

Agenda Item	5.
Report No	EDU/12/26

The Highland Council

Committee: Education

Date: 3 June 2026

Report Title: Statutory Consultation: Relocation of Beauly Primary School – Final Report

Report By: Assistant Chief Executive - People

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 The Highland Investment Plan was approved by Council in May 2024 and sets out a long-term approach to transforming the Council's asset base and modernising service delivery across Highland. This approach represents a once in a generation opportunity to deliver transformational change in communities across Highland.

This report aligns with the Council's Developing a Future Operating Model for The Highland Council, approved by Council in October 2025, which sets the strategic blueprint for transforming how services are designed, managed and delivered through an adaptive, collaborative and community-focused approach.

1.2 Following informal engagement and the identification of a preferred site west of Cnoc na Ràth, a statutory consultation was undertaken on the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School to allow the creation of new accommodation as part of a Beauly Community Point of Delivery. This report presents the outcomes of that consultation process and seeks Members' agreement to proceed with the relocation of Beauly Primary School to a new site in Beauly.

1.3 His Majesty's Inspectors of Education have produced a report on the educational aspects of the proposal.

That report recognises the poor condition of the current accommodation and identifies clear potential educational benefits arising from a new purpose-built school, subject to continued engagement and resolution of matters raised through consultation.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. Note the progress being made in relation to the Highland Investment Plan and the development of a Community Point of Delivery in Beauly.
- ii. Note the outcome of the statutory consultation on the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School.
- iii. Note the report from Education Scotland at Appendix 4 and the educational benefits identified.

- iv. Agree to recommend to the Council that Beauly Primary School be relocated from its current site to a new site west of Cnoc na Ràth, Beauly, as part of a new Community Point of Delivery.
- v. Agree, subject to iv. above, that officers should fully address and discharge the recommendations and matters raised by Education Scotland as set out in the Consultation Report at **Appendix 2**.

3. Implications

3.1 Resource

The relocation of Beauly Primary School forms part of the Highland Investment Plan approved by Council in May 2024. The project will be delivered as part of the Council's approved capital programme, subject to final design, land acquisition and affordability considerations being concluded through the normal governance process.

The proposal represents the replacement and relocation of existing accommodation and does not change the level of educational provision or introduce a new education model.

Once operational, the new school is expected to operate on a like-for-like basis in terms of service delivery. Ongoing revenue costs associated with staffing, transport and day-to-day operation are not anticipated to change materially from the current position.

The proposal does not give rise to additional recurring revenue commitments beyond those associated with the current operation of Beauly Primary School except for potential rate revaluation. That will not be confirmed until the new building has been completed.

Detailed financial appraisal and cost planning will be progressed through the established capital project approval process as the design is developed and will be subject to Member scrutiny in line with the Council's governance arrangements.

3.2 Legal - The consultation has been carried out in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Should Members approve the proposal, the Council will comply with its statutory duties to notify the Scottish Ministers and publish the required notices.

3.3 Risk - Failure to replace Beauly Primary School would result in the continued use of accommodation assessed as poor in both condition and suitability. This would limit the ability of the school to deliver modern learning and teaching and would perpetuate health and safety, accessibility and operational challenges.

Concerns raised through consultation regarding land acquisition, site access and traffic management will be addressed through the next stages of design, planning and engagement if the proposal is approved.

3.4 Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people) - The existing buildings present ongoing challenges in relation to supervision, accessibility and pupil safety. A new purpose-built school will be designed to meet current health and safety standards and to provide a safe, inclusive environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

3.5 Gaelic
There are no known implications for Gaelic related to this proposal.

4. Impacts

4.1 In Highland, all policies, strategies or service changes are subject to an integrated screening for impact for Equalities, Poverty and Human Rights, Children’s Rights and Wellbeing, Climate Change, Islands and Mainland Rural Communities, and Data Protection. Where identified as required, a full impact assessment will be undertaken.

4.2 Considering impacts is a core part of the decision-making process and needs to inform the decision-making process. When taking any decision, Members must give due regard to the findings of any assessment.

4.3 Integrated Impact Assessment - Summary

4.3.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment screening was undertaken on 9 March 2026. The conclusions have been subject to the relevant Manager Review and Approval.

4.3.2 The screening process has concluded that there are clear positive impacts for equalities, children’s rights and wellbeing, human rights, and socio-economic opportunity through the provision of modern, accessible and inclusive school accommodation.

No significant negative impacts have been identified across poverty, data protection, or island and mainland rural communities.

While there may be short-term environmental impacts during construction, these are expected to be mitigated through modern design standards, with long-term efficiency and sustainability benefits.

Members are asked to consider the summary in **Appendix 1** to support the decision-making process.

4.3.3 Impact Assessment Area	Conclusion of Screening/Full Assessment
Equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and Young People – <i>Positive</i>• Children affected by disability – <i>Positive</i>• Older adults –<i>no impact</i>
Socio-economic	<i>Positive</i>
Human Rights	<i>Positive</i>
Children’s Rights and Well-being	<i>Positive</i>
Island and Mainland Rural	<i>No impact</i>
Climate Change	<i>No significant impact</i>
Data Rights	<i>No impact</i>

5. Overview

- 5.1 The statutory consultation on the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School was undertaken in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The consultation period ran from **1 December 2025 to 23 January 2026**, meeting the statutory requirement for a minimum six-week period, including at least thirty school days.
- 5.2 The proposal paper and supporting documentation were published on the Council's website and made available at Beauly Primary School and Beauly Public Library. Formal notification was issued to all statutory consultees, including parents, staff, the Parent Council, elected Members, Education Scotland and relevant community bodies.
- 5.3 A public meeting was held in **December 2025** and was attended by parents, staff and members of the local community. (Note **Appendix 3**) The meeting provided an opportunity for stakeholders to hear more about the proposal, ask questions and have their views recorded as part of the consultation process.
- 5.4 There was a strong degree of consensus across consultees that the existing Beauly Primary School buildings are no longer fit for purpose and that new accommodation is required. Stakeholders recognised the challenges created by the current dispersed and poor-quality accommodation and the limitations this places on learning, teaching, supervision and accessibility.
- 5.5 Issues raised through consultation included concerns about the acquisition of the proposed site, traffic and access arrangements, provision of indoor and outdoor sports facilities, and the importance of safe routes to school. Stakeholders also emphasised the need for continued engagement in the design process and clarity on future community access and use of facilities.
- 5.6 The Consultation Report is contained at **Appendix 2**. It sets out the written and oral representations received, the note of the public meeting, and the Council's response to the issues raised during the consultation.
- 5.7 The report from Education Scotland is included at **Appendix 4** and provides an independent consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal.

His Majesty's Inspectors recognise the educational benefits that could arise from a new purpose-built school while highlighting areas that require further consideration as the project progresses.

6. Education Scotland Report

- 6.1 The report from Education Scotland is provided at **Appendix 4**.

His Majesty's Inspectors of Education have considered the proposal in line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, including the likely educational benefits and the views expressed by consultees.

- 6.2 HM Inspectors recognise that the existing Beauly Primary School accommodation is of poor quality and no longer well suited to the delivery of modern learning and teaching. They note that the school is currently spread across multiple buildings,

which creates challenges for supervision, accessibility, outdoor access and learning continuity.

- 6.3 HM Inspectors agree that a new, purpose-built school has the potential to deliver clear educational benefits. These benefits include improved learning environments, greater flexibility in teaching spaces, enhanced digital infrastructure, improved accessibility, and increased opportunities to support wellbeing and inclusion.
- 6.4 The report highlights strong agreement across pupils, parents and staff that a new school is required. Stakeholders identified the value of flexible breakout spaces, direct access to outdoor learning environments, improved facilities for sport and physical activity, and the benefit of bringing the whole school community together within a single building.
- 6.5 HM Inspectors note that concerns were raised during consultation about the acquisition of the proposed site, traffic management, safe access routes to the school, and the scale and quality of sports facilities. They emphasise the importance of addressing these matters through the next stages of planning and design if the proposal proceeds.
- 6.6 HM Inspectors also highlight the importance of continued engagement with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community to ensure that the final design of the school and associated facilities meets local needs and delivers the anticipated educational benefits.
- 6.7 Overall, Education Scotland concludes that the proposal offers potential educational advantages for children and young people attending Beaulay Primary School, subject to continued involvement of stakeholders and careful consideration of the issues raised during consultation.

7 Highland Investment Plan and Next Steps

- 7.1 The proposed relocation of Beaulay Primary School is a key element of the Highland Investment Plan and the wider place-based approach being developed for Beaulay. It provides an opportunity to deliver a modern, purpose-built school alongside a Community Point of Delivery that brings together education, council and partner services in a single location.
- 7.2 The proposed Community Point of Delivery approach in Beaulay aligns with the Council's Future Operating Model by supporting more integrated service delivery, improved use of assets, and a community-focused response to identified local needs. This reflects the principles set out within the Highland Investment Plan, while allowing the precise mix of services to be shaped through further engagement and design development.
- 7.3 Subject to Members agreeing the recommendation to relocate Beaulay Primary School, officers will progress the next stages of the project. This will include completion of land acquisition arrangements for the proposed site, continued engagement with pupils, parents, staff and the wider community, and the development of design proposals for the new school and associated facilities.
- 7.4 As part of the design process, particular regard will be given to access, traffic management, safe routes to school, outdoor learning, and indoor and outdoor sports

provision, reflecting matters raised through consultation and by Education Scotland. The project will then progress through planning, procurement and the Council's capital governance processes in line with established requirements.

- 7.5 If approved by the Council, officers will notify Scottish Ministers of the decision within the statutory timescale, provide the required documentation, and publish notice of the decision in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

Designation: Assistant Chief Executive - People

Date: 20 May 2026

Author: Derek Martin, Strategic Lead- Operations

Background Papers:

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Integrated Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 – Consultation Report

Appendix 2A - The Original Proposal Paper

Appendix 3 - Note of the Public Meeting

Appendix 4 - Education Scotland Report

Integrated Impact Assessment Screening

Summary

Proposal overview

The proposal relates to the construction of a new Beauly Primary School combined with a Community Point of Delivery, replacing the existing school buildings. The development will provide modern, energy-efficient accommodation, with existing elements repurposed or relocated.

Who is affected

The proposal affects children and young people, parents and carers, school staff, and the wider community who may use the facilities within the Community POD.

Equalities impact

Overall impact is positive. Positive impacts are identified for age, disability and race, with no impact identified for other protected characteristics. The proposal supports inclusion through improved facilities and environments.

Poverty and socio-economic impact

The overall impact is positive. Prospects and opportunities and impacts on place are positive, with no identified financial impact. Improved facilities and community access are expected to support outcomes while maintaining affordability.

Human rights

The proposal has a positive impact on human rights, particularly the right to education, through provision of improved learning environments and continued access to services.

Children's rights and wellbeing

A positive impact is expected. The proposal supports the best interests of the child, the right to education, and an adequate standard of living. Improved facilities will support wellbeing, development and learning outcomes.

Data protection

Personal data processing will continue under existing arrangements, with no significant change to current processing identified.

Rural communities

No impact has been identified for rural communities and no differential effects are expected.

Climate change – Full Impact Assessment

A Full Climate Change Impact Assessment has been completed. The proposal demonstrates strong positive impacts including improved energy efficiency through Passivhaus and Net Zero standards, use of low and zero carbon technologies, support for active travel and electric vehicle infrastructure, sustainable procurement and waste reduction, reuse of materials, biodiversity enhancement, and improved infrastructure and community resilience. Mitigation actions focus on maintaining these outcomes through design, construction and ongoing stakeholder engagement.

Overall conclusion

The proposal demonstrates a positive impact overall across equalities, poverty, human rights and children's wellbeing. The Full Climate Change Impact Assessment confirms significant positive environmental, energy and resilience outcomes. No other full impact assessments are required at this stage.

Consultation Report

Proposal to Relocate Beaully Primary School

9 March 2026

Introduction

This report has been prepared following a review of the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School to a new school building on a site west of Cnoc na Ràth.

The Highland Council has prepared this document having had regard to:

- relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period
- oral representations made at the public meeting held on 10 December 2025
- the report from Education Scotland

This report is issued under the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

Background

At the meeting of The Highland Council's Education Committee on 19 November 2025, Members agreed to proceed to statutory consultation on a proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School to a site west of Cnoc na Ràth.

This decision reflected the long-standing need to replace the current school buildings, which are rated as being in poor condition and of limited suitability. The existing accommodation spans multiple buildings, creating constraints around accessibility, maintenance, supervision and the availability of appropriate learning and breakout spaces.

The introduction of the Highland Investment Plan in 2024 reaffirmed Beauly as a priority location for Phase 1 investment. This supported the reinstatement of a replacement school within the Council's Capital Programme and formed the basis for progressing the relocation proposal.

The proposal paper set out that the relocation would provide a modern, purpose-built school designed to improve the quality of learning and teaching environments, enhance accessibility, and support a wider range of curricular and outdoor learning opportunities, as detailed within the Educational Benefits Statement.

The original Proposal Paper forms Appendix 2A to this report.

Consultation Process

The formal consultation period ran from 1 December 2025 to 23 January 2026. This exceeded the statutory minimum requirement of six weeks and included at least 30 school days, in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

The Proposal Paper was made available online via The Highland Council website and in hard copy at Beauly Primary School and other appropriate local venues.



Notification of the consultation was issued to all statutory consultees, including parents and carers, school staff, pupils, the Parent Council, relevant community bodies and trade union representatives.

A public meeting was held on 10 December 2025 at Beauly Primary School, providing stakeholders with the opportunity to hear more about the proposal and to raise questions and concerns directly.

During the consultation period, stakeholders were invited to submit written responses to the Council. All responses received by the closing date have been considered as part of this report.

Issues Raised and Highland Council Response

One written response was received during the consultation period, in addition to representations made at the public meeting.

Overall, there was strong support for the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School, particularly in relation to the need to replace the existing accommodation. The main issues raised by stakeholders related to site safety, traffic and access arrangements, design considerations, and opportunities for outdoor learning and community use.

The key issues raised during the consultation, along with the Council's response, are set out below.

Safety concerns relating to the inclusion of a public building on the shared site


A respondent expressed concern about the proposal to include a public-facing building within the wider site. They highlighted that the school supports children who may be at risk of absconding, and felt that increased public access could heighten safeguarding risks. They also noted wider changes in community dynamics, including the relocation of individuals with offending histories into rural areas, and stated that this added to their anxiety about potential interactions between pupils and the public.

Council response: The Council recognises the importance of safeguarding and will ensure that any public-facing facility is completely separated from school areas. Access to school zones will be controlled and limited to authorised staff, pupils and approved visitors only.

Final layouts will include discrete entrances, secure lines and enhanced supervision. Safeguarding needs specific to Beauly Primary, including support for children who may be at risk of absconding, will be fully considered during detailed design stages.

Concerns regarding the safety of routes to school, particularly via Croyard Road

Concerns were raised that while the Braeview Park entrance benefits from a crossing patrol, the Croyard Road route does not. The respondent reported regular incidents of vehicles failing to stop at the traffic lights and felt this posed a significant risk to pupils walking from this side of the village. These concerns have been raised previously with Police Scotland and local community officers. The respondent emphasised the need for safer, supervised routes away from the main road where possible.



Council response: The Council acknowledges the concerns about Croyard Road and agrees that safe routes to school must be prioritised. A Safer Routes to School assessment will be undertaken and will review pedestrian safety across both current and future access points.

Safe pedestrian access will be built into the new school's design, including options to reduce reliance on the main road as part of transport planning.

General emphasis on children's safety and condition of the current school

The respondent emphasised that safety is the highest priority and described the current school buildings as inadequate. They supported the need for a new school but stressed that safety on site and during journeys to school must be central to all future decisions.

Council response: The Council agrees that children's safety is paramount. The new school will provide modern, compliant accommodation designed to improve safety, accessibility and supervision. The Council will continue to work with parents, staff and stakeholders to ensure that the design and wider infrastructure reflect the needs of the Beauly community and support a safe, high-quality learning environment.

Suitability of Current Accommodation

Stakeholders highlighted challenges caused by the current multi-building layout, including supervision, maintenance difficulties, and limited breakout spaces.

Council Response: The Council agrees that the current estate is no longer suitable. A single-building modern school will address these issues and offer enhanced learning environments.

Land Acquisition Concerns

Parents noted that the Council had not yet secured the proposed site.

Council Response: The Council acknowledges this and confirms acquisition processes are underway.

Outdoor Learning and Access to Cnoc na Ràth

Stakeholders emphasised retaining access to Cnoc na Ràth for outdoor learning.

Council Response: The design will safeguard access to outdoor learning and maximise educational benefit.

Sports and Activity Provision

Concerns included pitch size, sports hall capacity, changing areas, and after-school club space.

Council Response: The design brief includes enhanced indoor and outdoor sports spaces, suitable for curricular PE and after-school activities.

Traffic and Safe Routes



Parents indicated the importance of safe walkways, including potential access via Braeview Park.

Council Response: A full transport assessment will be completed.

Security and Safety

Concerns included a private residential property within the current school grounds.

Council Response: The new site will address these concerns.

Stakeholder Involvement in Design

Stakeholders requested involvement in shaping the new school's design.

Council Response: Stakeholder engagement will continue.

Education Scotland Summary and Council Response

Education Scotland identified several key points, including the poor quality of the current accommodation and the clear educational benefits of a new purpose-built school.

Council Response: The Council agrees with HM Inspectors' findings and will continue working with stakeholders.

Alleged Omissions or Inaccuracies

No significant omissions or inaccuracies were identified during the consultation period that required formal correction to the Proposal Paper.

Any points raised by consultees were reviewed and considered as part of the overall assessment of the proposal but were not considered to materially affect its content or conclusions.

Overall Review of the Consultation Exercise

The consultation exercise demonstrated clear support for the proposal to relocate Beauly Primary School, particularly in relation to the need to replace the existing school buildings, which are widely recognised as being in poor condition and of limited suitability.

Stakeholders, including parents, staff and the wider community, highlighted a range of factors in support of the proposal, notably the opportunity to provide a modern, purpose-built learning environment, improved accessibility and enhanced opportunities for outdoor learning.

A number of concerns were also raised during the consultation, primarily relating to site safety, traffic management and safe routes to school, as well as design



considerations including sports provision and community use. These issues have been carefully considered by the Council and will be taken forward through the detailed design, transport assessment and future engagement with stakeholders.

Education Scotland's report supports the educational benefits of the proposal and recognises the need to improve the quality of the existing accommodation. The Council has had full regard to this report in reaching its overall view.

Taking all of the above into account, the Council considers that the proposal represents the most appropriate way forward in addressing the current deficiencies in the school estate while delivering improved educational outcomes for pupils.

Legal Issues

The statutory consultation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. This included the preparation and publication of a Proposal Paper, a consultation period of the required duration, a public meeting, and consideration of the report prepared by Education Scotland.

Conclusion

The consultation has demonstrated a clear recognition among stakeholders of the need to replace the existing Beaully Primary School building, reflecting its poor condition and limited suitability.

There is general support for the provision of a new, purpose-built school, alongside constructive feedback on matters such as site safety, transport and design. These issues have been considered and will be addressed through the next stages of the project.

Education Scotland's report supports the educational benefits of the proposal and the need to improve the learning environment.

Overall, the Council is satisfied that the proposal provides an appropriate and effective solution to the issues identified and will deliver improved educational outcomes for pupils.

Recommendation

It is recommended that The Highland Council, having considered all consultation responses and the report from Education Scotland, proceeds with the proposal to relocate Beaully Primary School to a new school building on a site west of Cnoc na Ràth.



The Original Proposal Paper

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The proposal is to relocate Beauly Primary School, to allow the creation of new accommodation.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

THIS IS A PROPOSAL PAPER PREPARED IN TERMS OF THE EDUCATION AUTHORITY'S AGREED PROCEDURE TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

INTRODUCTION

The Highland Council is proposing, subject to the outcome of the statutory consultation process:

- To replace the current Beauly Primary School building with a new school building located on a new site, which will also accommodate a community point of delivery.
- The proposed change, if approved, will be implemented when the new accommodation has been completed.

SUMMARY OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Proposal Paper Published

The proposal paper will be available for inspection, free of charge, at:

- Beauly Primary School
- Beauly Public Library
- and published on the Highland Council website:

www.highland.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

Copies of this Proposal Paper are also available on request from:

Business Support Team,

Education Service,
County Buildings,
High Street,
Dingwall
IV159QN

E-mail: Education.Consultations@highland.gov.uk

To request this information in an alternative format, e.g. large print, Braille, audio formats, or suitable language, please also contact:

Business Support Team,

Education Service,

County Buildings,

High Street,

Dingwall

IV15 9QN.

E-mail: Education.Consultations@highland.gov.uk

Formal notice of the proposal and relevant information will be given and be made available, free of charge, to the consultees listed as follows:

- (i) Parents of pupils attending Beauly Primary School; including parents of pre-school pupils
- (ii) The Parent Council of Beauly Primary School
- (iii) All staff of the school
- (iv) Members of Parliament and Members of the Scottish Parliament for the area affected by the proposal
- (v) Trade union representatives
- (vi) Beauly Community Council

- (vii) Councillors representing Aird and Loch Ness Ward
- (viii) Education Scotland

Advertisement in Local Media

A notice announcing the public meeting will be placed in the Ross-shire Journal and on the Highland Council's Facebook page and "X" account.

Consultation Period

The consultation for this proposal will begin on 1 December 2025 and will end on 23rd January 2026. This period allows for the statutory minimum of six weeks, including at least thirty school days.

Public Meeting

A public meeting will be held the week commencing 8 December 2025.

Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Council, will be chaired by a senior elected councillor, and will be addressed by officers of The Education Service. Electronic invitations will be sent to all statutory consultees and the link for the meeting will be made available to others.

The meeting will be an opportunity for the public to hear more about the proposal; to ask questions about the proposal; and to have the views of all stakeholders recorded so that they can be considered. A note will be taken at the meeting of questions asked and views expressed. This note will be published on the Council website. The meeting may also be recorded.

The note will be forwarded to Education Scotland, along with other submissions and comments received by the Council during the consultation process.

Responses to the Proposals

Interested parties are invited to respond to the Proposals by making written or electronic submissions on the Proposals to:

Business Support Team,
Education Service,
County Buildings,
High Street,
Dingwall
IV159QN

Email: Education.Consultations@highland.gov.uk

Or via an online form, a link to which can be found on

www.highland.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

When responding, you are invited to state your relationship with the school – for example, “pupil”, “parent”, “carer”, “relative”, “former pupil”, “teacher in school”, “member of the community” etc. However, it is not compulsory to do so.

Those sending in a response, whether by letter or electronically should know that their response will be open to public scrutiny and may have to be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it. If they do not wish their response to be made publicly available, they should clearly write on the document: “I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to councillors and officers of The Highland Council”. Otherwise, it will be assumed that the person making the response agrees to it being made publicly available. All written responses must be received by the last day of the consultation period, 23 January 2026 at 5.00pm.

Involvement of Education Scotland

When the proposal document is published, a copy will also be sent to Education Scotland by the Council. Education Scotland will also be sent, by 27 January 2026, a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Council from any person during the consultation period.

Education Scotland will also receive the summary note of the public meeting that and, so far as is practicable, a copy of any other relevant documentation. Education Scotland will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 27 February 2026. In preparing their report, Education Scotland may visit the affected schools and make such enquiries as they consider appropriate.

Review of Consultation Exercise

The Highland Council will review the proposal having regard to the Education Scotland report, written representations that it has received, and oral representations made at the public meeting. It will then prepare a consultation report. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be sent to anyone who submitted a written representation during consultation. It will be available on the Council website as well as at the affected school and local library, free of charge.

The report will include a summary of the written and oral representations made during consultation and a copy of the Education Scotland report, together with the Council's considered response to the issues raised. The report will include details of any alleged inaccuracies and/or omissions and how these have been handled. The consultation report will be published at least 3 weeks prior to being submitted to the Council's Education Committee, who will make a recommendation to the full Highland Council.

In publishing the report, the Council will invite any person or party to make further representations to the Committee prior to its meeting. A notice to this effect will also be published on the Highland Council website.

At the present time, the Council intends to publish its report in May 2026 prior to submission to the Council's Education Committee in June 2026. However, this timescale may change depending on the nature of issues raised during consultation, and the need to give full consideration to those issues. In the latter event, the report may not be submitted until a later Committee meeting.

Any proposal approved by the Education Committee would require to be confirmed by a subsequent meeting of the full Highland Council. This is currently planned for September 2026.

Note on Corrections

If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this proposal paper, either by the

Council or any other person, the Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or, if the paper contains an inaccuracy. The Council will then take appropriate action, which may include the issue of a correction, the reissuing of the proposal, or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period. In that event, relevant consultees and Education Scotland will be advised.

PROPOSAL

1. Legislative Background

1.1 The proposal is advanced within the context of all applicable legislation. Amongst other duties, education authorities are required to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education (S.1 of the Education Act 1980); and to publish or otherwise make available information as to their arrangements for the placing of children in schools under their management (S.28 of the 1980 Act).

1.2 In common with all public bodies in Scotland, The Highland Council also has a duty to provide best value. This includes making arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance, whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost; and, in making those arrangements and securing that balance, to have regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities requirements and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

2. Reason for the Proposal

2.1 Beauly Primary School currently suffers from poor quality accommodation. Relocating the school would permit the construction of a new build school.

2.2 The Council has had a long-standing commitment to replace the school. Initial discussions took place in 2021, to look at possible options for the future of the school building.

2.3 In 2023, there was an unsuccessful bid for Scottish Government Learning Estate Investment Funding. Plans were put on hold following a review and reduction of the then capital programme on grounds of affordability, It was stated that capital priorities could be reconsidered if at some point in the future there was a material change of circumstances.

2.4 In May 2024, The Highland Council adopted a new Highland Investment Plan (HIP), which sets out how the Council will work over the next 10 years to optimise its investment of resources in its learning estate in a prioritised manner to meet the needs of 21st century learning and teaching. As part of this, a new generation of community facilities was envisioned for the Highlands, with Points of Delivery (PODs) providing a range of public services brought together in a single location.

2.5 Within the HIP, a commitment was made to rebuild Beauly Primary School alongside a number of other public services.

2.6 Following the approval of the HIP approach last year, work was undertaken to identify a site that could accommodate a community POD development for Beauly. A suitable site has been identified west of Cnoc na Ràth and, although it is not currently in Council ownership, positive discussions have taken place with the landowners, Lovat Estates, regarding the acquisition of the site. The exact location of the school within the site has yet to be determined.

2.7 Appendix 2 identifies the location of the proposed community POD and includes the relevant land areas that would be required for each of the component parts, i.e. the Primary School, and other co-located community and partner facilities.

3. Informal Consultation

3.1 A series of engagement events have been held to consider priorities for the Beauly area, as part of assessing local interest in new points of delivery. Included in this were views regarding a preferred site for a new school; the opportunities for better use of premises for delivering services; and for co-location of various services; and the future use of existing buildings. Council officers have also engaged directly with parent councils and specific community groups to raise awareness and understand views on the HIP approach and the potential opportunities for Beauly. Public drop-in events were held in Beauly in 2023 and 2024. The stakeholder group was reconvened in January 2025 with a further five meetings over a number of months.

The initial feedback has been generally supportive of the longer-term strategic approach and the concept of a community POD. There has also been discussion on the possible relocation of the Highlife Highland library from Phipps Hall and also the provision of leisure facilities. The community would like to see improved travel routes to school.

3.2 Within the informal consultations, officers of the Council have also engaged with parents of children at Beauly Primary School over the future location of the new school building. There has been ongoing engagement with the parent council, with Council staff attending. Additional officer meetings have taken place with parent council office bearers around specific issues raised.

The drop-in sessions identified various site options, but feedback forms have not identified a clear preference.

Initial concept drawings of the potential new school at the POD site have also been shared with the stakeholders.

3.4 The Council has considered the views of parents submitted during informal

engagement, described above. Having reviewed the options in their entirety, it takes the view that the relocation of Beaully Primary School to the new site offers educational benefits, due to the opportunities that arise from a new building to meet the educational needs of pupils.

4. Beaully Primary School – Description

4.1 Beaully Primary School provides education to children in the 3-18 age group. It is located in the centre of the village and admits pupils mostly within 2 miles of the surrounding area, with a few pupils attending from further afield. There are 113 pupils on the school roll and 20 in the nursery. The school dates from the late 19th- early 20th century, although there have been many building modifications down the years. The current school accommodation comprises one larger and one smaller original building, a modular annexe and a temporary canteen. Overall, the accommodation is currently rated “C – (Poor)” for both condition and suitability, and another building was recently removed.

There is limited opportunity for outdoor play and learning.

There is general agreement that the accommodation does not adequately support the delivery of education for pupils.

The proposed new build will significantly improve the learning environment for pupils. Further details on this are provided in Section 5 below.

5. Educational Benefits

5.1 The Council’s proposal to relocate the school in Beaully was based on the principle that a new school building offered the prospect of strong educational benefit arising from improved accommodation and west of Cnoc na Ràth is considered to be the best available site. Benefits include:

- Pupils

1. Enhanced Learning Environment

- Modern classrooms with better lighting, acoustics, and ventilation improve concentration and comfort.
- Purpose-built spaces for a modern curriculum support diverse learning styles and interests.

2. Access to Updated Technology

- Improved IT infrastructure supports effective access to a wide curriculum and modern learning styles and opportunities.
- 3. Improved Wellbeing
 - Inclusive design promotes emotional wellbeing and improved access for those with additional needs.
 - Safer, more accessible buildings reduce anxiety and increase engagement.
- 4. Greater Sense of Pride and Belonging
 - A fresh, well-designed school can foster a stronger school identity and community spirit.
- 5. Flexible Learning Spaces
 - More flexible spaces, and adaptable furniture encourage collaboration and creativity.
 - Spaces designed for project-based learning and group work support 21st-century skills.

Staff

1. Improved Working Conditions
 - Comfortable staff rooms, planning areas, and meeting spaces support collaboration and wellbeing.
 - Better temperature control, lighting, and acoustics reduce fatigue and stress.
2. Professional Development Opportunities
 - New facilities come with updated resources and training on how to use them effectively.
 - Spaces for CPD sessions and peer learning foster a culture of continuous improvement.
3. Enhanced Teaching Tools
 - Access to modern teaching aids and digital platforms improves lesson delivery and assessment.
4. Boosted Morale and Recruitment
 - A new school can attract high-quality staff and retain existing ones by showing investment in education.
 - Staff often feel more valued and motivated in a purpose-built environment for 21st century learning and teaching.
5. Stronger Collaboration
 - Flexible teaching spaces encourage interdisciplinary planning and team teaching.

- Improved connectivity and layout support better communication across the school.

6. Impact on School Transport

6.1 As the new school will be located in the village, there is not expected to be any significant effect on school transport arrangements.

7. Effects on Staff and School Management Arrangements

7.1 The relocation will have no impact on school management or staffing arrangements.

8. Effect on the Local Community

8.1 The proposal is not expected to have any negative impact on the wider local community.

9. Integrated Impact Assessment

9.1 The proposal has been assessed as having no negative impacts on data handling, or on island and rural mainland communities.

9.2 In respect of age equality, the proposal relates to a primary school and, as such, affects children in the 3-12 age group and their parents. The proposal is advanced on the basis of educational benefit to the children in these age ranges. No negative age-related effects arise. Age is not a protected characteristic for the purposes of school provision.

9.3 With respect to climate change, the construction phase of the new building may result in additional CO2 emissions, however the new buildings will provide a long-term benefit in being built to the most modern environmental standards. It is not expected that the overall effect on climate change will be significant.

9.4 The new school would have a positive impact on disability since it will include up to date and more inclusive facilities. As such it will have a positive overall effect on equalities, human rights, and children's health and wellbeing.

10. Recommendation

10.1 Taking the above into account, The Highland Council recommends that Beauly Primary School is relocated from its current site to a new school site in the village.

10.2 This consultation paper is issued in terms of the authority's procedures to meet the relevant statutory requirements. Following the consultation period, a report and submissions received will be presented to the Education Committee of The Highland Council.

END OF PROPOSAL PAPER

Minutes of Public Consultation Meeting

Proposal: Relocation of Beauly Primary School

Date: 10 December 2026

Time: 7:00 PM

Venue: Beauly Primary School

1. Attendance

Role	Name
Chairperson	Cllr David Fraser (DF), Highland Council
Highland Council Representatives	Lyndsay Bradley (LB), Acting AQIM (South 4)
Highland Council Representatives	Robert Campbell (RC), Strategic Lead – Estate and Investment Planning
Highland Council Representatives	Dorothy Gibb (DG), Team Leader, Estates Team
Highland Council Representatives	Fiona Sangster (FS), Estates Co-ordinator
Highland Council Representatives	Tracey Fraser-Lee, Headteacher
Stakeholder	Euan Hardie (EH), Beauly Shinty Club
Stakeholder	Sandy Tulloch (ST), Parent/Shinty
Stakeholder	Robert Logan (RL), Neighbour
Stakeholder	Judith Young (JY), Ex-parent/Neighbour
Stakeholder	Angela Blake (AB), Parent
Stakeholder	Jenny English (JE), Parent/Stakeholder
Stakeholder	Siobhan Grieger (SG), Parent/Stakeholder
Stakeholder	Valerie Storey, Beauly Resident
Stakeholder	Catherine Rait, Parent/Stakeholder
Stakeholder	Wiz Wharton, Neighbour
Stakeholder	Alan McDonell, Neighbour
Observer	Alona Murray, His Majesty's Inspector

2. Welcome and Introduction

Cllr David Fraser opened the meeting, welcomed attendees, and outlined the purpose of the consultation: to discuss the proposed new Beauly Primary School. DF introduced council representatives and explained the format of the meeting.

3. Consultation Process Overview

Presented by Lyndsay Bradley (LB):

- Proposal paper issued on 1 December following Education Committee approval in November.
- Consultation period: Minimum 6 weeks (until 23 January 2026).
- Representations can be submitted via email or contact details in the proposal paper.
- Phase Two: HM Inspectors review educational benefits, representations, and submit a report within 3 weeks.
- Phase Three: Council publishes final report including HM Inspectors' findings, responses to representations, and any corrections.
- Final report to Education Committee in June 2026, then to full council.

4. Project Update

Presented by Robert Campbell (RC):

- Beauly is a Phase 1 priority in the Highland Investment Plan; capital funding was approved March 2025.
- Target operational date: 2028.
- New school will serve as a Community Point of Delivery with shared facilities and touchdown spaces for public sector staff.
- High Life Highland will consult on relocating Beauly Library to the new building.
- Steering Group to consider future use of Phipps Hall and the two stone school buildings.
- Site BE04 selected after evaluation of four options; decision influenced by SEPA flood risk mapping.
- Highland Council are partnering with Hub North Scotland to deliver the project, however the design is based on a scheme developed with the Council's In-house Design Team.
- Design considerations include traffic, walking/cycling routes, and stakeholder input.

5. Questions and Discussion

Key points raised by stakeholders:

- Site Location: EH queried why the site near the railway was chosen. RC explained flood risk and housing considerations influenced the decision. DG confirmed land value was not a factor.
- Sports Facilities: EH and ST raised concerns about pitch size and sports hall provision. RC noted current plans meet school needs but will revisit pitch size. LB shared comparative pitch dimensions.
- Site Orientation and Access: RL questioned sunlight and access routes. DG highlighted challenges with balancing pedestrian safety and service access. Safe Routes to School remains a priority.

- Community Access: JY and AB suggested alternative access routes; DG confirmed feasibility issues and ongoing work with Safer Routes team.
- After School Care: AB and SG stressed need for dedicated space for childcare and clubs. RC acknowledged concerns and committed to further discussion at stakeholder meetings.
- Future Use of Existing Buildings: EH asked about plans; RC confirmed that there were no plans at this stage; it will be an agenda item for stakeholder group meetings going forward and Historic Environment Scotland had advised that Beaully Primary School has been proposed for listing.
- Other Issues: RL requested high-speed internet; RC assured future-proofing. JY asked about completion date; RC confirmed 2028 target but noted delays in land negotiations.

6. Educational Benefits

- New build will provide modern facilities, improved learning environment, and enhanced outdoor spaces.
- Consolidation of nursery and school into a single building will strengthen sense of community.
- Better provision for additional support needs.

7. Closing Remarks

DF thanked attendees for contributions and reiterated opportunities for ongoing input via formal consultation channels. Emphasized the wider vision for Beaully, including community facilities and master planning.

- Stakeholder group to meet in the new year.
- Record of meeting to be available within 3 weeks.
- Final report to Education Committee on 3 June 2026, then full council before summer recess.

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by HMIE addressing educational aspects of the proposal by The Highland Council to relocate Beauly Primary School, to allow the creation of new accommodation.

February 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from HMIE has been prepared by His Majesty’s Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) (“the 2010 Act”). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of a proposal by The Highland Council to relocate Beauly Primary School, to allow the creation of new accommodation. 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’ view. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it alongside any relevant considerations the council received and then prepare its consultation report. The council’s consultation report should include 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 consultation report at least three weeks before it takes its final decision. With all proposals the council needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the school; 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:

- attendance at the public meeting held on 9 December 2025 in connection with the council’s proposals;
- consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others; and
- visits to the site of Beauly Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 The Highland Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The consultation period ran from 1 December 2025 to 23 January 2026. The council held a public meeting on 10 December 2025, which was attended by 11 stakeholders. The council published the consultation paper on its website and provided copies to relevant stakeholders including parents, carers, staff and elected members. The council received one response to the public consultation. Stakeholders asked questions about the location of the site. They raised

concerns about the size of the pitch and sports hall provision and stressed the need for dedicated space for after school care and clubs. Stakeholders queried community access to the new site and future use of existing buildings. A few also raised concerns about security and children's safety. The council has also undertaken informal consultation and shared initial concept designs of the potential new school with stakeholders.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 The council's proposal acknowledges Beauly Primary School's current poor-quality accommodation. The proposal is for a new build school to be constructed on a site west of Cnoc na Ràth, although the council has yet to acquire this land. As part of Highland's Investment Plan, the council intends to create more community facilities that will provide a range of public services, in a single location. The council anticipates that a new build school will provide a modern, purpose-built facility. Children could benefit from improved learning environments, digital infrastructure, more flexible and inclusive spaces, which could support diverse learning styles and interests. HM Inspectors agree that this proposal could bring educational benefits, which may strengthen learning, teaching, and support the wider school community.

3.2 All children, parents and staff who met with HM Inspectors agree that a new school is required. They acknowledged that the current accommodation, which is spread over multiple buildings, presents challenges for children and staff throughout the school day. This includes ongoing maintenance issues, supervision of different areas of the playground and limited break out areas to work with children who may become dysregulated or need additional support. The layout of the school currently limits direct access to the outdoors, which restricts access to free flow play for children attending the nursery. Staff and children believe that the current accommodation can also limit opportunities for peer learning across different stages.

3.3 All stakeholders recognise that a purpose-built school could improve considerably the learning environment of the school. They highlighted the need for more flexible teaching and breakout spaces. All stakeholders feel it is important that they are able to maintain direct access to Cnoc na Ràth to support outdoor learning. They believe this could enhance the delivery of the curriculum and improve children's learning experiences in the new school.

3.4 All stakeholders expressed some concern about the private residential property that is located within the current school grounds. They agree that a new school building on the proposed site would alleviate this concern and improve the safety of children. All stakeholders believe that children and staff would benefit from being housed in one building and this could help create a stronger sense of school community. They believe this will create more opportunities to share resources and provide more space for those who require additional support.

3.5 All stakeholders who met with HM Inspectors highlighted the importance of involving them in the design of the new school. They expressed the need for appropriate digital infrastructure and sensory areas, which they currently lack. All stakeholders would welcome the inclusion of adequate outdoor and indoor sports facilities, with appropriate changing areas. They believe that this could enhance the uptake of shinty and increase participation in inter-school competitions and increase opportunities for after-school clubs. Where appropriate, the council should continue to consult stakeholders about the final design of internal and external spaces.

3.6 Parents who met with HM Inspectors are concerned that the council have not yet acquired the proposed development site. They are worried that the potential cost of securing this land may reduce the available funds for the new build school. Parents also expressed some concern about traffic and congestion around the new school. They feel it is important that the council considers additional safe walkways to access the school, including access at Braeview Park.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that there are potential educational benefits to this proposal. These are dependent on the final design and build of the new school. All stakeholders agree with the need for a new school and the current school is in poor condition. They recognise that a new school could provide significantly improved facilities to support children's learning and wellbeing. All stakeholders are keen that the new school includes adequate indoor and outdoor sports facilities. However, concerns remain over the council's acquisition of the proposed site and the provision of safe access routes to the new school. If the proposal is agreed, The Highland Council should consider the suggestions raised by stakeholders and continue to involve them, where appropriate, in the development and design process.

HM Inspectors
February 2026

On behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education in Scotland