory consultees.
- Clarification was sought regarding whether Forgandenny PS would be allocated an additional classroom assistant if the number of P1 pupils increased.
- Clarification was sought on whether the whole catchment boundary was to change and it was stated that the proposed new catchment area will be huge.
- Clarification was sought on whether Forteviot PS could be used for children living in Oudenarde.

151 letters were issued inviting comments and participation in the consultation. Three parents are known to have participated in the consultation to make their views known.

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Forteviot Primary School

25 April 2018 Pupil consultation P1 – 3

Proposal - Education provision at Forteviot Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;

Why is the school closing?

18 pupils in class, once all understood the children were asked to put their name beside emoji's.

		
10	8	

Children were also given the opportunity to ask questions/share thoughts and these are summarised below:

What about Dunbarney?

Everyone understands

It was fun - us?

Would there be lots of children

Was it abandoned or a bad school

Is the school going to get knocked down

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Forteviot Primary School

25 April 2018 Pupil consultation P4/5

Proposal - Education provision at Forteviot Primary School be permanently discontinued with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter;

Why is the school closing?

7 of the class had a connection to Forteviot. 20 pupils, 5 did not understand went back over it and checked all children now understood. Once all understood the children were asked to put their name beside emoji's.

		
4	8	8

Children were also given the opportunity to ask questions/share thoughts and these are summarised below:

Is it closed already?

What will it turn into

Knock it down and build a playpark

Turn it into a library

It could be a skatepark.

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 staff meeting 18 April 2018

Forteviot Primary School

This meeting was held to allow staff the opportunity to see the presentation that will be shared at the public meeting on 26 April 2018. Staff had the opportunity to ask questions throughout the presentation

Q.1 Concerned about roll and future increases. 14 coming in P1

A P1 intake information will not be confirmed by the schools team until 30 April.

Q.2 Future for siblings who have existing placing requests

A Noted.

Q.3 Why not consulting P6 – 7?

A Only those pupils directly affected by the proposal are being consulted. Current P6 and P7 will not be affected as they will have left primary school by the proposed implementation date of June 2019.

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Perth and Kinross Council to permanently discontinue education provision at Forteviot Primary School, with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter; and that the pupils of Forteviot Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Forgandenny Primary School, from 1 July 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter; and that the delineated catchment area of Forgandenny Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Forteviot Primary School from 1 July 2019.

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 Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to permanently discontinue education provision at Forteviot Primary School, with effect from 28 June 2019, or as soon as possible thereafter; that the pupils of Forteviot Primary School catchment area permanently receive their education at Forgandenny Primary School, from 1 July 2019 or as soon as possible thereafter and that the delineated catchment area of Forgandenny Primary School be permanently extended to subsume the whole delineated catchment area of Forteviot Primary School from 1 July 2019. 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 of the schools affected; any other users; children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children and young people in the 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 sites of both Forteviot and Forgandenny Primary Schools, including discussion with relevant consultees.

1.4 As the proposal will lead to the closure of an accessible rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of any reasonable alternatives to closure of Forteviot Primary School, the likely effect on the local community and the likely effect of any different travelling arrangements of the proposed closure.

2. Consultation Process

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

2.2 The consultation period began on 19 March 2018 continuing until 17 May 2018. A public meeting was held in Forgandenny Primary School on 26 April 2018. There were five members of the public in attendance, three parents and two members of the community. Letters were issued to the list of statutory consultees with a link to the proposal paper and details of where and how to obtain a paper copy. The proposal paper was also published on the council website. A specific email address was set up for representations and enquiries. This was in addition to the usual methods of submitting representations. An online response form was set up on the consultation webpage. Public notice adverts were placed in the local press on 16 March 2018. There were two online responses to the consultation and both were in favour of the proposal. No written representations were received.

2.3 Those who attended the public meeting sought further clarification about different aspects of the proposal, including in the main: school roll predictions; P1 intake; allocation of places; travel arrangements; future plans for Forgandenny and Forteviot Primary School buildings; and the Local Development Plan.

3. Educational Aspects of Proposal

3.1 The council has presented a comprehensive account of the educational benefits of closing Forteviot Primary School. Since the mothballing of the school in October 2016, due to a falling and unsustainable school roll, children from the Forteviot catchment area and formerly on the school roll at Forteviot Primary School have been educated at Forgandenny Primary School. This has enabled Forteviot children to access learning with groups of learners at all stages within a primary school. It has supported a greater number of learning opportunities across and between classes. It has provided Forteviot children with the opportunity to benefit from peer support from a wider group of peers and to develop their social and interpersonal skills in a broader range of appropriate contexts. Transition to secondary school has been strengthened, supported by a wider group of peers and friendship groupings. There has been no noticeable detrimental impact on children's education following their transfer to Forgandenny Primary School. As pupils of Forgandenny Primary School, children have benefited from established school partnerships such as those with Strathallan School. These provide access to digital learning and sports facilities, enhancing the curricular experience and supporting children's achievement and health and wellbeing. Children have also been able to benefit from Forgandenny Primary School's well-established involvement in both outdoor learning activities and sustainable education initiatives. Future roll predictions indicate that there is unlikely to be an increase in the pupil population within the Forteviot catchment over the next four years. Many parents had already exercised their right to placing requests for other schools prior to the mothballing, due to concerns about the falling roll and a reduction in opportunities for children to socialise with peers. In addition, the Forgandenny Primary School building has been rated more positively than the Forteviot building in relation to both suitability and condition and a closure decision would mean financial savings could be secured in line with the council's drive for best value. The proposal further secures a long term sustainable school roll and future for the Forgandenny school community and the proposed enlarged catchment area. Overall, HM Inspectors consider that there are many clear and well-founded educational benefits to the proposal.

3.2 Children who met with HM Inspectors were positive about the proposal overall. Those travelling the 2.7 miles, or six minutes, on average, from the Forteviot catchment were anxious to know if transport would continue to be provided for them once their school was closed. They expressed a desire for consistency in the council's approach, in that should Forteviot Primary School be closed then other schools with similarly small rolls should also be considered in the same way.

3.3 Staff who met with HM Inspectors believe that there has been no negative impact for Forteviot children resulting from the move to Forgandenny Primary School. They identify a number of advantages, including a more positive learning experience overall. They had some concerns, that with land in the catchment area now zoned for housing, the Forgandenny building and grounds would not have sufficient capacity in the future to cope with the increased demand from catchment families. They also recognised the potential impact on families, given that with an increased school roll, any future placing requests were less likely to be successful and therefore some siblings might not be able to be educated alongside their brother or sister.

3.4 Parents who met with HM Inspectors expressed similar views to staff. While no concerns had been raised by their children, as parents, they did have a concern over what might happen to the existing school building at Forteviot and were keen that the rich potential of the setting was capitalised upon for the benefit of the community. Some parents highlighted that the site at Forgandenny was limited in size, with restricted space both indoors and out, compared with the Forteviot site, despite Forteviot only having two classrooms and that the space currently available might be further compromised in the future, if temporary accommodation or an extension was required to accommodate an increased number of pupils.

3.5 As the proposal will lead to the closure of an accessible rural school, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of the factors to which it should have special regard. Prior to formulating the proposal, the council had given appropriate consideration to any reasonable alternative to closure and evaluated these accordingly as outlined in their options appraisal paper. In undertaking their options appraisal, the council gave well-balanced consideration to any potential impact of the closure on the local community, the environment and children, young people and other school users. A pre-consultation exercise was carried out with the community to help inform the options appraisal. Information on pupil numbers, house building and financial implications were also sought and presented as part of this exercise.

4. Summary

Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to permanently discontinue education provision at Forteviot Primary School, making consequent changes to catchment areas, is of clear educational benefit. Since the mothballing of the school in October 2016, the Forteviot pupils have become well-integrated into Forgandenny Primary School, benefiting from being educated alongside a larger peer group at every stage. The children have adjusted well to the move and to the minimal additional travel involved and overall there has been no detrimental impact. Alternative options to closure have been very well-considered. With a declining and unsustainable school roll and facilities now requiring significant investment, potential savings can be secured as a result of the closure, minimising the impact of any cuts to education services and contributing to the council's vision of best value. There are no significant objections to the proposal as it stands. In finalising the proposal, the council should reassure children and their families about future long term travel arrangements for children in the Forteviot catchment area. It should also continue to engage with the Forteviot community regarding any future plans for the Forteviot Primary School building.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
May 2018**