

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
Education, Culture and Sport Committee
14 January 2010
Review of Education Provision

Agenda Item	
Report No	

Report by Director of Education, Culture and Sport Service

Summary

This report sets out a rationale for review of the Highland School Estate and makes proposals regarding the planning and implementation of the review.

1. Background

1.1 The Highland Council has a school estate of:

- 183 operating Primary schools
- 29 operating Secondary schools
- 3 operating Special schools

1.2 The Highland pupil population is:

- 16,821 Primary pupils
- 14,767 Secondary pupils
- 127 pupils attending Special Schools

This represents a steady decrease in primary pupil figures recorded for national census purposes from:

- 18,000 pupils in Highland Primary schools in 2003
- In the Secondary sector the figures have remained relatively static over the same period.

The national trend in pupil numbers also shows a decline over this same period. Details of the national pupil figures are shown in **Appendix 1**.

1.3 The number of schools in Scotland broken down by local authorities is shown in **Appendices 2a and 2b**.

Overall in the period 2000 to 2008 there has been a decrease of 13 Secondary schools and 125 Primary schools.

1.4 Whilst the geographic and demographic differences from one local authority area to another mean that comparison should be taken with a degree of caution, it is of interest to note that Aberdeenshire, a rural authority with 2,466 more pupils than Highland operates a school estate of 152 Primary schools and 17 Secondary schools.

- 1.5 Given the overall pupil population and the number of operational schools in Highland, there are significant numbers of schools with very low percentage occupancy rates.

It must be recognised of course, that schools with low percentage occupancy rates are always likely to be a feature of education provision in an area of sparse rural population with significant distances between settlements. It should also be recognised that the existence of these premises may well offer opportunities for provision of other public and partner agency services from a recognised location within a given settlement.

2. Profile of the Highland School Estate

- 2.1 26% of existing Primary schools were built before 1900
7% of existing Secondary schools were built before 1900
24% of existing Primary schools were built between 1901 and 1969
53% of existing Secondary Schools were built between 1901 and 1969
- 2.2 Of the 183 Primary schools operational currently within the Highland Council area:-
- 11 are rated as Condition A
 - 112 are rated as Condition C
 - 57 are rated as Condition B
 - 3 are rated as condition D

On the basis of the most recent School Estate statistics publication, Highland Council has over 25% of the Category C (poor) Primary school buildings in Scotland.

3. Current Situation

- 3.1 Through its School Building Programme the Scottish Government is seeking to improve the fabric of the Country's schools.
- 3.2 Scottish Government has helpfully committed to provide 66% of the funding required to address the fabric deficiencies at Wick High School. However it should be noted that the Highland Council was unsuccessful in its most recent bid for a funding contribution from the Scottish Government for the replacement of 5 Primary schools by 2 new Primary school buildings.

At a time of diminishing funding in the Public Sector it is difficult to see how the fabric and suitability improvements required in such a large estate could be addressed either through Government resources or through The Highland Council's Revenue, Maintenance and Capital Expenditure Programmes.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 With the general aim of improving education provision for Highlands' pupils it is proposed that a planned programme of review of Primary, Secondary and Special School provision be undertaken in order to:-

- maximise opportunities for moving pupils from poor to better quality school buildings
- make most efficient use of available funding
- address issues relating to demographic change

It is further proposed in order to ensure consistency, transparency and rigour this review of provision should take account of:-

- Educational impact of any change
- Community impact of any change
- Distance from one school to another in any change relating to amalgamation
- Distance from furthest point of catchment areas to proposed receiving school in any amalgamation proposal
- Travel time
- Current and projected school roll
- Economic impact
- Operational capacity of schools under review
- Percentage occupancy of schools under review
- Transport

5. Planning and Implementation

5.1 In recognition of the enormity of the task and in order that options for Members' consideration are fully developed on an objective basis it is proposed that a team external to the Council be established.

5.2 This team would have responsibility for:-

- The initial preparation of options
- The statutory consultation process
- The drawing up and reporting of recommendations for Members' consideration.

5.3 In order to achieve best value for the Council, it is proposed that a framework agreement is procured through a competitive process within the terms of the Council's contract standing orders.

6. Resource Implications

6.1 A reduction in the number of operational schools will have the effects of reducing revenue expenditure and avoiding future revenue maintenance expenditure and capital expenditure.

6.2 Against the above background it is proposed that the costs of the external team referred to in paragraph 5.1 could be met on a spend to save basis. Some consideration must also be given to creating dedicated resources from existing resources within the Council to work alongside the external partner. This may necessitate some temporary back-fill arrangements for a period of up to 24 months. This additional cost could also be met on a spend to save basis.

6.3 On the basis of recent option appraisal exercises in relation to the Maryburgh and Conon Bridge Primary school replacement and the review of future educational

provision in Greater Fort William, the estimated annual costs of a partnership agreement on a framework agreement basis should not exceed £0.100M. In addition any back-fill arrangements relating to a dedicated internal resource, it is estimated, should not exceed £0.050M per annum. The funding for these additional medium term costs will be met from the revenue savings that will be achieved as a result of the review process.

7. Recommendations:

Members are asked to agree that:-

- A review of education provision be commenced.
- Action is taken in line with Council contract standing orders to procure a framework agreement for the Services of an external team to take forward the review in its entirety.
- The process of review to be considered for Spend to Save funding by the Resources Committee, as outlined in section 6 of the report.
- Prior to the commencement of any review, a report with input from the external team is brought to members seeking their agreement to the full detail of the process.

Signature:

Designation: Director of Education, Culture and Sport

Date: 5th January 2010

Background papers:

Appendix 1 – The number of pupils by authority 2000 to 2008 inclusive

Appendix 2a – The number of Primary schools by authority 2000 to 2008 inclusive

Appendix 2b – The number of Secondary schools by authority 2000 to 2008 inclusive

PUPILS IN SCOTLAND - 2000 to 2008 inclusive

ANNEX 1

2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008

Aberdeen City	26,357	25,853	24,999	24,448	23,958	23,465	22,985	22,489	21,874
Aberdeenshire	36,579	36,239	36,160	36,135	36,152	35,815	35,438	34,961	34,326
Angus	16,523	16,408	16,290	16,319	16,211	16,098	16,088	15,813	15,614
Argyll & Bute	13,263	13,016	12,976	12,927	12,847	12,520	12,236	11,981	11,716
Clackmannanshire	7,486	7,430	7,312	7,222	7,195	7,109	7,006	6,973	6,769
Dumfries & Galloway	22,293	22,045	21,851	21,528	21,337	20,941	20,561	20,288	19,894
Dundee City	20,462	20,272	19,803	19,434	18,964	18,649	18,166	17,859	17,598
East Ayrshire	19,022	18,808	18,662	18,467	18,313	17,891	17,490	16,971	16,654
East Dunbartonshire	19,431	19,258	19,026	18,867	18,319	17,608	17,136	16,538	16,253
East Lothian	13,316	13,494	13,532	13,518	13,541	13,467	13,423	13,352	13,164
East Renfrewshire	16,083	16,137	16,314	16,374	16,352	16,346	16,232	16,241	16,213
Edinburgh City	49,681	49,322	48,739	47,927	47,058	46,353	45,504	44,864	44,531
Eilean Siar	4,216	4,166	4,153	4,110	4,018	4,010	3,891	3,833	3,711
Falkirk	21,271	21,246	21,170	21,355	21,376	21,275	20,946	20,737	20,636
Fife	53,195	52,638	52,079	51,455	50,850	50,039	49,388	48,700	48,203
Glasgow City	76,580	75,664	74,535	73,076	71,362	69,799	68,582	67,392	66,075
Highland	33,588	33,326	33,112	33,065	32,858	32,617	32,422	32,163	31,860
Inverclyde	13,299	12,993	12,757	12,482	12,203	11,890	11,521	11,070	10,779
Midlothian	13,020	12,997	12,777	12,710	12,412	12,266	12,073	11,904	11,686
Moray	13,540	13,562	13,660	13,727	13,675	13,506	13,114	13,002	12,581
North Ayrshire	21,579	21,382	21,374	21,174	20,789	20,416	19,909	19,437	19,062
North Lanarkshire	52,505	52,113	51,842	51,579	51,096	50,525	49,864	49,402	48,667
Orkney Islands	3,155	3,130	3,168	3,133	3,111	3,057	3,009	2,929	2,788
Perth & Kinross	18,489	18,366	18,438	18,407	18,230	18,388	18,200	17,977	17,745
Renfrewshire	27,389	27,058	26,820	26,418	25,887	25,413	25,024	24,543	24,110
Scottish Borders	15,721	15,760	15,779	15,696	15,663	15,558	15,478	15,400	15,116
Shetland Islands	3,785	3,751	3,740	3,679	3,655	3,617	3,527	3,441	3,377
South Ayrshire	16,933	16,669	16,347	16,265	15,876	15,635	15,332	15,026	14,783
South Lanarkshire	47,235	46,636	46,212	45,781	45,620	45,026	44,732	44,141	43,429
Stirling	12,794	12,853	12,870	12,994	13,052	12,978	12,937	12,681	12,563
West Dunbartonshire	15,400	15,057	14,810	14,419	14,071	13,679	13,316	12,973	12,723
West Lothian	25,617	25,969	25,840	25,968	25,910	25,880	25,811	25,765	25,740
All local authorities	749,807	743,618	737,147	730,659	721,961	711,836	701,341	690,846	680,240
Cumulative reduction		-6,189	-12,660	-19,148	-27,846	-37,971	-48,466	-58,961	-69,567

PRIMARY SCHOOLS - SCOTLAND 2000 to 2008

ANNEX 2a

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Change 2000 to 2008	
Aberdeen City	57	57	57	57	57	57	57	57	49	-8	-14.04%
Aberdeenshire	156	156	156	155	155	152	153	152	152	-4	-2.56%
Angus	61	60	60	60	59	57	57	55	55	-6	-9.84%
Argyll & Bute	87	87	87	86	85	85	85	85	85	-2	-2.30%
Clackmannanshire	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	0	0.00%
Dumfries & Galloway	114	114	111	110	109	107	107	106	106	-8	-7.02%
Dundee City	41	41	41	41	41	40	40	39	37	-4	-9.76%
East Ayrshire	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	46	-1	-2.13%
East Dunbartonshire	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	0	0.00%
East Lothian	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	0	0.00%
East Renfrewshire	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	0	0.00%
Edinburgh City	102	102	102	98	97	94	94	94	94	-8	-7.84%
Eilean Siar	42	40	39	39	39	38	38	38	36	-6	-14.29%
Falkirk	48	48	48	48	48	48	48	49	49	1	2.08%
Fife	146	146	146	145	144	143	144	142	142	-4	-2.74%
Glasgow City	203	203	197	197	184	180	172	170	167	-36	-17.73%
Highland	192	187	185	184	183	184	184	184	183	-9	-4.69%
Inverclyde	32	32	32	32	27	26	26	26	24	-8	-25.00%
Midlothian	36	36	36	36	35	35	35	30	30	-6	-16.67%
Moray	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	0	0.00%
North Ayrshire	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	53	0	0.00%
North Lanarkshire	130	130	130	131	131	130	127	127	127	-3	-2.31%
Orkney Islands	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	0	0.00%
Perth & Kinross	78	78	78	77	76	76	76	76	76	-2	-2.56%
Renfrewshire	52	52	52	52	52	52	52	51	51	-1	-1.92%
Scottish Borders	71	71	71	71	68	65	65	65	65	-6	-8.45%
Shetland Islands	34	34	33	33	33	32	32	32	32	-2	-5.88%
South Ayrshire	45	45	45	45	45	45	45	44	44	-1	-2.22%
South Lanarkshire	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	0	0.00%
Stirling	43	43	43	43	42	42	42	42	42	-1	-2.33%
West Dunbartonshire	35	35	35	35	34	34	34	34	34	-1	-2.86%
West Lothian	65	66	66	66	66	65	65	66	66	1	1.54%
All local authorities	2,277	2,270	2,257	2,248	2,217	2,194	2,185	2,171	2,152	-125	-5.49%

SECONDARY SCHOOLS- SCOTLAND 2000 to 2008

ANNEX 2b

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Change 2000 to 2008	% change
Aberdeen City	13	13	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	-1	-7.69%
Aberdeenshire	16	16	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	1	6.25%
Angus	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	0	0.00%
Argyll & Bute	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	0.00%
Clackmannanshire	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	0.00%
Dumfries & Galloway	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	0	0.00%
Dundee City	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	11	10	0	0.00%
East Ayrshire	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	0	0.00%
East Dunbartonshire	9	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	8	-1	-11.11%
East Lothian	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	0	0.00%
East Renfrewshire	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	0	0.00%
Edinburgh City	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	0	0.00%
Eilean Siar	13	12	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	-2	-15.38%
Falkirk	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	0	0.00%
Fife	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	0	0.00%
Glasgow City	29	29	29	29	29	29	30	30	30	1	3.45%
Highland	28	28	29	29	29	30	30	30	30	2	7.14%
Inverclyde	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	7	7	-1	-12.50%
Midlothian	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	0	0.00%
Moray	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	0	0.00%
North Ayrshire	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	9	-1	-10.00%
North Lanarkshire	26	26	26	26	26	26	25	25	24	-2	-7.69%
Orkney Islands	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	0	0.00%
Perth & Kinross	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	0.00%
Renfrewshire	14	13	12	12	12	12	11	11	11	-3	-21.43%
Scottish Borders	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	0	0.00%
Shetland Islands	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	0	0.00%
South Ayrshire	9	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	8	-1	-11.11%
South Lanarkshire	21	21	21	21	21	19	19	17	17	-4	-19.05%
Stirling	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	0	0.00%
West Dunbartonshire	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	-1	-14.29%
West Lothian	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	0	0.00%
All local authorities	388	386	385	385	385	384	380	377	375	-13	-3.35%