



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

Roinn Foghlaim is Seirbheisean Chloinne
Department of Education and Children's Services

South Uist Primary Schools Catchment Areas

Report on Findings of Preliminary Consultation



Introduction

In February 2024, the Comhairle received representation from Sgoil Dhalabroig Parent Council seeking a review of the catchments of Sgoil Dhalabroig and Sgoil an lochdair, specifically in an area of the middle district of South Uist where the two boundaries currently meet. This request was made in the interests of there being a number of families living in this area that place their children at Sgoil Dhalabroig and it was felt that, in respect of that, the area should be rezoned to reflect the actual pattern of school enrolment.

The Comhairle considered the request at a meeting of its Education, Sport & Children's Services Committee on 23 April 2024 and concluded that the matter should proceed to a preliminary community consultation in line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The proposal of the preliminary consultation was to rezone the area of the middle district to Sgoil Dhalabroig as per the detail of the request received.

Proposal

The proposal involves moving the boundary line between the two catchments approximately 2.6 miles to the north. The change would subsume the following townships into the catchment of Sgoil Dhalabroig and, consequently, remove them from the catchment of Sgoil an lochdair.

- Ormacleit
- Stoneybridge
- North Stoneybridge
- Peninerine
- Snishival

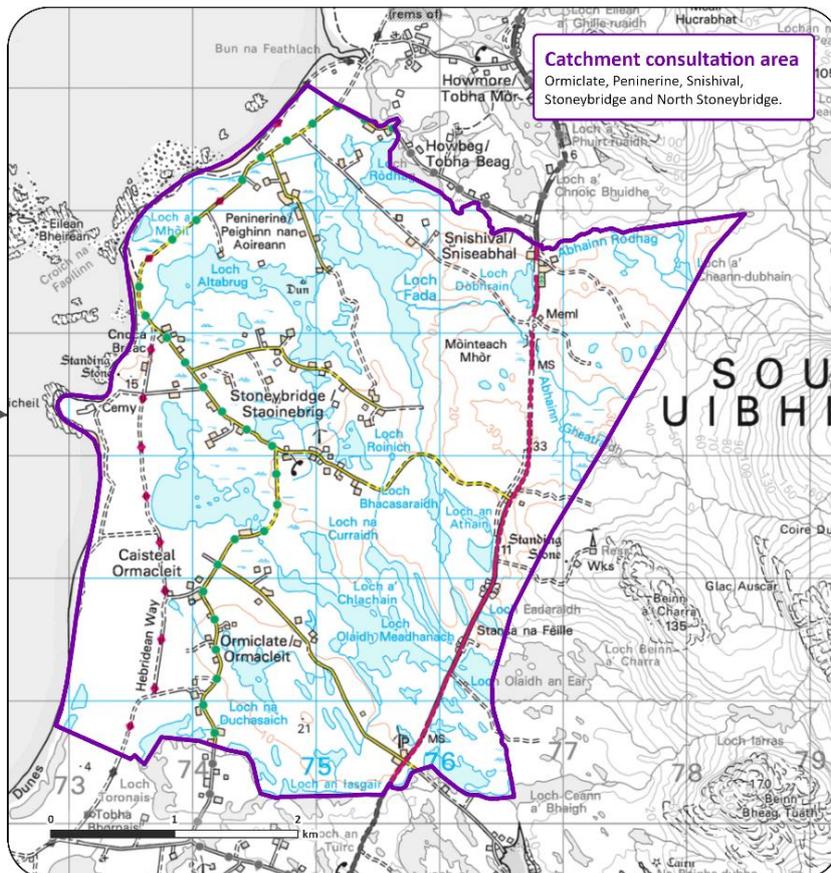
The change in catchment would result in any pupils resident in that area and attending Sgoil Dhalabroig to become entitled to receive free home-to-school return transport.

Consultation Area and Map

South Uist Primary Schools Catchment Consultation



The map included above indicates the area of South Uist affected by the proposal and the current catchment areas of the two schools. A zoom-in shows the townships, with the southerly line indicating the current catchment boundary and the northerly line showing where the boundary of Sgoil Dhalabroig catchment could extend to if the proposal was agreed.



Preliminary Consultation Process

The preliminary consultation consisted of two main elements: Local drop-in sessions and meetings in each school and an online survey.

The drop-ins and informal meetings were held in each school on the following dates and it gave the opportunity for the parents, staff, pupils and wider community of each area to hear details of the proposals and to give feedback.

Sgoil Dhalabroig:

Drop-in session 11th February 2-4pm

Informal meeting 11th February 6pm

Sgoil an Lochdair:

Drop-in session 13th February 2-4pm

Informal meeting 13th February 6pm

The online questionnaire opened for responses on Monday 3 February 2025 and closed on Friday 28 March 2025, ensuring that the minimum requirement of 30 term-time days for responses was met and exceeded. Feedback from the meetings and online questionnaire are included in this report.

Current Context of Schools

In the interests of providing context, information is provided below about each school that was correct at the time the preliminary consultation was conducted in February and March 2025.



Sgoil an Lochdair



Sgoil Dhalabroig

Official Capacity	175	150
Total Roll P1-7	40	73
GME Roll (P1-7)	33	50
GLE Roll (P1-7)	7	23
Sgoil Àraich N5	4	3
Sgoil Àraich N4	2	4
P1-7 Pupils Resident in Rezoning Area	0	6

Summarised Feedback from Drop-Ins and Informal Meetings

Sgoil Dhalabroig

Approximate Attendees

Drop-In: 7

Informal Meeting: 12

- It was expressed that the current catchments were having a negative socio-economic impact on the southern part of South Uist through the middle district being zoned to Sgoil an lochdair when the majority of employment, amenity and social movement was south towards Daliburgh and Lochboisdale.
- It was felt that the townships of the middle district has stronger historic, cultural and social links with Daliburgh than with lochdair.
- Following the closure of Stoneybridge School in 2011, it was felt that consultation about the zoning of the affected townships was inadequate and should have considered Daliburgh instead of lochdair.
- Sgoil an lochdair can currently draw from more townships for their catchment than Sgoil Dhalabroig (although it was noted separately that overall population was more significant than number of townships)
- It was highlighted that children from the old Stoneybridge school were zoned to Sgoil Dhalabroig for secondary education back then and this better reflected the community.
- There are currently a number of children in the proposed rezoning area that go to Sgoil Dhalabroig. There are none that go to Sgoil an lochdair. On that basis, the rezoning would better reflect a fair entitlement to transport.

Sgoil an lochdair

Approximate Attendees

Drop-In: 12

Informal Meeting: 60-70

- Multiple concerns were expressed that the reduction in the catchment of Sgoil an lochdair could further threaten the future viability of the school. It was strongly felt that the community needed to take every step to protect the school and maintain viable enrolment numbers
- It was felt that the issue emanated from matters that were parental choice in terms of which school parents wished to choose to enrol their children. That is a right parents have but should not result in a threat to the future of another school. It is known that placing requests forfeit eligibility for school transport and boundaries should not be changed to allow increased transport eligibility following placing requests.

- Concern was expressed that the change would be permanent and the townships would be lost from Sgoil an Iochdair for good. This would mean a loss of any new future enrolments, especially if there are new families coming into the area or if there is new house building taking place.
- Whilst it was recognised that the old Stoneybridge School catchment of Ormacleit, Stoneybridge and North Stoneybridge was somewhat disputed in terms of catchment, the request was very unfair in also including Peninerine and Snishival that have always been townships within the catchment of Sgoil an Iochdair.
- There was a full consultation on the rezoning of the old Stoneybridge School catchment in 2010 when the decision was made to close that school. It was clearly agreed that they should go to Sgoil an Iochdair and that decision should be respected.
- Several parents spoke of concern about encroachment of Sgoil an Iochdair catchment from the north and the south through Sgoil Bhaile a' Bhanaich and Sgoil Dhalabroig respectively. It was important to protect the future of Sgoil an Iochdair against this.
- It was felt that increasing the hours and capacity of Sgoil Àraich at Sgoil an Iochdair would help to secure the future of the school
- Parents wished to see investment and improvement in the school fabric and amenity in the interests of sustaining it into the future as an attractive learning environment.

In addition to the meetings, letters were received from pupils of Sgoil an Iochdair expressing strong support for their school and opposing any change to their school catchment.

Findings of Preliminary Online Survey

Alongside the drop-in sessions and meetings, an online survey opened on 3 February 2025 and ran until 28 March 2025. It asked questions that gave respondents an open opportunity to provide feedback and comment on proposals.

Total responses received: 75

Individual Responses: 72

Responses on behalf of groups or organisations: 3

Group responses:

- Iochdar Community Council
- Iochdar School Pupils Group
- Iochdar Parent Council

Collated results are provided below to each of the questions where information was provided.

1. Township in which respondent resides.

Township	Current Catchment School*	%
Ardmore	Sgoil an lochdair	2.7%
Balivanich	Sgoil Bhaile a' Mhanaich	4.0%
Benbecula	Unclear	2.7%
Boisdale	Sgoil Dhalabroig	1.3%
Bornais	Sgoil Dhalabroig	2.7%
Creagorry	Sgoil an lochdair	4.0%
Drimisdale	Sgoil an lochdair	2.7%
East Gerinish	Sgoil an lochdair	2.7%
Eriskay	Sgoil Dhalabroig	1.3%
Griminish	Sgoil an lochdair	2.7%
Hacklett	Sgoil an lochdair	5.3%
Howmore	Sgoil an lochdair	5.3%
lochdar	Sgoil an lochdair	24.0%
Kilpheder	Sgoil Dhalabroig	1.3%
Lionacleit	Sgoil an lochdair	5.3%
Lochboisdale	Sgoil Dhalabroig	1.3%
Lochcarnan	Sgoil an lochdair	5.3%
Locheynort	Sgoil Dhalabroig	1.3%
Milton	Sgoil Dhalabroig	2.7%
Mingarry	Sgoil Dhalabroig	1.3%
North Boisdale	Sgoil Dhalabroig	1.3%
Ormacleit	Sgoil an lochdair	8.0%
Peninerine	Sgoil an lochdair	1.3%
Rugashinish	Sgoil an lochdair	1.3%
Smerclate	Sgoil Dhalabroig	2.7%
Snishival	Sgoil an lochdair	1.3%
Stiligarry	Sgoil an lochdair	2.7%
Stoneybridge	Sgoil an lochdair	1.3%

**Note: The catchment school is shown as that related to the township and not necessarily the school in which the respondent's children are actually enrolled.*

Respondents from Sgoil Dhalabroig catchment	17.3%
Respondents from Sgoil an lochdair catchment	76.0%
Respondents from outside the two catchments	6.7%

2. The school in which the respondent has children currently enrolled?

Children currently in Sgoil Dhalabroig	17.3%
Children currently in Sgoil an lochdair	44.0%
'Other' or not declared	38.7%

3. Where enrolment was subject to placing request to a school other than the catchment school, what was the reason?

Reason	% of those who answered	% of total responses
School was closer to my home	26.7%	16.0%
Better transport or commute	13.3%	8.0%
Better suits childcare arrangements	11.1%	6.7%
Moved out of catchment but stayed in the school	4.4%	2.7%
Place of work is nearer school	11.1%	6.7%
Other	33.3%	20.0%
Did not answer question	-	40.0%

Of those that selected 'other,' some chose to make a comment, as detailed below:

- Feel more connected to Daliburgh catchment
- For Gaelic education
- Feel more part of the Southend community
- Better access to facilities at Cothrom
- A mix of socio-economic reasons
- More suitable childcare hours at another school
- Links to social/peer groups and activities in another area
- Family connections
- Preferred to enrol in a smaller school

4. For parents with children not yet in school, which school is intended for enrolment.

School	% of those who answered	% of total responses
Sgoil Dhalabroig	12.1%	5.3%
Sgoil an Iochdair	60.6%	26.7%
Other	27.3%	12.0%
Did not answer question	-	56.0%

Of those that selected 'other,' some comments were provided:

- Sgoil Bhaile a' Mhanaich
- No children
- N/A

5. Views on the rezoning proposal, as stated.

All seventy-five respondents to the survey provided a comment in response to this question. The table below provides a broad overview of the nature of the comments.

Comments supportive of the rezoning proposal	16.0%
Comments supportive of the rezoning proposal but with amendments	9.3%
Comments deemed to be neutral in not stating a specific preferred view	6.7%
Comments not supportive of the rezoning proposal	68.0%

The 9.3% of respondents that were supportive but proposed a change all made the same suggestion that the rezoning should just include the old Stoneybridge School catchment (Stoneybridge, North Stoneybridge and Ormacleit) and should not include the townships of Peninerine and Snishival.

Summarised themes from the comments are included below.

Opposition to the Rezoning Proposal

The majority of the respondents (68%) provided clear comments that were in opposition to the rezoning proposal. Reasons stated included:

- concern about long-term loss of this area from the catchment resulting in future falling rolls;
- significant concern about the future viability of the school;
- the risk of setting precedent that would result in similar rezoning requests from other areas; and
- views that the source issue related to voluntary placing requests and associated transport and they should not be resolved through disproportionate rezoning.

Value of the School to the Community

In addition to the reasons provided specifically, above, many of the respondents that commented against the proposal also made significant comment about the importance of Sgoil an Lochdair to their community and how much it is valued.

Support for Rezoning Proposal

Overall, approximately a quarter of respondents made comments that were supportive of rezoning, with 16% directly supporting the proposal as presented. Reasons for supporting the proposal were:

- long-term associations between the middle district and Daliburgh;
- Sgoil Dhalabroig is geographically closer to the townships in the consultation area;
- all children in the consultation area currently go to Sgoil Dhalabroig

- there are existing social, cultural, economic and community links between the townships and the Daliburgh/Southend area;
- the rezoning rights a perceived wrong that took place when Stoneybridge School closed; and
- childcare in the area is predominantly focused on Cothrom Òg and onwards links to Sgoil Dhalabroig;

Rezone but with an alternative Proposal

Approximately 10% of respondents used the question to provide a view that they supported the making of a change to the catchment but not the one proposed in the consultation. In each case, the alternative proposal noted was to not include the townships of Peninerine and Snishival but to focus on the catchment of the old Stoneybridge school. They felt this should be the area subject to consultation for inclusion in the catchment of Sgoil Dhalabroig (Stoneybridge, North Stoneybridge and Ormacleit).

Placing Requests and Transport

A theme ran through many comments was that, although all children in the consultation area attend Sgoil Dhalabroig, they do so under the terms of voluntary placing requests and that such arrangements forfeit eligibility to access school transport. The majority of these comments raised it from the perspective that this is a matter for parents that chose to do that and that it should not affect catchment boundaries. Others that commented stated the 100% uptake of placing requests in the area as the very reason that catchments should be changed.

A full anonymised transcript of comments is provided in Appendix One.

6. Additional comments or suggestions.

The final question in the survey offered the respondents to make any further comment. A total of 54 chose to do so. This question was predominantly used to provide further evidence, context and support for the answers they gave to the previous question. Summarised themes are included below.

Opposition to the Rezoning Proposal

There was strong opposition to the proposals as stated in the preliminary consultation. This was the significant majority view. There were a lot of concerns in relation to this proposal being a threat to the future viability of Sgoil an lochdair and that it may lead to other similar requests in the future. It was felt by many that no change at all should be made.

Placing Requests and Transport

There were multiple comments about the main issue being about transport issues related to voluntary placing requests and there was support for a solution to be found for this that didn't involve having to rezone catchments. Several felt that information and guidance should be clearer about placing requests.

Impact on the Community

Several respondents commented on concerns they had about potential negative impact on the community, particularly in the townships within the current catchment of Sgoil an Lochdair. This was linked to fears of falling rolls and investment in their school and possible risk of future closure as well as compounding existing issues of depopulation, loss of amenity and poor transport links.

Early Learning and Childcare Provision

Multiple respondents stated the view that enrolments in Sgoil an Lochdair could be increased through provision of longer Early Learning and Childcare hours that match better with the provision already available at Sgoil Bhaile a' Bhanaich and Cothrom Òg. This would reduce the loss of enrolments to other schools.

Support for Rezoning Proposal

A minority of respondents made comments in support of the rezoning proposals reinstating issues around community and social links, access to amenities around Daliburgh and feeling that the old Stoneybridge catchment should have come to Sgoil Dhalabroig instead of Sgoil an Lochdair.

Errors in the Proposal Documentation

A small number of respondents stated a view that there were inaccuracies in the documentation provided to support the preliminary consultation. Comments predominantly referenced two points. The first being a report that referenced a child living in the consultation area that attended Sgoil an Lochdair. The second related to disagreement with comments on the Initial Impact Assessment.

***Note:** The report that included reference to a child living in Stoneybridge and attending Sgoil an Lochdair was the Committee Report that was linked to the decision by the Comhairle to move to preliminary consultation. This was a public document published nine months before the consultation and was correct at the time of writing. The child subsequently moved out of the area. References to issues with the Initial Impact Assessment constitute expression of difference of opinion about the assessment but are not inaccuracies in and of themselves. This feedback will be used to update the assessment.*

An anonymised transcript of the comments is provided in Appendix two.

Appendix One – Anonymised transcript of comments provided as views on the proposal (Q5)

The information below removed any text that could identify an individual or could be construed to cause criticism or offense to individuals.

Question: What are your views on the rezoning proposal?

I actually am quite annoyed that this has even made it this far. Catchment areas are set and have worked fine for a long time and any parent who wishes to have their child educated in a different school outwith their catchment area then the onus is on them to get their child to that school. The catchment area is perfectly fine the way it is and should be left alone!

Since it doesn't include --- it doesn't affect me, if it did in future I would be against it as I want my children to attend lochdar

I disagree with this request. I lived in --- and took my daughter, to lochdair school as I worked in the area. I have recently moved to --- now. I feel if parents want to take their kids out of the catchment areas they should be responsible for taking them to the school they want and not make an issue of changing the catchment area to suit themselves. I feel the school will suffer altering the catchment area. And feel other schools will be requesting to move their catchment areas too.

The proposed rezoning better reflects cultural and historic connections between middle district and Daliburgh school. Furthermore, for Ormacleit and Stoneybridge - Daliburgh school is undeniably closer than lochdar. This is particularly relevant for young primary age children, notably those in P1, for whom extended travel time to school potentially makes for a long and exhausting day with negative impacts on learning ability. The links with Cothrom are also of relevance. Cothrom and Cothrom Og provide an essential service for families with young children across middle district. Cothrom and Daliburgh school have an established connection. This is demonstrated through the comprehensive transition to school programme established between the two organisations. Finally, it is important to note that parents in the affected rezoning area already send their children to Daliburgh. Officially changing the boundary will have no immediate impact on the number of children attending lochdar.

It is also the case that the zoning for Daliburgh school has been far from clear over the last ten years. Following closure of Stoneybridge school, the northern boundary has been reported and published in official documents and websites in various ways - some including Bornais, for example, other not. A different version of the school catchment was shown on the Scot gov website last year compared with the Comhairle website. The relevance of this is to demonstrate that the area has for some time been within a recognised 'grey area' with regard to zoning. As a resident of --- within the rezoning area and a parent with children of school and pre-school age, I welcome the opportunity for this boundary to be reviewed and clarified.

I think that it is unfair to propose all these townships are included, I feel that this has the potential to have detrimental impact on our school in the future, any families with young children now or in the future will send their children to Daliburgh school which may mean lochdair school role will drop. With budgets being cut there may come a point where the school could come under threat of closure in the future (it has already happened in the past). Parents who may be planning to send their children to lochdair may have second thoughts if they think the school may be under threat of closure in the future.

It may also cause other schools to think about their catchment area and request a review causing uncertainty.

lochdair's Gaelic culture is second to none, my child has thrived in the school, the school has great success in the national Mod last year, the thought that the school could potentially close in the future is very worrying.

I strongly oppose the rezoning. lochdar school has the capacity and resources to accommodate all children in the catchment area. If individuals wish to go elsewhere, it should be as it currently is, whereby they are responsible for transport. This how it is now and the moment and should remain as a standard across the Comhairle. If successful, this opens the door to requests from other areas across the whole of the Western Isles for rezoning, at a significant cost when the Comhairle is already faced with budget cuts.

I feel that it is important to maintain the school numbers in lochdar school as it already loses out on numbers within the immediate catchment area due to the school closing earlier at the end of the day in comparison to Balivanich and Daliburgh. It is a school I went to myself and I fear if the catchment area is reduced, the numbers will reduce and the next step would be a school closure.

I think it's a ridiculous idea

I am in favour of the rezoning as I consider these townships to form part of the community of Daliburgh school.

I would strongly discourage the change in catchment areas. Sgoil an lochdair has been the catchment for this area since other schools closed, taking pupils in and adapting to their changing circumstances. Having a school based in the north of the island has many benefits for the whole community. The proposal for the catchment change could be the first stage (for the council) in looking at closing the school down. This would be a great loss to the islands.

The drop in role at Sgoil an lochdair, in my opinion, has taken place for a number of reasons. One of those reasons being the lack of nursery places for under 2s and short opening times. By not offering the working parents in the catchment the opportunity to have their child from 1 year old in a placement during standard working hours limits access and once a child has gone elsewhere it can be difficult to move them. They will inevitably move on to P1 with friends.

The exodus of pupils to Balivanich school from areas close to lochdar should have been looked at more closely by the council to identify issues and rectify them.

If this resulted in the school closure of lochdair, the building would be left derelict just like the supporting buildings adjacent, This would be totally detrimental to the area and the community of lochdar

The boundary should stay the same, Sgoil an lochdair loses out on enough pupils going to Daliburgh and Balivanich as it is, when they're in the lochdar catchment area. We should be supporting our local area, school and its staff.

I think it makes sense in terms of the childcare provision in South Uist. Children attending Cothrom for nursery being split up going into P1 isn't ideal but has been happening. The journey up to lochdair from those townships is quite considerable for young children.

lochdar schools has a small number of kids attending as things are. Reducing the numbers will no doubt diminish the experience of the remaining kids and take another step closer to closing lochdar.

I don't agree. By doing this, lochdar school will have less children. It is already a smaller school and by doing this there is a possibility closure of the school could happen which I think is awful. lochdar school is an amazing school and needed for those already in the current catchment area.

As children in this area are most likely to attend Cothrom Òg pre-school, it makes sense for them all to have the opportunity to go on to Daliburgh school with their peers. As these areas are roughly equidistant between Daliburgh and lochdar though (and there aren't dozens of children), it feels like these townships, and perhaps Howmore too, should be offered the choice at an early stage e.g. at the beginning of pre-school.

When ----- last year, I was keen for --- to go to Daliburgh for a number of reasons, however the bus zoning made it too complicated for us to do this in the end.

Transport access to Cothrom from schools for after school care is a vital link in the chain for allowing parents to work, even PT (2.30 is an unreasonable time to finish a working day), and rezoning the catchments for both schools to allow Cothrom to offer this service is much needed!

i support the rezoning and would want Ormiclete included in Sgoil Dhalabroig

I am in favour of a rezoning. I certainly believe Ormiclete and Stoneybridge are strongly connected to the Daliburgh community. I certainly feel I am part of the South End of Uist's community, not lochdar. Most people in my village shop in Daliburgh, attend the doctor in Daliburgh or go to the Post Office in Daliburgh. Community is interconnected, intergenerational and integral to school life.

The townships were part of the Daliburgh <Secondary> school catchment and community since my time at school. I was surprised and disappointed to see that this boundary had changed and that for some reason young children could be forced to travel further than necessary to attend primary school.

I support the proposal for extending the Daliburgh catchment, all the primary kids in the area are attending Daliburgh school so it makes sense for them to be in that catchment.

There should be no rezoning. They should remain as they are. When we have more children they will be getting enrolled in Sgoil an lochdar

It should be rejected.

It is my belief that it would be beneficial for children, families and the community of the wider Middle District area for the addition of the townships of Ormiclete, Stoneybridge, North Stoneybridge Peninerine and Snishival to fall within the catchment area of Sgoil Dhalabroig. Traditionally island township communities feel aligned to the parish area in which they fall. There are no visible parish boundaries and the percentage of families which have strong links to the church is less than in the past but the affinity that people have to belonging to the 'Middle District' and therefore a distinct community lies to an extent within the geographical parish area which extends North of Frobost and includes Ormiclete, Stoneybridge, North Stoneybridge Peninerine and Snishival. When local community events are organised in the Middle District such as monthly soup socials or weekly whist, they are predominantly supported by those who live in the 'Middle District' and thus create a feeling of the connection of being part of one community.

Another example of this is that there are currently --- children from the 'Middle District' who regularly attend Children's Liturgy in Bornais church, this serves as an illustration of how it would strengthen the community bonds which currently exist if all of children South of Snishival were also to fall within the same school catchment area and journey through their primary years experiences together. Children being raised with a strong sense of community is a rich benefit of island life and it is my belief that the school catchment area being more closely aligned with the parish area of the Middle District would strengthen that community and enhance the social opportunities and familial relationships, as the children and families would then all automatically be entitled to be part of the same school community.

Currently all of the children within the Middle District are part of the Sgoil Dhalabroig school community because their parents have pursued the route of a placement request which indicates there is community support for a change in the catchment area zones. As the children are all currently in Sgoil Dhalabroig the re zone would not negatively impact on the current roll of the other primary school in South Uist which is an important consideration.

I agree with the impact assessment which identifies that "some initial submissions indicate that proceeding with the rezoning will improve access to childcare and transport for the affected area

and, thus will improve socio- economic factors for these families” I would suggest that the policy could therefore also have a wider impact relating to the “economic and social sustainability” of families in the middle district which would also then have a positive impact on their health and well-being.

The Council Corporate Strategy states there is a commitment to “Provide high quality childcare facilities that meets the needs of working parents. Currently there is no Comhairle provision for 0-2 childcare or after school childcare but there is provision for this at Cothrom Og. If the catchment area boundary was changed the council would be potentially supporting parents to access continuity for their children from 0-12 in a facility which provides high quality childcare between 8am and 5pm. This would help meet the needs of parents who are employed in jobs with hours out with school hours and for children to progress to school with their peer group.

The executive survey highlights that parents have indicated a preference to be in the Daliburgh catchment area as it allows access to childcare and after-school care in Cothrom. The rezoning could clearly bring economic benefits through parents being able to access wrap around care which would link with school transport and this could make the Middle District a more attractive place for families to move in to or settle in which would support the aims of the Council’s repopulation initiative.

I am hugely upset at the prospect of the catchment area being reduced. It is a small school, which has been described by former pupils as being, “more like a family than a school.” Reducing the catchment area will be of huge detriment to the school and could open flood gates for changes to catchment areas with Balivanich school as well. We have a school with soul. It is at the heart of the community and to reduce its potential for new pupils is incomprehensible.

I don't think it should be done. lochdar numbers are already quite low.

This is a thinly veiled precursor to shutting lochdar school - reallocating --- to cripple school-role. So why pretend? Be upfront and honest and set forth a proper cost analysis.

As you’ll still have the same amount of pupils in the islands and need the same amount of teachers this would leave you with a minimal cost saving in building running costs which will immediately get spent on bus contracts and at the detriment of the pupils who at a young age who won’t get the attention they deserve and suddenly find themselves having to travel unreasonable distances for school.

The rezoning is entirely unnecessary. It feels like the first step towards closing lochdar and taking away a vital community hub and the associated professions and prospects for the people of the southern Isles.

I live in --- and lochdar school is our catchment area school. However we couldn’t put --- into lochdar nursery due to the hours available. Based on this we made the decision to put --- in Balivanich.

I feel to rezone the catchment area is unnecessary and will have a detrimental effect on Sgoil an lochdair. lochdair currently does not receive all the eligible pupils in its catchment due to various reasons, and to suggest a rezoning would then encourage people in other areas to request the same for reasons not in the best interest of the schools or young people.

lochdar School MUST be protected at all costs.

It is the home of the local Mod. It is so important to the preservation of the culture, language and heritage of Uist and to reduce the roll of the school even further only points to one thing in the long term and that is the closure of lochdar school. That is unacceptable.

We talk about the depopulation of the islands and the negative effect it’s having on the local community and indeed the local economy. How can we attract families to the islands if we are constantly reducing our amenities?

We as a community must do everything we can to give as many young people as possible the opportunities to learn and embrace our culture, that can't be done if we are making our school rolls smaller which will inevitably lead to closing schools down. That only has one impact, and that is that it kills communities. Young people must be given the opportunity to learn as close to their homes as possible, they should not have to travel miles so that they are tired when they get to school, it defies any logic. As for the arts and performance, it is so important that we support our youngsters and give them the opportunity to perform in front of as many people as possible as well as learn from other performers they will meet at the Mod, National Mod and the festival. That can only be good for the development of the children and giving them a sense of belonging to their own area. The talent on show at EDF with the lochdar School play was one of the highlights of last year's event and we must be seen to encouraging these types of events.

I do not support the proposed catchment rezoning. I sympathise with Daliburgh parents and carers who may have difficulties organising transport around other commitments but believe the proposed change would be disproportionate and could present a long term risk to the viability of Sgoil an lochdair.

lochdair is a wonderful school. The staff are fantastic and provide an excellent learning environment. The fact that it is a small school is one of its strengths, which allows strong relationships to be built between pupils, staff, parents and carers. The school feels like an extension of home. The school also has a major presence in the local community and a long tradition of promoting Gaelic language and culture.

But I am conscious that funding must be difficult and with small schools there can be a tipping point on their long-term sustainability. It would be hugely detrimental for our community to lose Sgoil an lochdair and there is a genuine concern among parents and carers, whether founded or not, that this catchment review could be the start of that process.

I believe any significant changes to catchment areas should only be triggered by a planned school closure or projected housing completions and demographic changes where it can be clearly shown that certain townships are expected to shift. It is evident from the current housing land audit and development plan that there is no housing-based evidence to support a change of this nature for both Sgoil an lochdair and Sgoil Dhalabroig.

Both Stoneybridge and Ormiclete should have been assigned to the Daliburgh catchment area when Stoneybridge Primary School closed. The only reason the last pupils chose to go to lochdar Primary at the time was because the school had been under a Shared Headship and the pupils had been taken to lochdar school over a 12 months period on a twice weekly basis. It meant the remaining pupils were familiar with the school and comfortable in moving there full time when Stoneybridge finally closed. There was no community consultation at this time or since.

This is to do with transport. Could this not be arranged better with the transport provider, if it's being a service bus that affects the guarantee of seating on the bus from day to day? Whatever is the shorter distance for children to travel to should be the school they are in the catchment for. Distance wise Snishival, Peninerine are closer to lochdar than Daliburgh. Unsure of Stoneybridge but Ormiclete is nearer to Daliburgh.

It's not fair that lochdar could permanently lose out on future numbers because of an issue which will be non existent in a few years time.

The rezoning is not required. There should be no change to the catchment zones.

lochdair requires a full nursery provision so that working parents can utilise the facility that is in

their community and a great number of parents do not have to travel extended distances to ensure their child is looked after elsewhere.
I disagree and believe it should remain as is.
Could set a dangerous precedence in other catchments areas
A drastic move instead of finding a simpler solution to the problem
Why is this needed it feels like an underhanded way to try and close lochdar school. We as a community need all the schools we have and will not benefit from any of them shutting
Absolutely ridiculous this is even being considered. Go to the school within your catchment area or provide transport to and from the school for your child yourself.
The rezoning will have a negative impact on Sgoil an lochdair
I think it's great that we're giving parents the opportunity to decide which school they'd prefer to use if they live in the half way zone, but there should be more of an effort made for children to be enrolled to Sgoil an lochdair.
lochdar school needs to stay open for the simple factor that there will be more kids joining in the coming years and it's a very busy township at the moment, the kids will be very upset if the school closes and it will be cause an uproar to the locals
I agree with the rezoning proposal as it will entitle multiple children already attending Daliburgh school to have access to school transport. Should the proposal proceed or not, this will have no bearing on which school these children attend and will have no impact positive or negative on either school roll. There are no other young children in these areas in question under the consultation that could be considered taken from lochdar. Arguments from the consultation meetings surrounding "children's grandparents went to this school" are completely irrelevant as I am unable to send my children to ---- school which their grandfather attended or ---- school which I attended due to their closures, it provides no substance to any appeal to not move the catchment area.
Should not happen, middle district areas should remain part of lochdar
I don't think it should be changed at all
Not good and should stay as it is
It is not necessary, it's using the reasoning issue as a means to resolve a transport issue.
Leave things as they are please.
It should stay the way it is as lochdar is a great school to be taught in and it evenly splits up the islands. Less children in lochdar will end up with it being closed down. And no one in Uist would want or be happy with that.
I am strongly against the proposed re zoning of the catchment area. The future of our school is already in question with a small school roll and the Comhairle's lack of money or interest in spending money on maintaining the school. Whilst at the moment the rezoning doesn't affect the school roll, in future losing such a massive chunk of the catchment area could be detrimental to the school.
lochdar a massive amount of children to children attending nursery at Balivanich and Cothrom due to their more flexible opening hours for parents, but that's a separate issue. I believe if the re zoning goes ahead to suit the transport issues for Daliburgh parents outwith the Daliburgh catchment, it will cause a snowball affect for the rest of schools across the western isles, the parents of children attending Balivanich in lochdair catchment wanting zones changed so they can all get funded transport etc and could cause difficulty.
Comhairle are not liable to provide transport for those outwith. To change the catchment area to suit the transport needs could be tragic for lochdair School.
No obvious reason why they should. We could rezone the area and use it for lochdar. Reversing the decision in favour of lochdar.
I think they should leave the catchment zonings as they are, they're is no real need for change
I do not agree with the rezoning.

The rezoning should go ahead. Ormiclete, Stoneybridge, North Stoneybridge Peninerine and Snishival should be in the Sgoil Dhalabroig catchment.

To help maintain numbers within Sgoil an lochdair it is important for the boundaries to remain as they are at present.

Milage is actually closer to lochdar school. With 10 miles from lochdar to Stoneybridge road end.

Boundaries should remain as they are

I do not feel the rezoning is necessary and would worry that it would threaten the future of lochdar School

By granting the rezoning you would be opening a "can of worms" for other schools to make the amendments.

By reducing the catchment of lochdar you are reducing it's potential of new pupils and putting the school at potential future risk.

I respect people's ability to chose a school that suits their children's needs but I don't see the need to change the current boundaries to suit.

The school is important as it's old and precious and has been part of our community now for 65 years.

Our school catchment area will get smaller and Daliburgh's catchment area will get bigger if this goes ahead.

Although this doesn't affect any children in our school just now, it will have an impact on our school in years to come.

It's not fair what the Daliburgh Parent Council wants, they maybe haven't thought how this could affect our school.

People in our school community won't be happy about this because our school is important to everyone.

We have lots of houses in our catchment area just now and we don't want that to change.

If this goes ahead, Sgoil Bhaile Mhanaich could do the same to us and reduce our catchment area on the other side of us. If that happened, it would be a disaster for us.

Daliburgh school catchment area is a big enough area already, they shouldn't need to take any more.

This proposal is going to make our catchment area so much smaller.

Our school role is small as it is, this could make it even smaller in years to come.

Our school is in the heart of the lochdar community and they support us in lots of things that we do like they come to our Mod Ceilidhs, Coffee Mornings and Christmas Shows.

We will lose 2.6 miles of our catchment area which will be terrible. This will have a negative impact on our school in years to come.

I would request that the status quo is kept. This could be detrimental to the school roll in lochdar in the future with families moving to the area at any time. This should also prevent future requests to rezone catchment area at the North end of the lochdar catchment and also elsewhere within the Comhairle area.

I think it corrects some anomalies from way back. Stoneybridge school pupils always went to school in Daliburgh and with Cothrom being in that area it allows for an easier transition into primary school for pupils from Ormiclete and Stoneybridge.

Parents have made their views very clear that they do not wish there to be any change the current catchment area. There is concern amongst parents that in the longer term this could have a detrimental effect on the school with concern that the school could face closure in the future. Parents also expressed that many parents choose to place their children in Balivanich school due to the lack of early years provision at lochdair.

I do not agree at all

My view is that I believe the decision made to remove Ormiclete and Stoneybridge from the old Daliburgh secondary catchment area was short-sighted and wrong. Every local family who have lived in the area for years have put their children to Daliburgh. There are many reasons why I think this is the case.

There are strong socio-economic ties - football, youth club, the shop, the post office, Pàrant is Pàist', church, Fèis and Club' Phìobaireachd Bhòrnais are but some and are all frequented by my family. These ties are there because from a long time ago, Ormiclete and Stoneybridge were in the Daliburgh School catchment. These townships are closer to Daliburgh.

Within the immediacy of the Stoneybridge school closure, new enrolments from Ormiclete were set for Daliburgh School and concerns raised years ago about the change in catchment from Daliburgh to lochdar. For the many decades prior to Stoneybridge closing, Ormiclete and Stoneybridge were in Daliburgh catchment and no concerns were raised, but when this changed, almost immediately there were issues raised at school level, councillor level and now council level. These townships of Stoneybridge and Ormiclete were never in the lochdar catchment before. These traditional and cultural ties cannot be erased. The catchment should never have moved from Daliburgh to lochdar, a line on the map cannot eradicate centuries long ties.

lochdar school is a special school and fantastic teachers and that's where we have our local mod every year.

I feel that the future numbers of pupils at lochdar School is at risk because of this proposed rezoning. No one can predict when families will move home and lochdar school could very well lose out because of the proposed changes. There has been a school at the heart of this area for over 60 years. I do understand that people have the right to choose but this choice could have far reaching consequences for the school and those who work in it, less pupils, less staff.

Not acceptable

I do not think this should happen. lochdar has plenty space for the children and it is a great school with plenty support from the community, in-fact the school and community thrive in partnership and it is a great anchor within the community and surrounding areas which do not have a lot as it is.

lochdar school is open and inclusive and engages with all parents and the wider community. To change the catchment does not serve the community as a whole.

lochdar is already the smallest school role across Uist. We have good links with Cothrom and have enrolments from there into the school. If the catchment changes then the worry is that then Balivanich parent council could ask to change their catchment too. This would then decrease the catchment further and could jeopardise the future of the school.

If the rezoning goes ahead, what is stopping other parents from requesting the same thing on the other side, which would leave the catchment area even smaller? If parents choose to move their children to another school, it is up to them to take their children there each day. There are links to Cothrom in both schools, and if after school care is required, they can be dropped off from the school transport, as it's currently in the lochdar catchment area. It might not affect the school roll

<p>this year, but in years to come with Council cutbacks and a small school roll, it could eventually close the school. What would happen to our children then?</p>
<p>I would prefer if zoning for Daliburgh were limited to Stoneybridge as Peninerine and Snishival have always been lochdar catchment.</p>
<p>I feel certainly the southern townships in the zone would be better suited to being in the Daliburgh catchment namely Ormiclete and Stoneybridge.</p>
<p>I agree that the rezoning should take place to incorporate again the townships previously under the Stoneybridge school catchment area returning to Sgoil Dhalabroig.</p>
<p>I agree that the rezoning should go ahead, however that the townships of Peninerine and Snishival should remain in the Sgoil an lochdair catchment area</p>
<p> </p>

Appendix Two – Anonymised transcript of additional comments (Q6)

The information below removed any text that could identify an individual or could be construed to cause criticism or offense to individuals.

Question: Are there any further comments you wish to make?

Leave it alone. I can say this as I have also chosen to enrol in a school outwith my catchment area I certainly did not expect school, council or anyone else to provide transport.
I feel as a parent, if you wish your child to go to a school out of your catchment area then you should be responsible to take your child to and from that school.
In the Chief Officer's report, section 6.3 I believe is incorrect. 'There are also children resident within this area that attend lochdar School and the proposed consultation will need to consider impact on them in terms of their continuing eligibility to attend that school.'
This needs to be checked, because I don't believe it to be accurate. There are no children resident with the proposed rezoning area that currently attend lochdar school. Thus, there is no impact to be considered in this respect. This needs to be clarified and corrected asap, as it potentially has huge bearing on the consultation and impact assessment. If families in lochdar are being asked to comment on a proposal, believing that this will immediately impact current lochdar students, then their responses will be a reflection of that inaccurate information. This needs addressing ASAP otherwise there is the risk that this inaccurate information undermines the outcome of the consultation.
Consider some of the more southern townships move to the Daliburgh catchment but certainly it should not come as far north as is proposed.
Suggest that resolving transport for those going out with catchment, but boundaries should not change
Will the rezone remove a lot of children if so what's the future of the school looking like
Please do not do it!
More parents would be willing to send their children to Sgoil an lochdair if the Nursery took younger children and had more reasonable hours.
I think a lot of parents would be more interested in sending their kids to lochdar if the focus on Gaelic was reduced. One class for every age group if you don't want your kid to be forced to learn Gaelic is crazy.
you have included that there is a family in Stoneybridge that currently attends Sgoil an lochdair - this is incorrect, there are currently no families in Stoneybridge that attend Sgoil an lochdair
I would like the rezoning to proceed and for research to be done for the next stage. The closure of Stoneybridge School should not have resulted in a straight shift of the catchment to lochdar. This was very short sighted. Communities do not work like that. The wellbeing and health of the people are at the centre of the rezoning. Everything is a fight in Uist, ferries, high cost of food, lack of accessibility to suitable links to the mainland. This is one fight we do not need. Children should be able to attend the school in the community in which they reside, without having to send in a placing request and being refused a seat on a bus.
The number of children in the area enrolling in Daliburgh over the last few years is evidence, in my opinion, that the natural boundary of the catchment area is not the same as the boundary set by CNES. This needs to be addressed.

Surely for the children's health and well-being it is right that their journey / travel time is minimised, and also that they are part of the same school community and wider community, in which they are growing up.

It should be rejected. Minimising the catchment area for Sgoil and lochdar would have negative impact on the local community by likely leading to the redundancy of the school in the near future. The catchment area which Sgoil Daliburgh currently has is large enough.

It should be rejected. Minimising the catchment area for Sgoil and lochdar would have negative impact on the local community more than likely leading to the redundancy of the school in the near future. The catchment area which Sgoil Daliburgh currently has is large enough.

A rezoning proposal is an issue which has created ripples within the communities in South Uist and therefore requires sensitivity, which I believe the Education Department has endeavoured to do. However, in relation to the documentation issued by the Comhairle it is crucial we are able to come to our conclusions and engage with the consultation secure in the knowledge we are dealing with completely accurate factual information. Is it accurate that there are "children resident within the area that attend lochdar school? was this the case when the document was written? is this the case now? The document states " the proposed consultation will need to consider impact on them in terms of their continuing eligibility to attend that school." For balance does the eligibility question only apply to the children if they attend lochdar? Is it a consideration for the children who have a placement request in Daliburgh? Would the eligibility question be required if a placement request was submitted for a child in lochdar if the rezoning took place? My point isn't the semantics of the wording of the paragraph just my strength of feeling that it is vital that all information we receive as part of the consultation process is neutral, credible and comprehensive, and I hope going forward all materials are carefully scrutinized before being released.

I really welcome that the Comhairle has made it as easy as it can be for people to engage with the consultation process by supporting a wide range of ways to submit views (through the parents councils, written submissions, drop in sessions during the day and evening meetings) and I hope that means people will take the time to engage in the process respectfully.

Closure of a primary school can have a huge impact on the local community. Not just on teachers, pupils and other staff at the school but the 'feel' of a community. Schools bring life and energy to an area.

Folks should be allowed to chose which school their kids attend but I don't think changing the catchment area needs to be done.

I struggle to see any benefit from the rezoning proposal.

Again, I want to say that the rezoning request is unnecessary. Families can apply for a placement request in a school outwith their catchment area knowing that they may not receive school transport, which I feel is the reason the rezoning is being proposed. May I suggest that when families choose to attend a school outwith catchment they are told to apply for school transport at the same time with no guarantee (which I believe may be the existing situation).

While I understand there are monetary cost implications to keeping schools with falling rolls open, the cost to communities when they are closed is far greater. Rather than trying to move pupils from one school for another we should be encouraging people to move to the islands by providing the housing and infrastructure needed to build communities rather than shut them down.

Impact Assessment – under "Will individuals have access to, or be denied access to a service or function as a result of the policy or the changes being proposed to services or functions?" the report indicates "no". I think this is an error as if the proposed change takes place there would be a change to the transport service currently provided to a small number of individuals who have had placing requests to Sgoil Dhalabroig approved (by virtue of a catchment change for this purpose).

Report to committee in April 2024 – at para 5.3 you have said that "In recent years, several parents

resident in the middle district part of the catchment for lochdar School have made placing requests for their children to attend Daliburgh School. As such, they do not have entitlement to access home-to-school transport”.

This is correct, but misses two important points. The first is that the Council presumably agreed to these placing requests and in doing so would have taken into account the implications for school rolls and transport provision. You would have known that there would be a number of parents and carers effectively opting out of school transport and you were comfortable with this. The second is that those making a placing request out of catchment were made aware of the implications for school travel – that it would not be available. I think it is important to be clear that it is not the placing requests in isolation that have triggered this review – it is the agreement to these requests by the local authority and subsequent dissatisfaction with those who have had placing requests approved now that the implications of the travel policy are being felt.

School catchments are unfortunately crude and there’s no perfect way to draw the boundaries. This is especially difficult for rural and island communities. But a firm line needs to be drawn somewhere. There needs to be robust criteria for agreeing to placement requests outwith catchment. I can’t find the CNES placement criteria on your website, but national guidance from Scottish Government is very clear and none of these relate to transport needs – instead focussing on things like additional support needs through to the attendance of siblings. Indeed, it clearly states that “if you decide that you do not want your child to go to the school suggested by the council and instead ask that he or she goes to another school, the council does not have to provide a school bus or any help with transport. It is also not linked to the attendance of early years establishments, in this case, Cothrom. However, it is also likely that out of placement catchment choices are being influenced by the more limited early years provision at Sgoil an lochdair. The long term solution to that, as part of a wider mission to support island families to live in Uist more broadly, is to improve early years provision in the lochdair catchment.

Again, I sympathise with the parents and carers who cannot access school transport. I hope that a solution can be found around the transport policy that does not involve changes to catchment that may have long term negative consequences for Sgoil an lochdair.

The consultation has been wrongly interpreted by many which has led to the community of lochdar School being led to believe that their school is under threat of closure. In reality the consultation is about children in Daliburgh School not being able to access council transport although there are spaces available on current bus provision. The outcome of this consultation has no effect on existing pupil numbers in lochdar School as the children will continue to attend their chosen school in Daliburgh as it suits their needs and families.

The bigger issue to do with low numbers in lochdar and fear school will close probably has more to do with children who live within the catchment who attend Balivanich school. If this is to do with school hours/nursery provision/other - could this be looked into and amended to give lochdar school a chance to thrive. Could the data regarding numbers in Balivanich from lochdar catchment be gathered?

The proposal should find in favour of lochdair and that no change be made to the zones as soon as possible.

My children went to lochdar and had a great experience. They mixed well with other children from the variety of areas across the catchment. The culture and welfare were priority and they were taught well. Changing the catchment will knock numbers again and with many people and services working on the issue of depopulation surely this is not the right course of action.

It’s seems a bit of a drastic move to accommodate pupils to get to Daliburgh school. There should be special dispensation to children in this situation where they find themselves on the very edge of this catchment area. This could be a knock-on effect to our school roll and would prevent any future

children attending lochdar school. Moving five townships is a bit drastic and all this could be prevented.
Explore other solutions rather than increase Daliburgh's catchment area
As a parent of a child in ---- school I have concerns over this proposal and the impact it way have on lochdar school. That it may lead to lochdar school being closed and more strain on the few schools we have.
I would like to add on that perhaps if lochdair had better nursery hours we would have more people who's children should be in lochdair school that are currently in others due to their appealing nursery hours.
I would love to see lochdair nursery open 9-5. As a working parent it is very hard to get a job that suits your childcare. I know I would be able to apply for a job that I would far rather enjoy if I had the appropriate childcare hours and not have to send --- to another nursery until they are in school.
The placing request system needs to be looked at as it currently stands it has a very negative impact on Sgoil an lochdair. There needs an improved early years provision
Pushing for the catchment area is great, but if the end goal is to close the school, then the good intentions were never there. It will leave a massive hole in the community, never mind the gap between the actual schools. An island 22 miles long should have a school at either end or at the very least, one in the middle accessible to all. Don't make education less accessible by forcing children to travel all the way to Balivanich or Daliburgh for the sake of profit. Fair enough having one high school but this these are primary schools, we're talking 4 year olds having to get 30min+ buses to school when there's a very obvious solution. We want to make living here easy and encourage families to stay, not make big decisions that'll make life harder and push people away
This isn't encouraging our young people to move back home and bring up their young families, we are going backwards not forwards
I sympathise with anyone affected in this matter but they all made a conscious choice.
The future of lochdair School needs to be protected.
No apart from Daliburgh school has more than enough areas to fill their school. Please leave it as it stands. For the pupils sake.
Ok. lochdar School is at risk, don't say no. The community raised 30k to fix the playpark, gave it the council but the council have refused to finish the job. lochdar have done a lot with park. Then all the trees. Now the £1m pound cycle project.
It would be a huge shame to lose lochdar school, it's a huge part of the community, and means so much to pupils present and past.
I feel that allowances should be made in this instance for the pupils in the middle district. I feel a bus could and should be provided for those pupils going to Daliburgh, I believe one goes very close to the boundary already. If there is an extra cost to this then the parents of the children in that area should foot the bill.
Shutting lochdar school would be disastrous and also considering how close schools are in Lewis, puts a dim view on the decision making. Considering the amount of councillors voices making decisions for the southern isles are always obvious.
Consider your decision very carefully or all trust is going to be lost. For. Example, why can't decisions for the southern isles be made in the southern isles.
There needs to be better support, longer day provision in lochdar
lochdar School has an excellent reputation, and I think its closure would impact badly on the local community
I think the current boundaries should remain as they are
We hope that our catchment area will be kept the same and there will be no changes made.

It was stated at the community meeting that this request would not have been made had there been any children in the area in question attending Sgoil an lochdair. This is not true, there was at that time.

It was also stated that the lochdar catchment had more townships in it. The lochdar catchment is far more detailed than Daliburgh's, for example Eriskay is listed as one township, when it actually has a number of villages.

Accessing after-school provision at Cothrom Òg was stated as a reason to attend Daliburgh School, whereas Cothrom Òg is actually within the lochdar catchment.

Factors such as the differences in the school day, with Daliburgh and Balivanich school day finishing some 25 / 30 minutes after lochdar and more flexible child care provision at Cothrom Òg and at Balivanich, all impact on the school roll at lochdar and the number of placing requests elsewhere.

I think it would have been less costly for CNES to organise transport rather than the hours wasted on this exercise which lochdair will no doubt oppose to the rezoning causing unnecessary conflict.

I believe this is a transport issue there is no need for a devastating and potential blow to lochdar School, and community relationships, when at this difficult time for all our Island.

I feel very strongly that a mistake was made changing the catchment of Ormiclete and Stoneybridge to lochdar. This should never have happened.

Sort the transport issue and leave the school alone.

My children attended lochdar and during secondary have both volunteered for the school, they continue to have strong bonds with the school which I believe a majority of children will have if the community bonds remain strong and are encouraged.

We have a huge amount of history at lochdar. I feel the request is more to do with convenience for the parents and their work rather than the friendship connections that was spoken about at the recent meeting. I urge the council to leave the catchments as they are as the implications are huge for lochdar if the changes are made. The community would lose its heart and soul.

The reason more parents don't have their children in lochdar school is because the availability in the early years childcare for working parents. When parents place their children in the early childcare they then don't want to move their children and that is affecting our school roll. lochdar is a great community school and our children are well looked after.

I would prefer it if the council were more supportive of lochdar and clearer in their messaging that this rezoning consultation is about children getting access to the bus and not removing children from lochdar and sending them to Daliburgh leading to the closure of lochdar.

Placing requests and bus access should be treated for Daliburgh from lochdar as they are for lochdar catchment to Balivanich.

With the present enrolment of the pupils from the villages concerned it is very clear which school the families feel more connected to. Actions speak louder than words and the actions show that Daliburgh is the school for these townships. It is not so easily defined in other areas but this situation at the southern boundary could not be clearer and simpler. 100% of the children already attend the schools as reflecting the change requested. There would be no pupil number change to either school if the change is implemented as what is being asked for is what is the present actual state of pupil enrolment in these villages.

Geographically --- location is closer to Sgoil Dhalabroig (6.4 miles) than it is to Sgoil an lochdair (9.7 miles), which for travel is beneficial, but also for the reduction in time spent by our children commuting to school. Extra time spent on commute can be very tiring in addition to the duration of a school day. Attending a school closer to our location makes more sense to avoid an excessively long day which will not help children's education.

On a cultural basis our children attend various Dancing, Piping and Youth clubs that are based in the southern part of the island close to Sgoil Dhalabroig. They have attended these groups for many years mainly due to close proximity and also carrying on our local family traditions who also attended such groups. They have naturally established a close group of friends associated with these clubs who all attend Sgoil Dhalabroig.

On a day to day basis our family naturally use the amenities such as shops surrounding Sgoil Dhalabroig as they are closer, and therefore our children are more part of the community around the school.

There are close connections historically and presently with Sgoil Dhalabroig.

During their pre-school years, --- children attended Cothrom Og which arranged activities and outings to the Sgoil Dhalabroig area, and the children have kept these connections as they have grown older.

Children attend extra curricular activities within the Daliburgh area, such as --- and ---, with the members of these groups attending Sgoil Dhalabroig.