

ECYE26. Proposed Consultation on the Permanent Closure of Limerigg and Bothkennar Primary Schools

The Education, Children and Young People Executive considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which sought agreement to progress to a formal statutory consultation on a proposal to permanently close both Limerigg and Bothkennar Primary Schools.

On 26 March 2019, the Education Executive agreed that both Bothkennar and Limerigg Primary Schools would be mothballed from August 2019, subject to an annual review of demand for places. There was also a commitment that if either or both of the schools remained mothballed for a period of 2 years that a further report would be brought setting out future options. Both schools remained closed with no plans to re-open them beyond August 2021 due to continued low catchment area demand for places.

In the 5 years running up to the decision to mothball Bothkennar Primary School demand for places had declined considerably, year on year. Data showed that the number of primary age children in the Bothkennar catchment area had reduced by 18% over the previous 3 years. Preschool population numbers showed the decline in the primary age population would continue over the next 5 years.

In the 5 years running up to the decision to mothball Limerigg Primary School demand for places had also declined every year to very low numbers. Data showed that the number of primary age children in the Limerigg catchment area had remained the same over the previous 3 years. However Preschool population numbers showed that the primary age population was expected to decline over the next 5 years.

The only element of a statutory school closure consultation that was affected by current Covid-19 restrictions was the public meeting. The proposals therefore also included the option to hold a virtual public meeting to ensure that there was a public forum to allow discussion on the closure proposals to take place. Depending on the Covid situation at the time the consultation proposals also allowed for the consultation period to be extended to accommodate matters.

Decision

The Education, Children and Young People Executive agreed:-

- (1)to undertake a formal consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on a proposal to permanently close Limerigg and Bothkennar Primary Schools, and**
- (2)to request that a report from the consultation is presented to a future meeting of the Education, Children and Young People Executive for decision.**