

## Public Consultation Meeting – Gaelic Medium Catchment Areas

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017, Portree Primary School

### On Panel;

Mr John Finlayson, Councillor (Chair)

Ms Norma Young, Area Care & Learning Manager (West)

Mr Ian Jackson, Education Officer

Miss Amy Coe, Clerical Assistant Business Support (Minute Taker)

In Attendance		
Name	Title	Contact
Mr Calum Munro	Kilmuir Primary School Parent Council	<a href="mailto:munrohungladder@gmail.com">munrohungladder@gmail.com</a>
Ms Flora Guidi	Head Teacher Portree Primary School	<a href="mailto:Flora.guidi@highland.gov.uk">Flora.guidi@highland.gov.uk</a>
Ms Sara Matheson	Principal Teacher Portree Primary School	<a href="mailto:Sara.matheson@highland.gov.uk">Sara.matheson@highland.gov.uk</a>
Ms Joan Esson	Education Scotland	<a href="mailto:Joan.esson@educationscotland.gov.uk">Joan.esson@educationscotland.gov.uk</a>

Chair

1. Welcome
2. Chair Introduced himself.
3. The purpose of the meeting - is to discuss the proposal to formally establish a Gaelic Medium Catchment for Portree Associated Schools Group (ASG) as set out in the recommendation to the proposal Paper.

The proposal has been issued as a result of new statutory guidance on Gaelic Medium Education published earlier this year.

Chair introduced those on the platform (Norma Young, Area Care and Learning Manager, Ian Jackson, Education Officer and Amy Coe, Business Support) and asked whether anyone needed another copy of the paper.

4. Chair - The Education Officer, Ian Jackson, will now describe the consultation process.

IJ - The Consultation process is quite a lengthy process. The stage we are in now is the 6 week public consultation, which must include 30 school days. Due to the in-service days in September, the consultation process will end on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017. This is the last date for responses, at this stage.

The next stage is a 3 week consultation with Education Scotland that will take place in November, and following that Education Scotland will produce a Report on the merits of the

proposal. We will then review the responses to the public consultation and the Education Scotland report, consider and respond to any points that are raised and then publish our final review report. This is published at least 3 weeks before taken back to the People Committee, to allow for any further representations from the public. Although the Paper must be published at least 3 weeks the Committee date, we will aim to publish a couple of weeks before that, to allow for full consideration of any representations received. If all is agreed, will be implemented.

We are hoping to take the paper to Committee in early 2018, 15<sup>th</sup> March.

5. Chair - The Area Care and Learning Manager, Norma Young, will now speak about the educational benefits set out in the Proposal Paper.

NY - Discussions were held about a catchment area when it became clear that the New Gaelic School was going to start in Portree and part of that, for Highland Council, was protecting the status of other Gaelic Medium Schools because we didn't want there to be a drift coming into the schools. However we are very mindful of the 1980 Education Act and through that parents can make a placing request. There is a placing request policy in Highland and we would use that if necessary if parents wish to do so. It was then picked up that defining Gaelic Medium catchments might be a very good idea across all Gaelic Medium units.

The Education Officer drew up a very detailed plan, had consultations with a lot of communities and practically every school catchment within Highland catchment area has access to Gaelic Medium Education. In this particular paper there is one school which will not have direct access, and that's Raasay, purely because of the logistics of it. However, if a parent wished their child to access Gaelic Medium Education at the age of 4 or 5 and were happy for their child to travel on the ferry, we would accommodate that. The Education Officer drew up some details plans in terms of travel times, these are notional travel times, to work out what travel would really look like for each of the different schools in the area, and Raasay is the only one where the children would need to be away early in the morning. You can find the table under section 4.3 on the Paper.

In Skye & Lochalsh, there would basically be no change, it's just firming up the proposal. The proposal in front of you will then be taken across the different ASGs and then be firming up on a rolling programme within different areas. Over a period of 2 or 3 years this will cover the whole of Highland with different ASGs. Part of this is because Education Scotland are involved in the process with us, and we need to have a manageable programme of implementing it.

6. The Chair then explained that Mrs Young and Mr Jackson are available to answer questions.
7. Open the meeting to the floor.

No questions were asked.

8. Chair thanked everyone for coming and reminded those present of the final date for submissions/representations, which should be sent to;

Mrs Norma Young, Area Care and Learning Manager (West)

The Care & Learning Service  
The Fingal Centre  
Portree  
Viewfield Road  
IV51 9ES

or by email to the address circulated in the letter, to arrive no later than Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

The record of the meeting will be made available at least 3 weeks before the People Committee meeting in March 2018, when it is intended that the report of the meeting, plus any submissions/representations and the view of Education Scotland on the proposal will be considered.