



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR
Education and Children's Services Department

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Education Provision
PROPOSAL DOCUMENT – September 2014

Review of Education Provision

LIONEL SCHOOL (S1/S2)
Isle of Lewis

Roinn an Fhoghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne

COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR
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Review of Education Provision: September 2014 Lionel School (S1/S2), Isle of Lewis

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PROPOSAL

It is proposed that:

- The S1/S2 education provision at Lionel School be discontinued with effect from 26 June 2015.**
- That the pupils of S1/S2 at Lionel School continue their education at The Nicolson Institute, from 13 August 2015.**

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Comhairle nan Eilean Siar aims to allocate resources in a way which will secure the best possible educational experience for pupils in the Western Isles. Implicit in this key objective is the effective deployment of resources in order to secure continuous improvement in educational achievement and attainment, and to provide better facilities in the most viable settings.
- 1.2. The Comhairle previously agreed in November 2010 to discontinue S1/S2 education at Lionel School from 29 June 2012. This decision was called in by Scottish Ministers, and the Comhairle subsequently reconsidered its position and agreed on 21 June 2012 not to discontinue the provision. Since that time, however, pupil numbers have declined, and a significant proportion of parents have chosen to send their children to The Nicolson Institute for S1 and S2 from August 2014. The secondary roll for 2014/15 at Lionel S1/S2 is 8 pupils (2 in S1 and 6 in S2).
- 1.3. The Comhairle, at its Meeting on 26 June 2014, authorised the Director of Education and Children's Services to proceed to undertake the necessary statutory consultation with parents, staff, pupils and other interested parties in accordance with the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the Act"), as amended, on a proposal regarding the discontinuation of the S1/S2 provision at Lionel School, being a relevant proposal in terms of Paragraph 1(1)(b)(ii) of Schedule 1 of the Act.
- 1.4. This document relates to a proposal to close the S1/S2 provision at Lionel School with effect from 26 June 2015 on the basis of the transfer of the pupils to The Nicolson Institute.

CONSULTATIVE PROCESS - SUMMARY OF PROCESS FOR THIS PROPOSAL DOCUMENT

Consideration by the Education and Children's Services Committee

- 2.1 This Proposal Document has been issued as a result of a decision approved by the Comhairle. The purpose of this document is to seek views on the proposal in this paper.

Proposal Document issued to consultees and published on Comhairle Web-site

- 2.2 A copy of this document will be issued free of charge to the consultees listed at Appendix A, and it will also be published on the Comhairle website: www.cne-siar.gov.uk

Publication of advertisement in local newspapers

- 2.3 An advertisement will be placed in the Stornoway Gazette and the West Highland Free Press. In addition, there will be announcements related to the consultation process on the local radio station, Isles FM and Radio nan Gaidheal.

Length of Consultation period

- 2.4 An advertisement will be placed in local newspapers on Thursday, 11 September 2014. The consultation will thereafter run until close of business on 7 November 2014, which includes a period of 33 school days.

Public meeting

- 2.5 A public meeting will be held on Tuesday, 30 September 2014 at 7.30pm, the details of which are given in this Document.

Involvement of HMI/Education Scotland

- 2.6 When the Proposal Document is published, a copy will also be sent to Education Scotland ("HMI") by the Comhairle. HMI will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Comhairle from any person during the consultation period or, if HMI agree, a summary of any such representations. HMI will further receive a summary of any oral representation made to the Comhairle at the public meeting that will be held and, as available (and so far as otherwise practicable), a copy of any other relevant documentation. HMI will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 15 December 2014 after the Comhairle has sent them all representations and documents as mentioned above. In preparing their report, HMI may visit the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there as they consider appropriate.

Preparation of Consultation Report

- 2.7 The Comhairle will review the proposal having regard to the HMI Report, written representations that it has received, and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting. It will then prepare a Consultation Report. This Report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be advertised in local newspapers. It will be available on the Comhairle website and from Comhairle Headquarters, as well as at the affected schools, free of charge. Anyone who has made written representations during the consultation period will also be informed about the Report. The Report will include a record of the total number of written representations made during the consultation period, a summary of the written representations, a summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting, the Authority's response to the HMI Report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the HMI Report and any other relevant information, including details of any alleged inaccuracies and how these have been handled. The report will also contain a statement explaining how it complied with the requirement to review the proposal in light of the HMI Report and representations (both written and oral) that it received. The Consultation Report will be published at least 3 weeks prior to the Comhairle making a decision.

Decision

- 2.8 This Consultation Report, together with any other relevant documentation, will be considered by the Education and Children's Services Committee, who will make a recommendation. This recommendation will then be subject to the approval of the Comhairle.

Scottish Ministers Call-in

- 2.9 In the event that the Comhairle decides to close the school at this stage, it is required to notify the Scottish Ministers of that decision and provide them with a copy of the Proposal Document and Consultation Report in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 within 6 working days of the decision being made, and to publish on its website a notice that it has done so, detailing the opportunity to make further representations within 3 weeks. The Scottish Ministers have an 8-week period from the date of that final decision to decide if they will call-in the proposal. If the Scottish Ministers call-in the proposal, it will be referred to a School Closure Review Panel. Within the first 3 weeks of the 8-week period, the Scottish Ministers will take account of any relevant representations made to them by any person. Until the outcome of the 8-week call-in process has been notified to the Comhairle, the Comhairle will not proceed to implement the proposal.

Note on Corrections

- 2.10 If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal Document, either by the Comhairle or any person, the Comhairle will determine if relevant information has been omitted or, if there has been an inaccuracy. The Comhairle will then take appropriate action, which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of the Proposal Document or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period, if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and HMI will be advised.

PUBLIC MEETING

- 3.1 A Public Meeting will be held to discuss the proposal. Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The meeting will be convened by the Comhairle and will be addressed by representatives of the Education and Children's Services Department and other senior officers of the Comhairle.
- 3.2 The meeting will be an opportunity to:
- Hear more about the proposal
 - Ask questions about the proposal
 - Have the views of all stakeholders recorded so that they can be taken into account as part of the Proposal process.
- 3.3 Arrangements for the meeting are as follows:

Venue: Lionel School
Date: 30 September 2014
Time: 7.30pm

- 3.4 A note will be taken at the meeting of questions and views. This note will be published on the Comhairle web-site, and a copy will be made available on request. The meeting will also be recorded.
- 3.5 The Comhairle will also take into consideration any written or electronic submissions on the proposal, which may be submitted to schoolconsultations@cne-siar.gov.uk or to the **Chief Executive at the Comhairle Offices, Sandwick Road, Stornoway, HS1 2BW, to arrive not later than 5.00pm on 7 November 2014.**

GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE NEED TO REVIEW SECONDARY PROVISION AT LIONEL SCHOOL

- 4.1 The Comhairle is charged to provide its statutory services as effectively and efficiently as possible. It is therefore necessary to be strategic in the delivery of education to ensure Best Value. School rolls in the authority as a whole have been falling year on year for the last thirty years, and, as far as can be seen, this is a continuing trend. There are more buildings in the school estate than are considered necessary for the delivery of high quality education. The number of pupils attending Lionel S1/S2 has fallen in recent years.
- 4.2 The Comhairle does not believe that the continuation of S1/S2 educational provision at Lionel School is viable. The Comhairle have a responsibility to allocate resources across the Western Isles in a rational and fair way. In doing so the Comhairle have a responsibility to:
- a) provide the highest quality of educational opportunity and experience for school pupils within available resources;
 - b) consult in a timely and accurate manner regarding decisions and communicate accurate information about the benefits of change;
 - c) ensure that change is carefully planned, adequately resourced, and phased appropriately; and
 - d) ensure that receiving schools are properly resourced to provide a better environment for learning and teaching.
- 4.3 Since August 2012, Lionel School has functioned as a satellite of The Nicolson Institute with management of the S1/S2 provision overseen by senior staff from The Nicolson Institute. This has involved one of the Depute Headteachers from The Nicolson Institute attending Lionel School one day each week, arranging the timetables and overseeing the work of pupils and staff. If this arrangement were to continue, and given the reduction in pupil numbers, this would have a significant impact on curriculum provision and the quality of learning and teaching available in Lionel School secondary department in comparison to The Nicolson Institute (see section 8 of this document).
- 4.4 In order to provide a sufficiently broad and balanced curriculum for S1 and S2 at Lionel it is necessary for all students to follow a Broad General Education, which involves Curriculum for Excellence Levels 2 and 3 in English, Mathematics, Science, Languages (Gaelic/Gàidhlig, French or Latin), Geography, History, Art, Music, Technical, Home Economics, Physical Education, Religious Education with inter-disciplinary learning and a range of electives. Providing specialist teaching staff locally, either full or part-time, for all of these subjects, even for a single S1/S2 class, would be challenging, on the basis that recruitment is difficult at present, even in our larger schools. One option is for teachers to travel from The Nicolson Institute to Lionel to deliver lessons. However, due to the travel requirements this would impose on teachers, this would severely limit the teaching time available both at The Nicolson Institute and at Lionel School.

KEY FACTORS

Demographic Trends and School Rolls across the Western Isles

- 5.1 The total school rolls have fallen steadily since Comhairle nan Eilean Siar was established as a new Education Authority in 1975. Predictions made about falling school rolls in the past have proved to be accurate and have therefore been reliable. The total roll (primary and secondary) thirty years ago was 6,246, while in September 2013 this had fallen to 3,434.
- 5.2 The secondary pupil roll in the Western Isles has fallen from 3,724 in 2008/09 to 3,437 in 2013/14 (a reduction of 287 pupils, or 8%).
- 5.3 As pupil population has declined, the level of funding has fallen in line with that decline. This has the effect of making the current pattern of provision an unsustainable one, particularly in the context of the necessity to make major cutbacks, both at present and for the foreseeable future.
- 5.4 Over recent years the roll in the secondary department at Lionel School has declined. In the academic year 2013/14 the secondary roll was 19 (7 in S1 and 12 in S2) and there were 8 children in P7. If these P7 pupils had subsequently transferred to S1, and the 2013/14 S1 cohort had transferred to S2, the pupil roll in Lionel secondary department would have been 15 in the current academic year. However, due to a number of placement requests for The Nicolson Institute, the roll in Lionel secondary department has reduced to 8 in 2014/15. In 2015/16, the highest roll possible from current numbers would be 18, including 16 of the current P7. Based on current primary numbers and assuming no placement requests, anticipated secondary pupil numbers for future years would be as follows:

2015/16	18 pupils
2016/17	23 pupils
2017/18	18 pupils
2018/19	25 pupils
2019/20	20 pupils
2020/21	17 pupils
2021/22	19 pupils

Travel

- 5.5 A key criterion is the travel implications for pupils which would arise in the event of rationalisation:
- The distances that pupils have to travel to and from school are clearly important in any assessment of the requirement to make relevant and appropriate provision. In addition, distances of themselves have to be set in the context of road conditions and the time that such travelling takes.
 - In the case of Lionel School the distance to the designated receiving school, The Nicolson Institute, is 27 miles. The Comhairle Home to School Travel Policy states that secondary pupils should not as a rule have to travel more than 80 minutes on a bus. It is estimated that travelling times for S1/S2 pupils at Lionel School to The Nicolson Institute would be in the region of 40 to 55 minutes. The Comhairle has looked at solutions to reduce travelling time for pupils from the most distant areas, including Ness, by commissioning an additional bus service, thereby providing a more direct route for the majority of pupils to The Nicolson Institute. In addition, improvement works have been made at Laxdale Bridge and the Manor roundabout to alleviate the build up of traffic, and thus reduce the travel time for pupils.

SUMMARY

- 6.1 The potential impact of the factors detailed above, and the advantages detailed in the educational benefits statement below, have compelled the Comhairle to give consideration to the strategy of future delivery of educational provision at Lionel School and has resulted in the decision to consult on the proposal for the discontinuation of S1/S2 provision at Lionel school.

CONSULTATION PROPOSAL

- 7.1 It is proposed that:
- The S1/S2 education provision at Lionel School be discontinued with effect from 26 June 2015
 - That the pupils of S1/S2 at Lionel School continue their education at The Nicolson Institute, from 13 August 2015.

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS STATEMENT

Background

- 8.1 Lionel School was built in 1936 on a level site and has a large playing field. The property comprises of a single block two-storey building, which had a refurbishment in 1992 that included a redesigning of the entrance to the school, a new cafeteria and a swimming pool. Along with The Nicolson Institute, Lionel S1/2 is a receiving school for P7 pupils from Lionel Primary School. There are 85 pupils on roll: 77 in the primary school and 8 in secondary. Of the 8 pupils in the secondary department, 2 are in S1 and 6 are in S2. The school has a capacity for 98 S1/S2 pupils. The school was assessed as Condition B in the 2013 school estates survey.
- 8.2 The Nicolson Institute is a new-build six-year secondary school serving the Isle of Lewis, located in the town of Stornoway. The total roll of the school is currently 1,079. The roll has remained fairly constant over the last 7 years. Pupils from all Lewis primary schools, except Lionel, transfer to the Nicolson Institute at the S1 stage. Only pupils from the S1/S2 department at Lionel School transfer at the S3 stage. Currently the S1/S2 roll at The Nicolson Institute is 361.
- 8.3 Since August 2013, Lionel School secondary department has functioned as a satellite of The Nicolson Institute. Six of the nine teachers at Lionel School are deployed between both establishments. Two members of staff teach three or four subjects. Specialist staff are shared with the primary department. Two members of The Nicolson Institute Senior Management Team visit the school for management purposes and one teaches in Lionel on a weekly basis.

Curriculum

- 8.4 The S1/S2 curriculum at The Nicolson Institute will provide a broader range of opportunities for students from Lionel School to achieve and develop their skills for life, work and learning. Much of the S1 curriculum is integrated study within broad curricular areas, with Social Studies, Technology and Creative Crafts delivered through a rota system designed to reduce the numbers of teachers required to deliver the curriculum at any one time. In addition to the courses currently available in Lionel School, pupils transferring into S1 in The Nicolson Institute from Lionel School will follow a Computing Studies and Business Studies course, and they will have the option to study Latin. A programme of interdisciplinary project work, incorporating Study Skills, runs throughout the session and provides choices for pupils, including options for Drama, Media Studies and Outdoor Education. This wider programme of content is possible due to the larger number of staff available to teach pupils.
- 8.5 The larger staff team at The Nicolson Institute means that subjects are spread evenly across the week. At Lionel School, due to the smaller staff team and the requirements for travel, English and mathematics are taught twice each week (two 50-minute blocks on two days) and science, Gaelic, French and PE are taught once each week (for two 50-minute blocks) on a single day. The latter approach can impact more significantly in the event of staff or pupil absences. More frequent, shorter periods of exposure to subject instruction are potentially more effective.
- 8.6 The S2 Curriculum in The Nicolson Institute is planned to enable pupils to work towards fourth level within curricular areas, in terms of pace and depth of learning. There are no ceilings on what a pupil can achieve and units of work are designed to allow pupils to move into learning at the fourth level – the best springboard for progression to N5. A whole-school planning tool called ‘The Learning Wall’ aids this process. Pupils transferring to The Nicolson Institute from Lionel would benefit from such arrangements, providing better opportunities for setting according to ability and flexibility in accelerated learning.
- 8.7 The curriculum in S2 at The Nicolson Institute allows breadth within curricular areas, but also facilitates some degree of specialisation. For example, within Social Subjects, pupils in S2 study History, Geography and Modern Studies under the guidance of a specialist subject teacher. This allows for better progression for National Qualifications in S4-S6 in each area. In order to have a similar model operate in Lionel to that in place at The Nicolson Institute, a major revision of the timetable for The Nicolson Institute would be required, resulting in a greater number of staff having to travel between both schools. This, in turn, would give rise to greater complexities in managing staff absences and providing adequate and specialist cover to pupils at Lionel School.
- 8.8 Due to the size of the cohort and the flexible timetabling arrangements, pupils at The Nicolson Institute can be grouped for learning and teaching purposes according to their needs and their ability levels in English, Mathematics and Languages. This approach has demonstrated significant benefits to pupils. In addition, peer interaction in the learning process provides significant added value to the learning experience. Due to the small number of pupils, it is not possible to provide such arrangements at Lionel.
- 8.9 Pupils in The Nicolson Institute are well placed to benefit from the Broad General Education, with learning set in real life contexts due to the proximity and accessibility of a broader range of partner agencies that can regularly contribute to and enhance the curriculum.
- 8.10 At The Nicolson Institute, due to its size, it is possible to provide some certification in S2 - for example, Auto Engineering – from which Lionel pupils would be able to benefit.

- 8.11 There are also short courses offered at The Nicolson Institute, providing tasters of courses that pupils could elect to study in S3/S4, and thus ensuring that pupils make suitable course choices aligned to their interests, experiences and strengths. At present, due to the limited staffing resources available and timetabling constraints, it is not practical for the pupils at Lionel School to regularly access such courses.
- 8.12 Pupils in The Nicolson Institute also have the opportunity to be part of a broader range of electives programmes, such as the School of Rugby, which focuses on improving pupils' skill acquisition and their health and well-being. Other electives on offer include Small Boat Handling, School Radio, Museum Studies, Auto-engineering, Drama, Harris Tweed Design and Make, Photography, Logo Global, and Astronomy.
- 8.13 All pupils in S2 at The Nicolson Institute have a Tutor Time programme, which ensures that pupils have more time and support to work in a broad peer group setting to reflect on their learning, their strengths and their weaknesses. It also enables them to work together to enhance their learning skills, their entrepreneurial skills and their citizenship skills. A similar system operates in Lionel School, but its impact is reduced as a result of the limited number of students able to participate. Lionel School pupils would benefit from such provision in larger peer groups.
- 8.14 Lionel School pupils attending The Nicolson Institute would also benefit from access to a wider range of subjects delivered in Gaelic. Currently, pupils in Lionel School who are fluent in Gaelic receive oral instruction in Gaelic in Technical and Home Economics classes. In The Nicolson Institute, pupils who are fluent in Gaelic receive Gaelic Medium teaching in Social Subjects (History, Geography, Modern Studies, RME, Home Economics, Science, PSE and oral instruction in Technical and Business Studies).
- 8.15 Lionel School is the only remaining S1/S2-only provision remaining in The Western Isles. In transferring to The Nicolson Institute, S1/S2 pupils transferring from Lionel School would have access to the broader range of opportunities available to all other S1 and S2 pupils in The Western Isles. For example, Pipe Band activities, Choir, football, netball, etc).

Teaching and learning

- 8.16 Attending a school with a larger roll has educational benefits for pupils in terms of teaching and learning. A larger staff team allows senior staff to consider greater flexibility in grouping pupils. Consequently, pupils are able to work alongside their peers on tasks that are closely matched to their educational needs. For example, setting arrangements are deployed in The Nicolson Institute in certain subjects at S1 and S2. These arrangements are effective in providing appropriate challenge and support to pupils across the achievement range. Lionel School pupils will benefit from working alongside other pupils of a similar ability, and from focused support targeted to their needs.
- 8.17 A larger staff team will also offer a wider range of expertise, resulting in increased opportunities for sharing effective practice, collegiate support and variety in teaching approaches. Lionel School pupils will benefit from the greater diversity of teachers and breadth of experience and knowledge of the staff.
- 8.18 By attending a school with a larger staff team, Lionel School pupils could benefit from greater flexibility in the deployment of staff which would, in turn, meet the learning needs of pupils more effectively. For example, the absence or illness of a member of staff would be managed through the deployment of other teachers with the relevant subject knowledge and expertise. Also, a greater range of available teachers can help in managing flexibility in the group size that can be used in certain subjects, particularly where practical hands-on tasks are involved.

- 8.19 Transferring pupils from Lionel will offer the opportunity for pupils to be part of more viable cohorts for a variety of learning activities. It will mean there is access to a larger peer group of a similar age, stage and gender for such activities and this will assist in improving the pupils' learning skills.

Leadership

- 8.20 In transferring to The Nicolson Institute, secondary-aged pupils from Lionel School would benefit from more regular access to senior management staff. At present, Lionel secondary pupils are supported by one Principal Teacher, who is employed part-time at Lionel. Attendance at The Nicolson Institute would mean that pupils could benefit from a larger team of experienced senior staff, including Principal Teachers in various subjects and faculties, as well as a team of promoted guidance staff, Depute Head Teachers and the Head Teacher. The pupils will therefore benefit from enhanced leadership and more effective arrangements for planning. Having larger staff teams in various faculties helps ensure a more comprehensive and effective process for self-evaluation and consequent improvements to department and school performance.

Learning Environment /Resources

- 8.21 The S1/S2 pupils of Lionel School would benefit from access to the wider range of facilities available at The Nicolson Institute. The Nicolson Institute is a new school, opened in 2012. The school pupils benefit from modern and up-to-date facilities. These include specialist classrooms and flexible teaching areas. These are purpose-built to meet the requirements for the delivery of a Curriculum for Excellence. There are also language laboratories, media-studies rooms and a well-stocked library with multi-media resources. The multi-use stage facility for assemblies, shows and concerts also serves as an excellent facility for teaching drama and performing arts. Being adjacent to the Sports Centre, pupils have access to the all-weather pitch, running track and the sports facilities and swimming pool in the Sports Centre. Lionel School provides a good physical environment, which is well-resourced. However, transfer to The Nicolson Institute provides added value in learning and teaching, together with enhanced physical resources.

- **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)**

The pupils of Lionel School would have access to an enhanced ICT infrastructure, systems and range of ICT resources in the proposed move to The Nicolson Institute, including a faster broadband (internet) link via fibre connection. As with all recent new-build sites, the school has modern cable and wireless data networks offering good connectivity throughout, and all classrooms are equipped with teaching walls with interactive smartboards, which are easily height-adjusted to suit individual an pupil's height and/or mobility. In addition, all departments in The Nicolson Institute have access to a range of computer systems, along with banks of wireless-enabled netbooks or tablet devices, which are housed in mobile charging trolleys commonly known as 'class in a box' (CIAB) units. These enhance pupils' access to and use of ICT.

- **Additional Support Needs (ASN)**

The Nicolson Institute has the facilities to cater for the needs of all children, including those with additional support needs. At present there are 5.5 full-time equivalent Additional Support Needs teachers who are able to provide flexible and direct support to teaching staff. At The Nicolson Institute these teachers support in class, and deliver smaller tutorials for both junior and senior classes. This provides specialist provision for those pupils who require an adapted curriculum. The enhanced facilities in The Nicolson Institute will also help to enhance learning and teaching for all children who have additional support needs. Lionel secondary pupils would have access to the larger Pupil Guidance Team, and therefore would benefit from more immediate and targeted support as and when necessary. Pupils who are particularly vulnerable have their own supervised social area for intervals and lunchtimes.

Lionel secondary pupils would also meet their Guidance Teachers at an earlier juncture if they enrolled in S1, and this would help to establish the vital relationship between teacher and pupil and school and home. This relationship endures for the duration of a pupil's career.

Extra-Curricular Activities and sports

- 8.22 A choir and a melodeon group currently run in Lionel School. The Nicolson Institute runs an extensive programme of lunch-time and after-school clubs, including revision classes. Pupils from Lionel School will have access to a much wider range of activities than are available to them at present.
- 8.23 The transfer of secondary pupils from Lionel School will offer the opportunity for pupils to be part of more viable cohorts for a variety of activities, including participation in team events and sporting competitions. It will mean there is access to a larger peer group of a similar age, stage and gender for such activities. Such arrangements would help foster pupils' allegiance to a particular House and participate in S1 and S2 House events and competitions.

Personal, social and emotional needs

- 8.24 Attending a school with a larger roll will have educational benefits for Lionel pupils in terms of their personal, social and emotional development. Lionel pupils will be able to meet with and work with a wider group of peers in a greater range of contexts. Lionel pupils will be able to develop school friendships with a wider range of their peers. They will be able to benefit from the support and guidance of more staff, who will, in turn, be able to support their individual needs.
- 8.25 As part of the regular Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme, working alongside their peers, Lionel pupils will be able to access the curriculum and resources currently available at The Nicolson Institute. It is planned to have more regular involvement of specialist organisations and partners facilitating effective support for young people with a range of differing needs. Lionel pupils attending The Nicolson Institute will, during the school day, be able to access a wider range of locally based PSHE activities led by partner organisations and community groups.
- 8.26 The Nicolson Institute has qualified teaching staff in all curricular areas, including Pupil Support staff. These teachers are responsible for the assessment and planning of each individual learner's progress. By providing a more sustainable and wider educational experience, The Nicolson Institute would allow young people transferring from Lionel School secondary department to further develop the four capacities (Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens, Effective Contributors).
- 8.27 In S1 and S2 at The Nicolson Institute, classes give presentations to their peers in assemblies, including whole school events. This helps pupils develop the four capacities (Successful Learners, Confident Individuals, Responsible Citizens, Effective Contributors) and increased confidence, particularly in contributing to whole school developments and activities.

Accessibility of Premises

- 8.28 The Nicolson Institute is fully Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) compliant.

Capacity

- 8.29 The present users of The Nicolson Institute's facilities will not be disadvantaged in any way by the addition of children from Lionel School, as there will be adequate capacity to cater for the needs of the additional pupils.

Likely Effect on the Local Community

- 8.30 It is believed that the proposal will not be detrimental to the local community and will have no impact on social or economic activities in the Lionel area. As Lionel Primary will remain open, the facilities in the school will remain available to the local community. Ness is a vibrant community with good infrastructure and services. The current choir and melodeon after-school school activities will stop, as both the instructor and pupils will have transferred to The Nicolson Institute. Primary education remains in the community and the transfer of secondary provision will not reduce the community facilities available through the school and/or limit the contribution of education in the community. It is recognised that travel distance may impact on the choice of location for some families. However, given the experience to date in other similar areas, and the quality of the bus service, this is not considered significant.

Travel

- 8.31 The Nicolson Institute is located 27 miles from Lionel School. There are already arrangements in place for transporting pupils at the S3 to S6 stages from Lionel to the Nicolson Institute. The Comhairle, due to the current number of placement requests, has had to commission an additional bus service on the route, ensuring that there is sufficient capacity is in place to accommodate the additional demand which would result from the proposed discontinuation of the S1/S2 provision at Lionel School. The travelling time will add to the length of the school day for pupils. The Comhairle has taken reasonable steps to minimise journey times, as detailed in section 5.4 of this document.

Staff Transfer

- 8.32 Any staff transfers will be conducted under existing Comhairle terms and conditions with attempts being made, where possible, to minimise any additional distance that they may require to travel. Where necessary, any aspect of the implementation of these proposals that impacts on staff will result in consultation with the relevant trade unions and the individuals concerned.

Summary of Educational Benefits

- 8.33 Closing Lionel Secondary Department and moving the pupils to the Nicolson Institute would provide the following educational benefits to Lionel School Secondary pupils:
- a significant increase in curricular opportunities at S1 and S2;
 - increased access to a wide range of subject specialist teachers;
 - more staff, including Principal Teachers, offering a wide range of expertise and allowing better and consistent quality assurance of an individual learner's progress;
 - improved access to resources, including specialist subject resources, information communication technology, physical education, sports and leisure, after-school activities, library, social groups, clubs and societies and school trips and exchanges;
 - secondary pupils will integrate more effectively within the Broad General Education phase of Curriculum for Excellence and transition to Senior Phase;
 - access to a larger peer group of similar age, stage and gender;
 - access to a larger teaching staff group who are able to work collaboratively to benefit each pupil's learning;
 - staff who have better access to continuing professional development and peer interaction;
 - more efficient use of the Comhairle's financial resources, enabling greater investment in direct learning and teaching.

- 8.34 Closing Lionel School Secondary Department and moving the pupils to the Nicolson Institute would provide the following benefits to all pupils in the Western Isles;
- a more efficient and cost-effective model of secondary education delivery, thus contributing to the sustainability of the excellent quality of education provided to all pupils on the Western Isles in the current challenging financial climate;
 - greater equality of opportunity;
 - more efficient use of financial resources.
- 8.35 Pupils of Lionel School would have access to a modern educational establishment, which is fully equipped and designed to meet the needs of pupils and deliver a Curriculum for Excellence.
- 8.36 The proposal will result in S1/S2 pupils from Lionel School experiencing a more stimulating learning environment by attending a school which has been purpose built for the delivery of a 21st Century curriculum. The staff, Parent Councils and community will be consulted fully on the development of plans for the integration of S1/S2 pupils from Lionel School into The Nicolson Institute.

CONSIDERATION OF FACTORS AFFECTING RURAL SCHOOLS

- 9.1 In terms of Section 12 of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, Lionel School is a very remote rural school. Consequently, special regard has been given to the following factors in the preparation of this document.

Viable Alternatives to Closure

- 9.2 The alternative and reasonable options for the future provision of education for pupils in S1/S2 at Lionel School are to:

a) maintain the status quo.

This option does not provide educationally beneficial class groupings which would enrich the learning experiences of students. This option does not increase the curricular opportunities for pupils. It does not increase the number of specialist staff, resources and subjects available to pupils.

b) increase the time Lionel S1 and S2 pupils attend The Nicolson Institute.

This option would not ensure a consistently broad and balanced curriculum nor would it offer sufficiently regular access for pupils to educationally beneficial class groupings to enrich their learning experiences. Lionel pupils would potentially spend more time travelling. This would also erode further the case for a 2 site educational provision.

c) extend the provision to S1-S3.

This option does not provide educationally beneficial class groupings which would enrich the learning experiences of pupils. Neither does it provide the improved outcomes detailed within the benefits statement. The Comhairle does not, within its current budget, have the means to develop, fully staff and resource such an extended provision.

d) extend the provision to S1-S6.

This option does not provide educationally beneficial class groupings which would enrich the learning experiences of pupils. Neither does it provide the improved outcomes detailed within the benefits statement. The Comhairle does not, within its current budget, have the means to develop, fully staff and resource such an extended provision.

e) temporarily close the S1/S2 section of Lionel until pupil numbers rise.

This option is known as 'mothballing'. The demographic profile of the community does not provide evidence of sufficient growth in the birth-16 population.

9.3 These options are therefore not considered to be viable.

Likely Effects on the Local Community

9.4 As detailed in section 8 of this proposal document it is believed that there will be no significant effect on the local community.

9.5 The Outer Hebrides Migration Study 2008, identified key factors of sustainable communities which included Sustainable employment, Private sector led economic diversity, housing provision, self-determination, clean energy. It is not believed that the discontinuation of the S1/S2 provision at Lionel School would significantly impact on the identified key factors needed for sustainable communities.

Likely Effect Caused by any Different Travelling Arrangements that may be Required in Consequence of the Proposal

9.6 As detailed in section 8 of this proposal document, Lionel secondary pupils have access to an enhanced transport provision structure to access education at The Nicolson Institute, and route improvements have been undertaken. No additional school bus will be required, as described in section 5.5 (b).

OTHER FACTORS

Pupil Costs

10.1 The annual budgeted school running cost per pupil, as reported to Scottish Government, is obtained by dividing the total budgeted school running cost by the school roll. The total cost comprises of the following.

- Staff (teaching and non-teaching)
- Premises (e.g. lighting, heating, maintenance, cleaning, etc)
- Supplies (including books, materials and educational equipment)
- School transport
- Catering
- Other school costs (e.g. Parental Councils, Administration, examination costs (where applicable), etc)
- Income

10.2 The Lionel Secondary School and The Nicolson Institute pupil costs for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are shown in the following table:

SCHOOL	COST PER SECONDARY PUPIL	
	2013/14	2014/15*
Lionel	£19,218	£34,561
Nicolson Institute	£6,585	£6,835
Western Isles Average		£9,015

*figures based on 2014/15 pupil roll at S1/S2 and revised staffing budget as at 15 August 2014.

10.3 Since the initial figures were prepared for this consultation the Commission for Rural Education has finalised the format of the financial information to be included in consultation documents. The template has changed slightly. Previously requested management and central support overheads have now been removed to more closely reflect original cost per pupil calculations.

- 10.4 The Comhairle, as requested by the Commission for Rural Education, has considered the impact the transfer of pupils from Lionel S1/S2 to The Nicolson Institute will have on GAE (Grant Aided Expenditure). The secondary GAE funding is based on the number of secondary pupils in the authority with an adjustment based on the difference in average cost per pupil between Island and Mainland authorities. Although the transfer of pupils from S1/S2 does reduce the CPP figure across the authority by around £114 per pupil (£166k in total) there will be no impact on Comhairle GAE funding because any change will be compensated for by the Floor mechanism within the Local Government settlement.
- 10.5 Also requested by the Commission are details regarding the capital implications or disposal costs of any proposed closure, however, there are no plans to close, develop or mothball any buildings or physical assets and so this section of the template has not been completed.
- 10.6 Similarly, the new section requesting information on non-recurring revenue costs, has not been completed. Items that may be relevant here would be one off costs associated with the proposal such as redundancy or early retirement sums. The department would manage operational issues in line with existing policy and at this time no such costs are anticipated.

Staffing

10.7 Teaching Staff

The current teaching staff complement at Lionel Secondary School is, 1.5 FTE staff and 0.25 FTE Itinerant Staff, giving an overall staff complement of 1.75 FTE covering the range of subjects. Itinerant staff would be given revised timetables as already is the case in such circumstances.

Ancillary Support

- 10.8 The current ancillary staffing levels for Lionel Secondary School is 0 FTE staff

Staffing Costs for Lionel School Secondary Department

- 10.9 The following table details the staffing costs for Lionel School S1-2

SCHOOL	Staffing Cost
	2014/15*
Teaching Staff (including Supply)	£119,320
Support Staff	£36,129
Staff Training	£555
Totals	£156,004

Other staff

- 10.10 a) **Clerical**
The current school assistant hours would be retained for the Primary provision.
- b) **Janitor**
The current janitorial hours would be retained for the Primary provision.
- c) **Cleaning Staff**
The current cleaning hours would be retained for the Primary provision.
- d) **School Meals**
The current catering hours would be retained for the Primary provision.

CONCLUSION

- 11.1 Based on the demographic trends and the educational benefits statement it is considered that the proposal would result in the S1/S2 pupils at Lionel Secondary School firstly, attending a school building which is modern and designed for the delivery of a 21st Century curriculum and secondly, would receive an improved quality of education. On these grounds the Comhairle has therefore agreed to proceed to statutory consultation.

APPENDIX 1 CONSULTEES

The consultation will be open to all relevant stakeholders. The groups that will be specifically consulted are:

- Parents of pupils in affected schools;
- Pupils of any affected school;
- Staff (teaching and other) of any affected school;
- Parent Councils;
- Parents of children who may attend affected schools within two years of any proposal being published;
- Trade Unions,
- Community Councils;
- Outer Hebrides Community Planning Partnership;
- Bòrd na Gàidhlig.

Staff and pupils will be consulted separately.

APPENDIX 2 SCHOOL ROLL

Lionel School

School Year	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	PRI.	SEC.	Total Roll
2002-03	11	9	5	7	10	6	8	26	21	0	0	0	0	56	47	103
2003-04	6	12	11	5	8	11	9	13	26	0	0	0	0	62	39	101
2004-05	8	7	12	12	6	8	13	19	14	0	0	0	0	66	33	99
2005-06	11	9	5	15	13	10	9	24	21	0	0	0	0	72	45	117
2006-07	3	11	9	5	14	12	10	20	22	0	0	0	0	64	42	106
2007-08	8	3	14	12	6	15	13	20	22	0	0	0	0	71	42	113
2008-09	14	7	4	14	12	8	14	21	21	0	0	0	0	73	42	115
2009-10	9	15	7	6	15	12	8	26	21	0	0	0	0	72	47	119
2010-11	6	8	15	7	7	14	13	15	27	0	0	0	0	70	42	112
2011-12	12	9	8	18	10	8	9	20	16	0	0	0	0	74	36	110
2012-13	6	13	9	7	17	8	7	13	17	0	0	0	0	67	30	97
2013-14	11	6	14	11	7	17	8	7	12	0	0	0	0	74	19	93
2014-15*	8	12	6	15	11	9	16	2	6	0	0	0	0	77	8	85

*Projected roll

Overall percentage change over seven year period: -24.8%

Overall percentage change over one year period: -8.6%

Please note that all figures given in the table above are based on census data, with the exception of the 2014/15 figures, which show the projected roll.

APPENDIX 3 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Table 1: Current revenue costs for school proposed for closure			
	Costs for full financial year (projected annual costs) 2014-15	Additional financial impact on receiving school Nicolson Institute / Lionel Primary School	Annual recurring savings (column 2 minus column 3)
Lionel S1/S2 Department			
<i>School costs</i>			
<i>Employee costs - note 1</i>			
teaching staff	117,001	78,610	38,391
support staff	36,129	36,129	0
teaching staff training (CPD etc)	555	333	0
support staff training	0	0	0
Supply costs - note 2	2,319	0	2,319
<i>Building costs:</i>			
property insurance	1,736	1,736	0
non domestic rates	18,190	18,190	0
water & sewerage charges	2,435	2,435	0
energy costs	36,950	36,950	0
cleaning (contract or in-house)	17,981	17,981	0
building repair & maintenance	5,710	5,710	0
grounds maintenance	3600	3,600	0
facilities management costs - note 6	0	0	0
revenue costs arising from capital	0	0	0
other	0	0	0
<i>School operational costs:</i>			
learning materials	2,908	2,908	0
catering (contract or in-house)	5,590	3500	2,090
SQA costs	0	0	0
other school operational costs (e.g. licences)	1,475	0	1,475
<i>Transport costs: note 3</i>			
home to school	25,751	25,751	0
other pupil transport costs	165	83	83
staff travel	47	23	23
SCHOOL COSTS SUB-TOTAL	278,541	233,939	44,603
<i>Income:</i>			
Sale of meals	2053	2053	0
Lets			0
External care provider			0
Other			0
SCHOOL INCOME SUB-TOTAL	2053	2053	0

TOTAL COSTS MINUS INCOME FOR SCHOOL	276,488	231,885	44,603
UNIT COST PER PUPIL PER YEAR	34,561		

Number of pupils

8

Notes

1. The total costs incurred for teaching staff (row 5) and support staff (row 6) are required to be included. Column 2 should include the current costs for a full financial year for the school proposed for closure, and column 3 should include the *additional* cost to the receiving school as a result of staff transferring.
 For teaching staff, this should include regular teachers, itinerant teachers, learning support teaching staff and special education (ASN) staff.
 Itinerant teaching staff includes central support services such as English as additional language support, hearing, visually impaired services, and educational psychology services.
 For support staff, this should include classroom assistants, administration staff and janitorial staff.
 For all staff the costs entered should include salary, NI and pension costs.
 If the school proposed for closure has less than 3 staff members, then the cumulative staff costs only should be given in row 5 (for both teaching and support staff), so as to avoid possible disclosure of individual salaries.
 Training costs should be identified separately in rows 7 and 8.
2. Supply costs to cover teaching and support staff. This may be held in a central budget, be devolved or shared across the budgets.
3. 'Home to school' pupil transport costs should include those school transport costs incurred in accordance with Council policy. 'Other pupil transport costs' will cover costs incurred for the transport of pupils for activities such as swimming, etc.
4. Row 30 of column 3 should include the additional transport costs related to the increased home to school transport arrangements that are put in place in accordance with Council policy. This figure is therefore likely to be considerably higher than current costs.
5. This table is to capture the impact on the revenue support grant as a result of changes to GAE. Impact on GAE should consider the issues covered in the GAE section of the guidance document that accompanies this template.
6. Facilities management costs will include costs related to caretaking, janitorial and security.
7. The capital costs for the receiving school should be taken across the life cycle of the school in line with the life expectancy of that school. The capital costs for the school proposed for closure should be taken across the same life cycle period.