



Education Resources
Executive Director **Jim Gilhooly**

Outcome of the Statutory Consultation Process for the Proposal to discontinue Crawfordjohn Primary School and rezone existing catchment area to Abington Primary School

October 2013

This report has been issued by South Lanarkshire Council in response to the consultation undertaken in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. This report includes recommendations of the outcome of the consultation which will be presented to the Executive Committee of South Lanarkshire Council.

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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise all stakeholders on the outcome of the statutory consultation exercise undertaken in respect of the proposal to discontinue Crawfordjohn Primary School and rezone the catchment area to Abington Primary School with effect August 2014. This includes a report from Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal and Education Resources' responses to all questions and issues raised during the consultation period.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is intended that the Consultation Report along with any relevant documentation will be considered by the Executive Committee of South Lanarkshire Council on 6 November 2013.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Executive Committee:
- i. Note the content of the report
 - ii. Agree the following proposals, namely that:
 - Crawfordjohn Primary School be discontinued, and;
 - The current catchment area served by Crawfordjohn Primary School be rezoned to Abington Primary School.

3. Background

- 3.1 A Proposal Document was issued as a result of a decision by the Executive Committee of South Lanarkshire Council on 1 May 2013 to consult on the proposal below:
- Crawfordjohn Primary School be discontinued, and;
 - The current catchment area served by Crawfordjohn Primary School be rezoned to Abington Primary School.
- 3.2 The statutory consultation in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 was carried out over the period 10 May 2013 to 28 June 2013 which included a public meeting held on 4 June 2013 from 7pm – 8.30pm in the Crawfordjohn Village Hall.
- 3.3 A consultation notice was placed in the Carlisle and Lanark Gazette on 9 May 2013. The notice included a summary of the proposal, information on availability of the Proposal Document, how written representations could be made and also details of the public meeting.
- 3.4 A copy of the Proposal Document was issued on 9 May 2013 to the consultees listed in Appendix 1 plus local residents in the Crawfordjohn Village and it was published on the Council website and a copy available from all libraries and Q&As.
- 3.5 A public meeting was held 4 June 2013 from 7pm – 8.30pm in the Crawfordjohn Village Hall. A summary of oral representations made at the public meeting is included in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 3.6 South Lanarkshire Council sent a copy of the Proposal Document to Education Scotland (formerly HMIE) on 9 May 2013 as a statutory consultee. In addition, on 12 August 2013 Education Scotland received a summary of all relevant written responses and oral representations made during the consultation period.

3.7 South Lanarkshire Council received a copy of Education Scotland's report on 6 September 2013. A summary of this report and Education Resources' response to the key points is included in Section 8 of this consultation report and a copy of the whole document is attached as Appendix 3.

3.8 Ministerial call-in

It is intended that South Lanarkshire Council will notify Scottish Ministers of the decision on the proposal by 13 November 2013, that is, 6 working days from the date of the decision of the Executive Committee. A copy of the Proposal Document plus addendum issued and the Consultation Report will be provided to Scottish Ministers.

The Scottish Ministers have a 6 week period from the date of that final decision (on 6 November 2013) to decide if they will call in the proposals. Within the first 3 weeks of that 6 week period, any person may make representations to the Scottish Ministers.

No action will be taken to proceed with the implementation of the proposals until the outcome of the decision on whether to call-in has been notified to the Council. If Scottish Ministers call in the proposals they may refuse consent to the proposals or grant their consent with conditions or unconditionally.

4. Distribution of Proposal Document and summary of responses

Consultation proposal documents were sent to statutory consultees (48) and other stakeholders. A total of 140 documents were distributed to stakeholders (1 document per household). The document was also available on the council website, within libraries and council Q&As.

Total number of consultation response forms received **36**
 Number of individual names these response forms represented **44**

The 36 returns represented 44 named individuals or groups. Some responses were from individuals (multiple responses from the one household) and some were from more than one named individual on the one response.

Analysis of physical responses received (total 36)

RESPONSE	TOTAL	BREAKDOWN OF RESPONSES	Parent / carer of child attending affected schools	Parent / carer of potential future pupil at affected schools	Parent Council	Pupil	Resident in Crawfordjohn catchment area	Other
In favour of proposal	11		3	2	0	0	6	0
Not in favour of proposal	21		3	2	1	2	12	1
Undecided	4		2	0	0	0	2	0

Analysis of physical responses taking into account those returns where there was more than one named individual on the one consultation proposal document (total 44)

RESPONSE	TOTAL	BREAKDOWN OF RESPONSES	Parent / carer of child attending affected schools	Parent / carer of potential future pupil at affected schools	Parent Council	Pupil	Resident in Crawfordjohn catchment area	Other
In favour of proposal	15		4	3	0	0	8	0
Not in favour of proposal	23		4	2	1	2	13	1
Undecided	6		3	0	0	0	3	0

Analysis of Statutory consultees' returns

From these 44 responses, the number of responses from statutory consultees totalled **20** and these were as follows

RESPONSE	TOTAL	BREAKDOWN OF RESPONSES	Parent / carer of child attending affected schools	Parent / carer of potential future pupil at affected schools	Parent Council	Pupil	Other
In favour of proposal	7		4	3	0	0	0
Not in favour of proposal	10		4	2	1	2	1
Undecided	3		3	0	0	0	0

Relevant statutory consultees are

- the Parent Councils of affected schools
- parents of pupils attending each affected school as well as the pupils themselves
- parents of pupils likely to attend an affected school
- pupils at each affected school
- staff at each affected school
- any trade union representative of those staff
- any other users whom the authority considers relevant

Multiple responses

5 households responded with a total of 12 consultation response forms.

Household	Number of responses	Response to proposal
Household 1	2	Not in favour of proposal
Household 2	2	Not in favour of proposal
Household 3	4	Not in favour of proposal
Household 4	2	Not in favour of proposal
Household 5	2	Not in favour of proposal

Other information / feedback received during consultation period

Within the consultation period, information from an online petition organised by a parent was presented. This information has been noted but not included in the results of this statutory consultation as the Council is unable to verify real signatures or real addresses given the wide area of respondees.

A survey was conducted by Councillor Gauld with local residents in the Crawfordjohn Primary School catchment area and the results were provided to the Executive Director of Education. Several issues were raised by the survey. First, it was noted that the question posed did not provide context for the consultation exercise nor did it align with the formal statutory consultation. Secondly, it emerged that the survey generated 57 responses, 6 of which were from people who were statutory consultees who have chosen to respond to the statutory consultation. Consequently a decision was taken not to include the information generated from the survey in the statistics presented above.



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5. Key Themes and Education Resources responses

A number of points were recurrent in the public meeting and in the written responses received during the consultation period. This section lays out these main themes together with Education Resources responses to the issues raised.

The themes can generally be categorised as follows:

- Best Value
- Community impact and legacy
- Process and decision making
- Size of school, educational experience and social mix

The comments and issues raised are displayed overleaf.



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Best Value

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Member of the Public	We feel that the cost of a new-build school in Crawfordjohn would be much better utilised on a new build at Abington where the school roll would be greater & result in a more balanced mix of children's ages & abilities.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.
Member of the Public	We do not believe it is a good use of taxpayers' money to build a new school for a small and declining school roll. The money should be used to rebuild Abington PS ASAP.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.
Member of the Public	It does not make economic sense to spend such a vast sum of money on a new school for so very few pupils. Better a 1st class facility @ Abington for the wider community (only 10 - 15 minutes journey). Any pupils ask for their views will only be a reflection of the parent's thoughts. My children were educated at Crawfordjohn Primary as was my husband. Numbers of pupils at those times were 27+ thus making a school viable. To rebuild a school for so few pupils is <u>ludicrous</u> and therefore am strongly <u>against</u> a re-build. The children will benefit immensely from being part of a larger school community, therefore making the adjustment to High School much easier. Road conditions are <u>very seldom</u> a problem in winter.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.
Parent of child within Crawfordjohn Primary catchment area	Taking the maximum number of pupils who would possibly go to Crawfordjohn Primary means spending approximately £125,000 per pupil just to re-build the school, and high annual running costs per pupil thereafter. This is an outrageous and unjustifiable amount of money under any circumstances, but especially so in the current and predicted future economic climate. We would consider the council wasteful, if the school is eventually rebuilt. We would argue that it would be better to enhance the design of Abington Primary, due for re-building in 2014, a significantly better use of scarce resources. Please do not delay the decision, close Crawfordjohn Primary, and enhance the development at Abington to make it a state-of-the-art facility for all local pupils and staff.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Parent/carer of a child at the school	I would like to propose one well made well fitted out school at Abington for both Crawfordjohn and Abington kids called Duneaton Primary. The saving from one school could possibly be used to give the community a good sports / fitness facility within the new school???	Any potential name changes or other changes would require to be proposed by the school / parent body and taken forward out with this consultation.
Member of public / community	I would also like to ask the question as to why Crawfordjohn primary has been singled out in the area for closure - as all after schools are going ahead with re-builds. What has separated this school from all the others for closure? If the argument for allocating resources together under one roof - why has other schools gone ahead? Is this another policy from the Council? If so, where is the Consistency across the region?	The Council is currently undertaking a statutory consultation on the future of Stablestone Primary School. There is no policy associated with potentially closing schools. However the Council will respond appropriately to approaches from the local community which happened in both the Crawfordjohn and Stablestone Primary School examples.
Parent/carer of a child at the school	The Modernisation programme has recently reported the rebuild of a local rural school which is costing more than ours, has fewer pupils than ours and has another school within a very short distance and also has access to a local bus route.	
Parent/carer of a child at the school	We have no other public sector support in Crawfordjohn community other than the school if you do not rebuild then a home owner and tax payer what are we paying our taxes for?	
Member of public / community	As you are now proceeding with Stablestone School at the cost of £1.2 million for 3 children, Crawfordjohn deserves the same investment for its children for bigger numbers.	

Community impact and legacy

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Member of the community	The school is at the heart of the Crawfordjohn community and the village would be a much poorer place without it.	Comments noted.
Other Group – Crawfordjohn Public Hall Association (CPHA).	The following comments are submitted on behalf of CPHA. When the school was in existence, the hall was used weekly by the pupils for P.E, Prize Givings, Open Events, Play/Concerts were held in the hall. Without a School, the village of Crawfordjohn has lost an integral part of Community Life. - The hall has lost much needed income. We very much doubt that the hall would be used for School events (in spite of comment made in 6.3 of the document) as the children will by then be integrated in the bigger, re-zoned School.	Comments noted.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Member of public/community	We disagree completely with the above proposals. Both of our children were educated at Crawfordjohn P.S. and we were very satisfied with their education. We also appreciated the importance of the school to the neighbourhood & believe that the absence of the school would be detrimental to the community as a whole. Another area for concern is the longer journey that pupils would have to undertake to get to Abington, especially the infants in the winter-time.	Rural school transport is well established across South Lanarkshire and existing operating procedures to deal with inclement weather are in place to reduce the risks posed by such incidents. These procedures are in place currently as Crawfordjohn Primary School pupils have travelled out of the catchment area to decant accommodation for the last 4 years.
Parent/carer of a child at the school	If the school closes, it will kill off whatever community we have left. Transporting children during winter months could be dangerous. School land will be returned to Douglas & Angus Estates - they will most likely build houses on it, as well as the recent planning application for surrounding area of village. When it was suggested that a 'super school' would be built incorporating all the area's small schools - we were in favour - that progress was being made. Then this was scrapped, still we had confidence in SLC that they would progress with plans to ensure stability for the children! Now four years on my son is ready to leave for High school and we have come to this!	As above. Established transport arrangements and contingency measures in place.
Member of public / community	If there is no immediate school to go to this will have an effect on young couples wanting to move into the area.....Crawfordjohn is likely to attract a much older population - a retirement village. This will have a serious implication to the community which currently has a range of ages. - all of which melt together and create a thriving community	Comments noted.
Parent of possible, future pupil	This school was a main reason for us moving to this village, keeping it would hopefully bring more families in too. A school in any village can be the pulse to any community, this one was the heart, with so many historical values attached to it (since 1846!). It also brings jobs and the possibility of after school curriculum at the school, even classes for O.A.P.s would be fantastic. Please don't take our families choice of a great school away for next to no savings per year!	Comments noted.
Member of public / community	I believe the school is important for the sustainability of the Village. It will not only provide jobs but also attract new people to the village which is incredibly important as the area may end up surrounded by wind farms.	Comment noted.
Member of public/community	My child attended Crawfordjohn Primary and I can only stress the impact of closure would be devastating for such a small community as ours.	Comment noted.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Parent and Community Worker	<p>Without a school directly in the village of Crawfordjohn, the community will suffer, unless an integrated and creative approach to regeneration is adopted by South Lanarkshire Council. Our village hall would not pull the community together, as is suggested by the consultation papers. The hall is a wonderful community-owned venue but it is a lot of work and, in a very small community, the bulk of the work usually falls on the same people. The hall committee, the heritage group and the pub owners all work hard to keep their organisations and enterprises going. The permanent loss of the school to the community would, without a doubt, negatively impact further on these groups.</p> <p>My main concern regarding the proposal, were it to go ahead and Crawfordjohn be 'discontinued' is that of legacy. At initial unofficial consultation meetings regarding the school (between Council Education staff and the school's Parent Council), positive feedback was given regarding support that might be available to the community after any potential merger.</p> <p>Would like to make the following suggestions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) That a key contact be established at South Lanarkshire Council (Regeneration?) to guide the community through the transition period. 2) That a firm, written and time-bound commitment be made regarding the provision of school transport to a merged school. In this way, families would still potentially be attracted to the community. 3) That a new 'identity' for the merged school be established, through a new logo and new name. 4) That the reality on the ground be set up and supported to reflect this new 'identity' by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bringing the school children regularly up to Crawfordjohn, to tend the 'school garden', undertake local projects and use the hall, etc. b. Involving the community of the merged school in school events in Crawfordjohn hall and vice versa. 5) That a commitment be made by the council to commit regular money over a significant period of time to minibus hire and hall lets to a) allow local children to come up to Crawfordjohn community and b) help with the longer-term sustainability of the hall. There is precedent for this, as SLC used to pay the hall for regular access over a 10 year period. 6) That the Council actively engage in consultation with Douglas and Angus Estates to secure the school grounds for the community and lead on a project to regenerate this land. We are already running our own hall, heritage venture, toddler group, Kids' Club and swing park improvement group! <p>Any costs incurred undertaking the above steps would be significantly lower than the build and running costs of a new school.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>The proposal is to discontinue Crawfordjohn Primary School and increase the catchment area of Abington Primary School. Any potential name changes or other changes would require to be proposed by the school / parent body and taken forward out with this consultation.</p> <p>The Council's policy on primary school transport is that a child is entitled to school transport if they attend the catchment school and their home address is more than one mile away by the recognised safe shortest walking route.</p> <p>The Council is positively disposed to supporting such a scheme and would discuss this further with the community if the proposal was to be implemented.</p> <p>As above.</p>

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Member of public/community	The school was the heart of the village activities and was always greatly supported by the community. They get to know the villagers and this does not happen anymore with no school, so I have been told. The staff and children had many events in the school which was always greatly supported and money raised would go to school fund but mostly to charity, with which the children were always involved with the charity they choose and having a representative from the charity coming to the school was a great learning and exciting experience for the children. The school had many fun days at school which the villagers, parents, family & friends were invited to and were greatly attended. When doing their Christmas show invitations were delivered by the staff and children to over 50 homes including farms out with the village etc. The village hall was always full and great enjoyable evenings were held by all. In the last 4 years only the Christmas show has been held as far as I know. It will be a very sad day for the village and the community if there is no school rebuilt in Crawfordjohn.	Comments noted.
Parent of possible, future pupil	Taking away our school will take away the heart of the community. Since the original school was demolished the change in the village dynamic, and general feel about the place, has changed in a very negative way, leaving a sense of not quite being whole. This village needs its Primary School; if families were to move here, or consider moving here, the first priority would be their children's education.	Comments noted.
Member of public/community	The process seems to be focussing on the short term and does not plan for the future benefit to the community. The primary is an integral component of the village and the surrounding areas, and from experience, has given my child a fantastic start to the learning process and prepared him well for the transition to high school. Closing the school would impact the community greatly and I fear lessen the total learning experience for existing and future pupils.	Comments noted.
Member of Community	The impact of community activity is not based on the availability or not of the school building for letting purposes. The presence of the school (i.e. children of the community) within the village draws support from the community. This may be lost if the school no longer exists. The absence of a school in the village may deter potential home-buyers and the community will therefore age and lose its life-blood. The village hall, because it is community owned is expensive to run. Most of the rentals are from people out with the village visiting the Heritage Museum as a reason for doing the school is irrelevant it basically breaks even and the supported by the contributions of 'friends'.	Comments noted.
Local resident	Trustee of the Crawfordjohn Heritage Venture - would greatly welcome an alternative use of the school ground as a safe play area / swing park for children. This could work well as it is within close proximity to the Hall, the Heritage Museum, and not far from the pub garden.	The Council is positively disposed to supporting such a scheme and would discuss this further with the community if the proposal was to be implemented.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Parent of child within Crawfordjohn Primary catchment area	<p>We hope the South Lanarkshire Council is not unduly swayed by those that disagree with the Council and their proposition to close Crawfordjohn Primary, when the correct decision is to close it. When one disagrees with a decision you are much more likely to shout it than when you agree. It would not be unexpected therefore to receive more comments from those that want to retain the school, than from those that agree with you and wish to see it closed, for example. It should be noted that because of the age profile locally, it may be that many of the local residents who respond will disagree with the council, simply because of some nostalgia of having attended the school in the past, rather than a considered response on its merits in the current climate. We are in agreement with the council, in the strongest possible terms, that Crawfordjohn Primary should NOT be re-built and should be formally closed, and that the catchment for Abington Primary be enlarged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not rebuilding the school will have no effect on village life in Crawfordjohn. The school has not been there for 4 years and village life, to all intents and purposes, continues unaffected. <p>There are no caveats for our unreserved support for the Council proposal to close Crawfordjohn Primary. But we would ask the council to consider the following too:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area occupied by the school is an eyesore and something needs to be done about it. Would the Council take it upon themselves to make proposals for the area that was occupied by the school and provide the resources to make it happen? I would ask the Council to take the lead on this and not leave it to residents to continually remind the council of its obligations. A visually pleasing and useable space, such as an easy to manage village garden could be one suggestion. • If the council is keen to help the village and its rather limited infrastructure then you could provide a decent amount of money to re-develop the village play area, to improve it, add some modern play equipment and make it safe with proper fencing. A safe place where children of all ages can interact and play outside of school. • An in doing these two things, we ask that you involve the local community / Village Hall Committee in any decision taken, give us something we want rather than impose an unsatisfactory outcome. 	<p>This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.</p> <p>The Council is positively disposed to supporting such a scheme and would discuss this further with the community if the proposal was to be implemented.</p> <p>As above.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Parent/carer of a child at the school	<p>Crawfordjohn community needs their school for the sustainability of our village, being the only public sector support we receive from South Lanarkshire Council. We have no access to any bus route leaving our community completely isolated.</p> <p>The school is not only a building but part of Crawfordjohn history being there since around 1846.</p> <p>There is a present several big family homes being built in Crawfordjohn along with several current family homes for sale which undoubtedly will house more children and new families into Crawfordjohn. There will be no evidential enhancement gained by closing and rezoning Crawfordjohn Primary and forcing a join to Abington. Our children will not become part of Abington Community they are Crawfordjohn they will just be incomers, they will in fact suffer from limited access to the school activities as well as after school clubs etc. caused by school transport times and Crawfordjohn community lack of transport. This will result in the death of their own community with no public sector support or community spirit resulting in a loss of sense of belonging for our children. Lifelong learning is a very important part of ours and every other rural community especially with our lack of Public Sector support.</p> <p>We have very little to offer new families to our village without Crawfordjohn Primary. South Lanarkshire Council and their modernization team sticking to its agreement to rebuild Crawfordjohn Primary could offer so much more to the community other than the most important child's education aspect. The school facility could offer classes for the community such as computer, literacy and internet learning all of which can share school equipment etc. Support for our ever growing elderly population with meals being distributed to those in the system. The possibility of jobs being brought back into the community as previously done as being so rurally isolated Crawfordjohn adds to current unemployment crisis. The school also has the potential to offer out of school care from 3-6 every day for working parents, bringing together children from surrounding villages who need the services via community bus. Childcare in the area is extremely scarce. The further farm within Crawfordjohn schooling zone is 10+ miles from the school site added to the 5 and a half miles from the site to Abington this will put in a significant time on any child's day for school transport. This is unacceptable in this day and age in main land Scotland.</p>	Public transport provision is not determined by the location of a primary school.
Member of public / community	If the school is not rebuilt it is going to affect the wider community's freedom to have access to life time education.	As above.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Parent of child who attended Crawfordjohn Primary	I have had three children attend the school in the past 12 years and have seen the marked difference on the community and the children from the time that the school building was knocked down. The school was the heart of the community, and since it has been removed there has been a marked decline in the nature of the village. The school acted as a focus for the village, & in the past enjoyed many activities such as fundraising red nose days & health award events, all included invitations for the wider community to attend. These events were especially valuable for the older members of the village 1stly to be involved & included in the school, to get to know the staff, children & other visitors, and as a way of social interaction. The annual Christmas play continually had audiences of 100+ with the majority being from the local community.	Comments noted.

Process and decision making

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Raised and answered at Public Meeting	Was it feasible when the initial communication took place that there was a conflict of interest?	We would not consider this situation to present a conflict of interest. Statutory consultees (parents, staff and other key stakeholders) have the right to comment on this consultation and have their personal views taken account of.
Raised and answered at Public Meeting	How wide reaching is the consultation? Have you contacted former pupils and residents? Could they have a say?	There are statutory consultees who were sent the consultation document directly. In addition, local residents in the Crawfordjohn catchment area were sent a copy. Others could access via the council website and attend the public meeting which was advertised in the local press and on the council website. All responses received are included in the consultation report.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Raised and answered at Public Meeting	If closure was the decision, what is the process and timescales? What if the consultation is to rebuild? When does this go back on track? Who is on the Executive Committee?	We are aiming to report to Executive Committee in November where a decision would be made. All Chairs of committees including the Leader and Depute Leader are on the Executive Committee. All political parties are represented although the balance is in favour of Labour as they are in the majority and have the balance of power.
Raised and answered at Public Meeting	Can you clarify the figures in the report? I think they are inaccurate and misleading. The figures don't add up and there is a parent missing.	Prior to this statutory process, an informal approach was made to sound out the views of parents. Informal consultation has been highlighted in the most recent report from the Rural Commission [Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education – COSLA / Scottish Government] as demonstrating best practice. If the results of informal consultation are that there is sufficient doubt for rebuilding the school, then statutory consultation is the next appropriate step. The decision on where we go will be based on the responses from the six weeks of formal, statutory consultation. The outcomes will be externally scrutinised by Education Scotland (HMIE) and if required, can be called-in and further scrutinised by Scottish Ministers. We are confident of our figures.
Raised and answered at Public Meeting	What is the decision making process? Will they make a decision on majority of responses Yes V No?	It won't be simply a matter of a mathematical equation. It will involve weighing up the opinions of different groups and noting any educational benefit, in the opinion of Education Resources and of Education Scotland (HMIE). Analysis will be in terms of the quality not simply the quantity of responses taking into account the educational benefit for young people.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Raised and answered at Public Meeting	What are the next steps in the process?	The end of the consultation is 28 th June. Responses will be collated and comments from tonight will be included. Written and verbal comments will be put into a document and sent to Education Scotland (HMle) to peruse and enable them to write their response. That process takes 3 weeks during the school term and starts in August. After Education Scotland (HMle) respond to Education Resources, a consultation report will be produced and circulated to all who participated in the consultation process and made available on the website. People can comment on this. The target is for presentation at the Executive Committee in November when a decision will be made.
Raised and answered at Public Meeting	If the outcome is to move back, when are we looking at?	There would be a decision coming back from Executive Committee late January / February 2014. We would then be in a position to know and resume plans for rebuild.

Size of school, educational experience and social mix

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
<p>Raised by a variety of participants and answered at Public Meeting</p>	<p>Education is as good as your teacher, nothing to do with size.</p> <p>Why don't you close all small schools and have one big school?</p> <p>Education is proven in small schools. Dumfries & Galloway have a school with 9 children that received 'excellent' across the board. We already work with children at other schools. Children from three schools go to the nursery at Abington. What about Crawford and Leadhills? They go back to their own schools.</p> <p>We heard before of the benefits of going to a larger grouping. What are the benefits of smaller groupings?</p>	<p>The argument presented is that learning takes place more effectively when there are others around to discuss issues. We are not saying small schools don't work.</p> <p>Size of school isn't everything. Quality of education depends on personnel. Small teacher / child ratios can be beneficial but peer interaction and social aspects are also important.</p> <p>Attainment is not significantly different between small schools and large schools. Attainment is the levels that children reach in areas such as literacy and numeracy. The idea of reading, writing and arithmetic being significantly different as a result of schools of different sizes is not demonstrated by fact or evidence. The notion that there is a correlation between all small schools and attainment is not demonstrated. The experience of adult / child interaction - education is about the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Developing skills and attitude tends to come from interaction with one another where as the development of knowledge is taught by adults. What we learn we don't only learn from teachers.</p>

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Member of public / community	Your argument at the consultation that children don't receive good education in small numbers doesn't hold much weight. A school is good as the teachers, head teachers and parents make it.	No officer argued this. Please see transcript of Public Meeting and extract above to clarify Education Resources' position.
Parent	I agree 100% of Crawfordjohn Primary being discontinued and joining with Abington Primary. Maybe a change of School name to help with this transition! I feel my child will benefit greatly of the joining of the two Schools. He will have a larger chance to interact with more children his own age! Thus learning to play, talk & educate at his own level/age group.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.
Parent of possible, future pupil	Just because a couple of parents prefer the bigger school for their child does not mean they should reject plans for another / original school to be built, thus taking away the <u>choice</u> that they have made from others. My family will have two (possibly three!) children going to this school in a few years and I want the very best from this rural school and community. Having had experiences of both larger and smaller schools myself, I am a great supporter of rural schooling / education.	Comments noted.
Grandparent of pupil who attends Crawfordjohn Primary	We feel the decision should be made by their parents as to what they feel would be best for them. The children are our main concern at this time and are therefore undecided. Although our sons were well educated at primary, I think children need more competition and challenges compared to the 1980s when our 3 sons were at school. A bigger school would give them this opportunity to achieve this.	Comments noted.
Parent of child who attended Crawfordjohn Primary	I understand the issue of small classes and lack of peer groups but also how valuable it is to have to get along with all ages within the school, & not just a single age group. I moved my youngest daughter to Wiston PS in 2010 before the children were moved to Abington as the school had endured too much uncertainty and disruption. My daughter thrived in a community that would be very similar to Crawfordjohn if the school would be rebuilt. the school roll was about 11, in a new school building, and many events that included the local community. The Ofsted report was very positive especially for the level of learning achievement and the general politeness and well being of the children. When my children were at Crawfordjohn before it was pulled down, the school had the reputation of being one of the best schools in the area to be in - for the staff and the children. Visitors commented on the positive attitude of the children. Within the past 3 years two of the boy school captains at Biggar High School have been Crawfordjohn pupils showing & proving that a small school can produce good citizens as well as positive learning environment. I do understand that the current pupils will find it difficult to leave their new friends at Abington, but I feel that their parents need to look at the bigger picture of the need to rebuild Crawfordjohn School for the good of the children and the community. Equally South Lanarkshire Council promised not to close any of the small schools and they should honour that promise.	Comments noted.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Parent	As a teacher myself, I can only see the benefits, socially, of pupils being in a larger education setting. As a child I grew up in Crawfordjohn, but my Mother took the decision to send myself and my sister & brother to Abington so that we would benefit from a larger school setting both educationally and socially. We are all very grateful she did so.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.
Parent of possible, future pupil	I believe a better education would be received in a smaller school with less pupils. Our infant son will be a future pupil and we want this type of education for him.	Comments noted.
Parent	The curriculum for excellence has been proven very successful in small schools. Commission report states there is "NO Social Impact Proof". The proof has been provided that schools with small roll numbers perform successfully, the curriculum for excellence is carried out without issue, a benefit of the small schools is that every child counts and every child plays a relevant part in the success of the school and their individual learning there is no chance for a child to blend into the background, providing children with confidence they may not gain elsewhere. This confidence was evident in a recent performance put on in Crawfordjohn by Limelight providing our children with lots of confidence and ensuring almost every child had their own role. This would not have been possible in a larger school.	Education Scotland's report to the Council has highlighted the benefits for children associated with learning and developing in a larger peer group and the better opportunities for children to discuss, plan and review their work together in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence.
Parent/carer of a child at the school	Girfec I believe is what is promoted by South Lanarkshire Council when has this been used and provided for the pupils of Crawfordjohn Primary. The curriculum for excellence has been proven very successful in a small school, there is no evidence to prove any social impact on children with small school numbers.	As above.
Parent/carer of a child at the school	1. Feel that for current roll and projections it would not best serve the educational and social needs of the children which I feel would be compromised due to lack of numbers. 2. It would be my desire that my children be educated where there was more opportunity for them to be educationally challenged within larger social and educational groupings. 3. Under current circumstances should Crawfordjohn Primary be rebuilt, it would be my preference for them to continue their education at Abington Primary.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.
Local resident	Where I recognise that the school was once a key part of the village, and remember with great memories the sound of children in the playground, I am undecided but have doubts that rebuilding is a sensible way forward. In previous years there were much higher numbers of children. Currently teaching children in such small numbers does not appear to make sense in social and educational terms.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.

DESIGNATION (Parent etc.)	COMMENT / ISSUE RAISED	COUNCIL RESPONSE / COMMENT
Parent of child within Crawfordjohn Primary catchment area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very small pupil rolls do not improve the education that a pupil gets, simply because of small class sizes, and especially so when it is proposed to have a single class with a wide age range (from 4/5 year olds to 12 year olds). Further, in the case of Crawfordjohn, some of those attending will also be family members or otherwise related, further reducing the social mix. Development in part in the school environment, how is a child to learn enhanced social skills, mixing, resolving conflict, peer interactions, and all other non-educational skills, when they have a very limited mix of people? Without the opportunity to develop fully, having not experienced a good social mix, it can make for insular thinking; and perhaps some difficulties when the pupils eventually transfer up to Secondary school. A pupil's development in these wider educational needs can only occur when the social mix is more dynamic and varied, which positively endorses closure of this school and relocation to Abington. • Further to those allocated to Crawfordjohn Primary, but currently at Abington, will have made close relationships, be operating within the ethos of that school, and be familiar with the education and structure offered there. Even with good planning, decamping of pupils from Abington to Crawfordjohn would lead to unnecessary disruption at the very least and be potentially detrimental to the pupils' overall education. 	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.
Parent/carer of a child at the school	Thinking purely for the education and life experience of my children I feel they need more than a very small number of kids to be around day after day. By joining Abington and Crawfordjohn schools I feel gives us a decent number of pupils and parents needed to run a decent school i.e. enough kids for a game of football, enough kids for a school play / panto, enough kids for all games etc, enough parents for a PTA!!! It breaks my heart to say this as I love my community but it just to me makes no sense to build two schools for such a small number of kids and families and I feel would be more beneficial for all concerned to have one good school for both kids and parents alike.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.
Member of Community	A bigger school makes for better social integration. In a small community pupils are often related, so a local school will not so much increase the social "mix". I agree too that a larger school can be better resourced. This is increasingly important in our technological age. Graduation from Abington Nursery to school here means that friendships can be carried through, and the 'shock' of moving to a big secondary school is lessened if there is a larger number of pupils in the primary school. Which I would be sorry as a member of the community to see the school dozed permanently, the children are the future and their well-being is paramount. I therefore agree with the proposal.	This comment is broadly supportive of the Council's proposal.



Education Resources
Executive Director **Jim Gilhooly**

6. Pupil comments

Crawfordjohn Primary School, Pupil assembly, held on Thursday 20th June 2013

To ensure that pupil had an opportunity to contribute their views to the consultation process, a special assembly was arranged for Crawfordjohn Primary School pupils. This was held on Thursday 20th June 2013. At the end of the school year, many schools encourage pupils to reflect on school memories and consider their thoughts for the future.

Children were asked:

- to identify their 'magic moments' over the past session, aimed to highlight things they have enjoyed most at school
- to identify 'tricky times', aimed to highlight challenges they have encountered
- to think about the future and to identify how they feel about the proposals related to Crawfordjohn Primary School
- to record their thoughts on the above

Further to feedback from parents at the Public Meeting held on Tuesday 4th June 2013, the opportunity for their child to opt out of participating in the above assembly was given. Of the current 10 pupils, 5 pupils took part (1 at P2, 2 at P3, 1 at P6 and 1 at P7).

The discussions were facilitated by the Principal Teacher and South Lanarkshire Council's Quality Link Officer for the area, Gillian Coulter.

Comments relating to the proposals for Crawfordjohn Primary School (XXXXX substituting for individual pupil names used)

Pupil 1

- I would like the school to be built because I remember being there.
- I remember the leaky roof, canteen and everyone was in the one class.

Pupil 2

- I'm looking forward to going to Kingswood Residential in October. We go with XXXXX, XXXXX and XXXXX from Abington. I'm the only P6 boy in Crawfordjohn and XXXXX is the only P7 boy.
- I don't think it should be built. It's a waste of money. We could have a leisure centre or pool or shop instead.
- If they built Crawfordjohn I would miss my friends and teachers. I've been here 6 years.
- We could change the uniform if we get a big school. We could vote on our new uniform – blue t shirt and black jumper.

Pupil 3

- I think a new school should be built so I can walk instead of getting the bus. I think we should change it to a swimming pool. We could just walk there.
- Out of three schools Abington is my favourite because we have the woods.

Pupil 4

- I have never been to Crawfordjohn Primary. We don't have a shop and a shop would be good. XXXXX and XXXXX could just walk across the road to the school.
- I would miss my friends and especially my best friend XXXXX.

Pupil 5

- I would miss my friends and teachers. I would miss everybody. I went to Abington in P1.
- We love this school. We love all our teachers. We don't want another school (but XXXXX does).
- We went to nursery in Abington too. You get to know people before you come to P1.

7. Summary of issues raised by Education Scotland (formerly HMle) and Education Resources' response.

- 7.1 As part of the statutory consultation process, Education Scotland prepared a report on the consultation proposal by South Lanarkshire Council, addressing educational aspects of the proposal. This report is attached as appendix 3.
- 7.2 Education Scotland highlighted the benefits for children associated with learning and developing in a larger peer group and the better opportunities for children to discuss, plan and review their work together in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence.
- 7.3 In line with the educational benefits statement presented by the Council within the consultation document, Education Scotland agreed that as a result of the proposal, children could benefit socially and emotionally through having increased opportunities to engage in social activities with others of similar age and stage.
- 7.4 Education Scotland also identified the potential for improvement in the transition experience for pupils from nursery to primary and from primary to secondary. They also highlighted that the proposal provides better opportunities for teaching staff to undertake professional development as they work collaboratively with a greater number of colleagues.
- 7.5 It was highlighted by Education Scotland that the Council should consider measures to mitigate any possible negative impact on the Crawfordjohn community and should refer to budgetary implications and any potential benefits any efficiencies will achieve for the children in the council area.

7.6 Response

South Lanarkshire Council welcomes Education Scotland's recognition of the sound educational benefits for children arising from the proposal. The education benefits statement contained in the consultation document has been corroborated by the comments contained in Education Scotland's report, particularly those mentioned above.

The Council accepts that further development of proposals for community support for the village of Crawfordjohn should be undertaken with the local community.

8" Review of proposals by South Lanarkshire Council

- 8.1 The Council has reviewed the proposals having regard (in particular) to any relevant written representations received by the Council during the consultation, and representations made at the public meeting, and Education Scotland's report.
- 8.2 Feedback indicates that there is a mixed response to the proposal amongst parents and the community.
- 8.3 Through the consultation process, various suggestions have been presented on measures the Council could take in mitigation against any possible negative impact the school's closure could have on the community it serves. These options will be considered followed by further discussion and consultation with relevant stakeholders.

9. Resource, risk and policy implications

9.1 Resource Implications

The closure of Crawfordjohn Primary School and rezoning of the catchment area to Abington Primary School will result in better use being made of existing school capacity

Capital efficiencies would be retained within the Primary Schools Modernisation Programme.

9.2 Risk implications

- 9.2.1 Possible risks associated with pupil transport in inclement weather were raised during the consultation feedback process. Rural school transport is well established across South Lanarkshire and existing operating procedures to deal with inclement weather are in place to reduce the risks posed by such incidents. These procedures are in place currently as Crawfordjohn Primary School pupils have travelled out of the catchment area to decant accommodation for the last 4 years.
- 9.2.2 The Council has a duty to conduct risk assessments under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulation 1989. Any current risk assessments at the schools would be reviewed if the proposal is implemented.

9.3 Policy implications

- 9.3.1 Strategy
This report supports Education Resources' priorities for raising educational achievement and attainment and achieving efficient and effective use of resources.
- 9.3.2 Consultation
This report describes the outcome of the statutory consultation process with the community. Any school closure proposals or changes to school catchment areas are subject to the statutory consultation process. South Lanarkshire Council has undertaken this consultation in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. Further consultation with young people, staff, parents. Trade Unions and other stakeholders would continue if the proposals are approved.

Appendix 1 Distribution of Consultation Proposals Document

Distribution list and how to access a copy of the proposal document

A copy of this proposal document was provided to the following consultees:

- The Parent Council of the affected schools
- The parents of the pupils at the affected schools
- Parents who have children who are expected to attend the affected schools within 2 years of the publication of this Proposal Document. To achieve this, a copy of the proposal was provided to all Early Years Establishments in the local area.
- The pupils at the affected schools and their pupil committees and councils
- All South Lanarkshire Council employees at the affected schools
- Trade union representatives
- Community Councils within the affected locality
- Local churches
- All relevant users of the affected schools
- South Lanarkshire Community Planning Partners

A copy of this Proposal Document was also made available to:

- All Elected Members of South Lanarkshire Council
- South Lanarkshire Youth Council
- Education Scotland (formerly Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, HMIE)
- The Constituency MSP of the affected schools
- List MSP for the area of the affected schools
- The MP of the affected schools
- Police Commander for Lanarkshire Division of Police Scotland
- Chief Executive, NHS Lanarkshire
- Chief Executive, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport
- Area Commander, Scottish Fire and Rescue Services
- Care Inspectorate

The steps listed below were also taken to ensure that the proposal document was widely available.

- Notice of the proposals and of publication of the proposal document was placed within the Carlisle and Lanark Gazette.
- The proposal document was also been published on the South Lanarkshire Council website: www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk.
- This document could be made available in alternative forms or translated by contacting Education Resources on 01698 454102 or at: education@southlanarkshire.gov.uk
- The proposal document was also available at the following locations:
 - a. Council Offices, Education Resources, Almada Street, Hamilton, ML3 0AA. Phone 01698 454102
 - b. All libraries in South Lanarkshire
 - c. All South Lanarkshire Council Q&A Offices
 - d. The schools affected by the proposals

Appendix 2 Oral questions and responses at Public Meeting. **Held at Crawfordjohn Village Hall, Tuesday 4th June 2013, 7pm – 8.30pm**

Information from register taken, attended by the three Elected Members for the Ward plus 20 others, breakdown below:

- Parent of pupil at Crawfordjohn Primary School – 7 (Statutory Consultee)
 - Parent of future pupil at Crawfordjohn Primary School - 3 (Statutory Consultee)
 - Parent of pupil at Abington Primary School – 1 (Statutory Consultee)
 - Grandparent and Resident of Crawfordjohn - 3
 - Resident of Crawfordjohn – 5
 - Interest Party – 1
-

Meeting commenced at 7.02pm.

Jim Gilhooly (**JG**), Executive Director of Education, opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and introduced the panel members.

- Lisa Kirkwood (**LK**), Project Coordinator – here to explain the consultation process, significance of tonight's meeting, the next steps and indicative timescales for key milestones.
- George Wynne (**GW**) – Head of Education (Resources) who is responsible for Schools Modernisation.
- Isobel MacDougall (**IMacD**) – Head of Education Area (Clydesdale and Hamilton).
- Gillian Coulter (**GC**) - Quality Improvement Officer for both Crawfordjohn Primary School and Abington Primary School who is currently on secondment from her post as Head Teacher of Carstairs Primary.
- Alexis Douglas (**AD**) – Central Support Services Coordinator, here to provide advice on any questions relating to placing requests, transport or other aspects.
- Rae McNally and Jean Hamilton – Support Services Coordinators and scribes for the evening.

We are here tonight to discuss the proposal of the discontinuation of Crawfordjohn Primary School and the realignment of Abington Primary School catchment.

LK talked through the consultation process as detailed in the Consultation Proposal Document.

JG. This is an opportunity for everyone here tonight to hear about the proposals, ask questions and express your views. It is important to put your views in writing also.

Jim Gilhooly opened the Question & Answer element of the meeting.

Question Resident. Why is this not being taped instead of having scribes?

Answer JG. We have scribes to record the discussion. It is also sometimes difficult to pick up all that is being said with recording equipment.

Question Parent. Concern has been raised about children being consulted, in particular younger ones. How will this happen?

Answer IMacD. There are a range of ways for the children to express their views and teachers are very skilled in this type of process. Different mechanisms are used for discussing issues e.g. pupil council and encouraging children to interact.

Comment Parent. Pupils should be involved. Young people don't come with baggage as adults do. I would like my child involved in this. My daughter has a fair head on her shoulders.

As some parents agreed pupils should be consulted but others did not, it was agreed that parents could chose for their child to opt out of this process.

Question Parent. How wide reaching is the consultation? Have you contacted former pupils and residents? Could they have a say?

Answer JG. There are statutory consultees who were sent the consultation document directly. In addition, local residents in the Crawfordjohn catchment area were sent a copy. Others could access via the council website and attend this public meeting which was advertised in the local press and on the council website. All responses received will be included in the consultation report.

Answer LK. The consultation document is available on the council website and was advertised through local press and made available in libraries and Q&As.

Question Parent. If closure was the decision, what is the process and timescales?

Question Resident. What if the consultation is to rebuild? When does this go back on track?

Answer JG. We are aiming to report to Executive Committee in November where a decision would be made.

Question Resident. Who is on the Executive Committee?

Answer JG. All political parties are represented although the balance is in favour of Labour as they are in the majority and have the balance of power. All Chairs of committees including the Leader and Depute Leader are on the Executive Committee.

Question Parent. Can you clarify the figures in the report? I think they are inaccurate and misleading.

Answer (JG). The addendum issued clarified the figures. The use of those figures is now redundant as they were taken at a point in time in order to determine whether the Council would move to a formal consultation. It's recognised that people's views may change.

Comment Parent. The figures don't add up and there is a parent missing.

Answer (GW). I'm sorry, I have to disagree. We are confident of our figures. A parent phoned in their response and figures were based on parents of pupils on the school roll in February and parents of children who could attend P1 in August this year. We have the records to prove this.

Answer (JG). Prior to this statutory process, an informal approach was made to sound out the views of parents. Informal consultation has been highlighted in the most recent report from the Rural Commission [Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education – COSLA / Scottish Government] as demonstrating best practice. If the results of informal consultation are that there is sufficient doubt for rebuilding the school, then statutory consultation is the next appropriate step. The decision on where we go will be based on the responses from the six weeks of formal, statutory consultation. The outcomes will be externally scrutinised by HMle (Education Scotland) and if required, can be called-in and further scrutinised by Scottish Ministers.

Question Parent. Was it feasible when the initial communication took place that there was a conflict of interest?

Answer JG. I am not prepared to discuss the responses of individuals in public. All information came from parents and the parent council.

Question Resident. Doesn't the council have rules on Conflict of Interest?

Answer JG. We would not define exactly what a conflict of interest would be. We do not consider this situation to be a conflict of interest. People have a right to make their views known as a parent. People have different interpretation of conflict of interest.

Question Parent. Are there council rules on this?

Answer JG. Situations could arise where there is a conflict of interests such as an interview situation – if someone is interviewing a friend or relative, this would be a conflict of interest. Whereas interviewing someone they have previously worked with and known in a professional capacity it is not a conflict of interest. Another example would be if a Councillor was on the planning committee and it was making a decision pertaining to their own house - this would be a clear conflict of interest. If you submit this concern via a consultation response, we will provide a written response.

Question Resident. You said house? Is a school not a building? Would that not be a conflict?

Answer JG. This is not the same.

Question Parent. What is the decision making process? Will they make a decision on majority of responses Yes V No?

Answer JG. It won't be simply a matter of a mathematical equation. It will involve weighing up the opinions of different groups and noting any educational benefit, in the opinion of Education Resources and of HMIE (Education Scotland). Analysis will be in terms of the quality not simply the quantity of responses taking into account the educational benefit for young people.

Question Bev Gauld, Local Elected Member. Chair. Having noted the points made so far, what is the next step in this process?

Answer LK. The end of the consultation is 28th June. Responses will be collated and unedited comments from tonight will be included. Written and verbal comments will be put into a document and sent to Education Scotland to peruse and enable them to write their response. That process takes 3 weeks which has to take place during the school term and starts in August. After Education Scotland respond to Education Resources, a consultation report will be produced and circulated to all who participated in the consultation process and made available on the website. People can comment on this. The target is for presentation at the Executive Committee in November when a decision will be made.

Question Parent. How come we're at this stage? Who instigated the closure?

Comment Resident. You're building the school then you're not building the school.

Answer JG. There is uniqueness about this project. Normally small schools are decanted for less than a year then return to their new school. This has not happened in this case for a range of reasons and the situation is different. The position was made known to us that it was possible that not everyone who currently attends would return if the school was rebuilt. That then moved on to

the informal process we have discussed. The view was expressed about returning to a new school and in light of that, we felt it reasonable to move to formal consultation.

Question Resident. Was it one or two people? Are they influential?

Question Resident. How have we jumped from that to school closure? This is not just about the parents but the village as a whole.

Comment Parent. We don't want this to be a decision of 5 or 6 people.

Comment Resident. House prices are plummeting. No reason for families to move into this area.

Comment Resident. That's why it's good that we are all getting a say.

Question Resident. Why didn't we ask the whole village first?

Answer JG. This is the process we are in now. Looking at the Commission of Rural Education, best practice is to have informal approach first and ask parents. The primary function of a school is to educate a child in the best way possible. In rural situations, it becomes more focussed. Seems reasonable to ask parents first.

Question Parent. This was a request from the parent council. I fully support what we are doing now. It's for the benefits of education for pupils in Crawfordjohn and the council are fully justified in what they are doing. I'm here to discuss the benefits for my child's education. I would like to hear what the benefits are.

Comment Resident. If this was the Highlands & Islands they would be throwing money at us. They're spending billions on ferrying children.

Answer JG. I'm not aware of that. In many areas distances involved are extreme in the islands. Alternatives are more distant and more scarce. This is an issue for particular communities as they arise. The unique nature of communities should be reflected.

Comment Resident. If people want to live in a town, they can like it or lump it. Bring the school back.

Answer JG. That is one view.

Comment Resident. People are stuck because they can't sell their house because of no school for families to come to.

Answer JG. That's a view. However, referencing the chapter on community impact of school closures in this document [Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education] there is no research to back this up, only anecdotal information.

Comment Resident. You tried to close it 25 years ago. If you do away with this school you do away with the future. Back then there were 6 kids at the school and 3 of them were mine.

Comment Resident. If you build the school you will bring in new jobs.

Answer JG. There are other things that attract people into communities. Jobs within the school already exist and these are not necessarily jobs for the community. We do not employ people because of where they live but because of their skills.

Can I go back to this gentleman's original question? Educational benefits are in 3 areas – early years, nature of learning and transition.

Answer GC. We are all here because we are all committed to education. There are many facets that contribute to the quality of education. Resources are important and buildings are one aspect, where the school is. Other resources include the physical and human. Some are qualitative and some are quantitative. Current educational thinking argues that learners have to be able to think, solve problems. This happens best when they are interacting with other people, particularly peers. Young people draw on the strengths of others. They need cooperative and collaborative activities. Social and emotional side. Children do like to have friends. My own children attended a school in a rural area and they wanted to interact. The outreach nursery means pre-school is a seamless transition. Both schools go to Biggar High School.

Question Parent. I'm not concerned about educational benefit - education will continue to be fantastic regardless of whether Abington and Crawfordjohn or just Crawfordjohn. My concern is if we go for closure. As a community worker, we have to work really hard to get resources. In the village there are no other facilities, nothing for children, no transport. How would you support us?

Answer JG. We cannot commit tonight but will look at it as part of the consultation process. We will commit to provide suggestions how we could assist Crawfordjohn to thrive.

Answer GW. At the second informal meeting with parents, a parent had asked 'In the worst case scenario, would you leave us hanging?' How the community get together and how we could support them was something suggested to consider.

Question Resident. How do you know this?

Answer GW. There were 2 previous meetings with parents.

Comment Resident. Oh, cozy, cozy.

Comment Interest Group. I have sat through two school closures. In major regeneration areas, house builders like Wimpey and Baratt, the first question they ask is 'Where is the local school?'. This keeps the vitality of the village. Education is as good as your teacher, nothing to do with size.

Auchenheath and Hawksland are examples. Much older communities because the demographic effects are irreversible. What is the reason to come here? Why would young people come here? There's the highest unemployment in SLC and an ageing population. Think about the whole community. The way you are talking, the school is already shut. I fear it is a fait accompli.

Answer JG. That's unfair. The purpose of tonight is written down in law: to hear views and produce a document. We are under an obligation to respond to questions asked. The decision is not a fait accompli. We are midway through a consultation period. We as officers will not make the decision to close this school. There are Education Resources' views, Consultees views, Education Scotland views, Elected Member views and potentially Scottish Ministers' views. Ultimately the decision will be taken by Elected Members.

Comment Interest Group. I've heard the same reasons before. If they find a reason to close it, they will.

Question Resident. Going back to education and socialisation. Why don't you close all small schools and have one big school?

Question Parent. Education is proven in small schools. Dumfries & Galloway have a school with 9 children that received excellence across the board. We already work with children at other schools. Children from three schools go to the nursery at Abington. What about Crawford and Leadhills? They go back to their own schools.

Answer JG. The argument presented is that learning takes place more effectively when there are others around to discuss issues. We are not saying small schools don't work. Tonight is a learning experience for us – a wider group of peers. Can it only happen that way? No, but we all learn something because we talk to each other.

Comment Parent. What about Wiston primary? It has only 6 pupils.

Comment Resident. You are suggesting we shut this school.

Answer JG. At this stage, we are putting forward a proposal to discontinue the school.

Comment Bev Gauld, Local Elected Member. The Executive Committee gave duty to officers to carry out the process. We are crossing bridges that haven't been built and decisions that haven't been made. The Leader of the Council wants to know the views of the community.

Comment Resident. You sent out a document with only 1 option – shut the school. This is very negative.

Comment Resident. Who started the argument? You've done F A. End of script.

Question Parent. My second priority is community and house prices. My child's education is my first priority. I want my bread buttered on both sides. I have no qualms. I would not like my child to be educated in a school with 6 or 7 pupils. I would like to hear more about the benefits, not the views of the vociferous minority, like enhancements to the quality of the building - sweeteners to make the move to Abington more appealing. My 2 children went to Abington Nursery and then into primary at Abington and had a seamless transition.

Question Parent. Can I clarify that SLC has a process for parents to send their child elsewhere if not wishing to use the school? Is there not a policy of placing requests?

Answer JG. Yes.

Comment Resident. If parents have a choice and can go elsewhere, why are we even arguing about this?

Answer JG. We grant placing requests where we have spaces. There is no right to transport if your child attends a school on a placing request.

Comment Resident. Build the school and let people go elsewhere if they want. You come up with some crackers, end of script.

Question Resident. We heard before of the benefits of going to a larger grouping. What are the benefits of smaller groupings?

Answer GC. Size of school isn't everything. Quality of education depends on personnel. Small teacher / child ratios can be beneficial but peer interaction and social aspects are also important.

Question Resident. Are you an educational expert?

Answer GC. I wouldn't say an expert, no.

Answer JG. Gillian is an experienced Head Teacher on secondment within our Curriculum and Quality Improvement Service and an Associate Assessor for Education Scotland so for our

purposes, she is an expert. She has also managed a small school that had a positive HMIE inspection.

Question Resident. I would like to hear both sides of the coin. I am not a parent – we are only getting one side. I want more information to make an informed decision.

Comment Resident. I am involved in outdoor education. Small group of 8 is best for us. Every child is involved. Older children help the younger ones and make sure they are not getting pulled away or left on their own.

Answer JG. I trust you mean similar age groups? Need to take account of stage of child.

Follow up comment Resident. They are a range of ages. Older ones look after the younger ones. Peer education happens. It would be good to hear both sides of the argument.

Answer JG. Attainment is not significantly different between small schools and large schools.

Question Resident. What is attainment?

Answer JG. The levels that children reach in areas such as literacy and numeracy. The idea of reading, writing and arithmetic being significantly different as a result of schools of different sizes is not demonstrated by fact or evidence. The notion that there is a correlation between all small schools and attainment is not demonstrated. The experience of adult / child interaction. Education is about the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Developing skills and attitude tends to come from interaction with one another where as the development of knowledge is taught by adults. What we learn we don't only learn from teachers.

Question Interest Group. Dumfries & Galloway have phenomenal performance. Thornhill and Moffat – incredibly small schools and High Schools. They compare well. Underbank and Braidwood have placement requests because of high attainment. Down to good teachers again. Why would you want to lose them and risk sending them somewhere else. Attainment is high at Crawfordjohn – why change? Smaller High School perform better for example Wallace Hall. Look at performance of Wallace Hall and Moffat in comparison to Lesmahagow High, Lanark Grammar and Biggar High. Hightae performs extremely well because of an incredible teacher.

Answer JG. Quality of the teacher is paramount. Hanging on to that teacher is hard especially if there is only 1 teacher in the school. If a teacher is weak, there is more capacity to develop staff in a larger school.

Comment Interest Group. I went to a school that was so bad they changed the school name. Garrion Academy to Clyde Valley High. Build the one school and give them the option.

Question Resident. Why wasn't there an option to close Abington? Are you closing Glespin?

Answer JG. I don't want to get drawn into discussing other schools.

Comment Resident. It's relevant. There are only 3 pupils there.

Answer JG. We only have one set of papers on which we are consulting - a proposal for Crawfordjohn Primary. Technically we are not planning to close any schools

Question Resident. You've said that small numbers are no good but you've got 3 pupils at Stablestone. At Wiston, apparently you have no pupils from Wiston. Why is it always Crawfordjohn?

Comment Parent. I don't believe they are trying to close the school.

Comment Resident. They are.

Comment Resident. We should be rewording the consultation to consultation on the rebuild of Crawfordjohn Primary. Who decided it was a closure proposal?

Comment Resident. Who did you consult with?

Comment Parent. Us.

Question Resident. Who with?

Comment Parent. Parents.

Question Resident. Can I presume that if bones hadn't been found, would the school have been rebuilt?

Answer JG. Yes.

Question Grandparent. The number at the school has gone up and down for years – 20, fallen to 6 up at 13. My grandchildren may want a bigger school. But my biggest fear is that the numbers will go up again, people move into the area and the school gets closed. What if 10 to 12 houses are built and there's no school?

Question Resident. What will happen to the land if the school is not rebuilt?

Answer GW. Please put this in a formal response. I don't want to pre-empt your consultation response or question, but if it's 'don't rebuild the school, but consider the following.....' you should put this on the consultation proposal form.

Question Resident. Can you tell me why Douglas & Angus Estates were not consulted as part of this?

Comment Bev Gauld, Local Elected Member. That is an issue of title and separate to this meeting.

Question Parent. I have 3 young kids who are going to primary school. I am thinking of education and life experience – I was a pupil at Crawfordjohn Primary when there was 7 of us. It breaks my heart to have this meeting. After my personal experience I would like enough folk for a decent game of football or to put on a decent play. This isn't about 'them' and 'us'. You are all my neighbours and friends but I've got to think of my kids' education. 5 miles travelling is nothing. They will all go to Biggar High School.

Comment Parent. My mind is not set in stone. It depends on what is on offer. Capital expenditure that is saved at Crawfordjohn shouldn't disappear to Rutherglen, Cambuslang or Hamilton. What's 5 miles when we travel to Biggar and Lanark?

Comment Parent. We feel that the Education department is going to use this information to shut the school. Taking the choice from everyone that wants to send their kids to Crawfordjohn Primary School.

Comment Parent. I didn't see myself as influential as that.

Comment Resident. We weren't at these other meetings.

Comment Parent. The parents that want the school respect the parents who choose not to send their children. You are taking choice away from me. You are not in favour of building. This is about future generations – I am giving my opinion.

Comment JG. The decision about this will sit with the politicians taking into account all feedback from Education Resources, all consultees, Education Scotland, and Elected Members.

Answer JG. We seem to have come full circle – some parents want some things and some parents want something else.

Question Parent. What if we don't agree with what's in the consultation report?

Answer LK. A document will be published with written responses plus questions and comments from tonight's Public Meeting.

Answer JG. Any factual issues would be corrected.

Question Parent. What if your perception is different from ours?

Answer JG. This is not about different perceptions.

Answer LK. Comments be recorded as accurately as possible and people will see the consultation report.

Answer JG. Could I stress that there are two other layers of quality assurance – Education Scotland and the Scottish Government. My own view is that the Scottish Government may call it in because of where we are with rural education.

Question Parent. If the outcome is to move back, when are we looking at?

Answer JG. There would be a decision coming back from Executive Committee late January / February 2014. We would then be in a position to know and resume plans for rebuild.

Comment Resident. I am disappointed that Douglas Estates were not consulted. They are major landowners in the area. My wish is that they are consulted.

Comment Resident. They shouldn't be consulted. They gifted the land.

Answer JG. We will check and if appropriate, will make available to them. They are not a Statutory Consultee but have the right to make comment.

Answer LK. The consultation proposal document is available to them on the Council's website.

Comment Resident. The school should have been built 3 years ago – you've been dragging your heels.

Jim Gilhooly thanked everyone for their attendance and contribution closed the Public Meeting at 8.36pm.

Appendix 3 Report by Education Scotland, addressing educational aspects of the proposal to discontinue education at Crawfordjohn Primary School and rezone the existing catchment area to Abington Primary School.

Context

This report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act. The purpose of this report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of the council's consultation proposal. Section 2 of this report sets out the views expressed by consultees during the initial consultation process. Section 3 sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal and the views expressed by consultees. Section 4 summarises HM Inspectors' overall view of the proposal. Upon receipt of this report, the Act requires the council to consider it and then prepare its final consultation report. The council's final consultation report should include a copy of this report and must contain an explanation of how it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Lanarkshire Council proposes to discontinue Crawfordjohn Primary School and rezone the existing catchment area to Abington Primary School. If the proposal goes ahead then it will not take effect before August 2014. South Lanarkshire Council originally planned to rebuild Crawfordjohn Primary School in line with its Schools Modernisation Programme. Work on this began in August 2009 when Crawfordjohn Primary School was demolished. At this time, children from Crawfordjohn Primary School were decanted to Douglas Primary School. In January 2011, children at Douglas Primary School moved to a new build. The children from Crawfordjohn Primary School were then decanted to Abington Primary School. Since 2009 the planned rebuild of Crawfordjohn Primary School has been subject to several delays. The council now proposes to close Crawfordjohn Primary School and no longer rebuild Crawfordjohn Primary School.
- 1.2 The report from Education Scotland is required under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. It has been prepared by HM Inspectors in accordance with the terms of the Act.
- 1.3 HM Inspectors undertook the following activities in considering the educational aspects of the proposal:
 - consideration of all relevant documentation provided by the council in relation to the proposal, specifically the educational benefits statement and related consultation documents, written and oral submissions from parents and others;
 - consideration of further representations made directly to Education Scotland on relevant educational aspects of the proposal;
 - consideration of further information on all schools affected; and
 - a visit to the site of Abington Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.
- 1.4 HM Inspectors considered:
 - the likely effects of the proposal for children of the school; any other users; for children likely to become pupils within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper; and other children in the council area;

- any other likely effects of the proposal;
- how the council intends to minimise or avoid any adverse effects that may arise from the proposal; and
- benefits which the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.5 As the proposal will lead to the closure of a rural school as defined in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of:

- viable alternatives to the closure of Crawfordjohn Primary School;
- the likely effect on the local community with regard to sustainability and on the community's access to the buildings, grounds and facilities if the school were to close, and
- the likely effect of different travelling arrangements on the environment and on children and young people and other school users occasioned by the closure.

2. Consultation process

- 2.1 South Lanarkshire Council undertook the initial consultation on its proposals with reference to the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. During the period between 2009 when Crawfordjohn Primary School was demolished and 2013, some parents of pupils of Crawfordjohn Primary School questioned the appropriateness of moving their children from Abington Primary School back to Crawfordjohn Primary School should it be rebuilt. They raised this informally with council officers. The concerns of these parents were around the possible diminution of their children's curricular and social experiences. South Lanarkshire Council then engaged in an informal consultation with parents of pupils of Crawfordjohn Primary School or parents of children who were soon to be pupils to determine the nature and extent of parental opinion. Parents had mixed views but the overall preference of parents at that time was not in favour of the rebuilding of Crawfordjohn Primary School. As a result of this a formal consultation process on the discontinuation of education at Crawfordjohn Primary School was initiated with all stakeholders.
- 2.2 The council received a total of 36 responses to the proposal, representing the views of 44 people or groups. Just over half of the total responses to the council's consultation proposal document were not in favour of the proposal. Slightly more than 30% were in favour. Other respondents were undecided.
- 2.3 None of the children who currently attend Crawfordjohn Primary School have been educated in the original Crawfordjohn Primary School building. Although broadly in favour of the proposal, the views of the children are varied. The children of Crawfordjohn Primary School feel that they currently have more friends than they would have if they were educated in a smaller school. They enjoy having a mix of children to engage in group work during lessons and to play with at intervals. They like the fact that there is more chance of them having a classmate that they are familiar with when they transfer to Biggar High School. Children of Abington Primary School like the wider social grouping and would not like to lose their friends from Crawfordjohn Primary School. A few children from Crawfordjohn feel that they would like to have the rebuild as it would be closer to their own homes which would be a healthier alternative as they could walk and cycle to school. A few are concerned about travel to Abington during adverse weather conditions. A few are concerned that not all pupils from Crawfordjohn would have access to after school activities due to transportation issues.

- 2.4 Views of parents of children currently at Crawfordjohn Primary School or are likely to become so in the next two years are mixed. Approximately half of parents who responded to the council's consultation document want the proposal to go ahead. Some feel that there is benefit to their children in having access to a wider social grouping. They feel that their children will have a broader learning experience if they are educated at Abington Primary School. They also feel that their children will benefit from not having to be educated in a P1 to P7 class with one teacher which they feel is not educationally beneficial. However, other parents would welcome their children being in such a single multi-stage class. Parents are happy that the current arrangements give their children a wider circle of friends which could help them settle at secondary school and that there is more opportunity for their children to be in a class with somebody that they know. These benefits would continue if the proposal were to go ahead. Some parents are concerned about the transportation of their children in a school bus during adverse weather conditions. A few are concerned that Crawfordjohn parents may play less of a role in the life of the school if the proposal goes ahead. Parents welcome the opportunity for a wider range of after school activities but are concerned that children from Crawfordjohn may not be able to benefit from these due to distance and having to rely on parents for transportation.
- 2.5 Staff have mixed views and can fully appreciate differing stakeholder views. Teaching staff welcome the increased opportunity to collaborate with colleagues and share good practice within a larger school. They feel that this supports their professional development and helps to develop a professional learning community. They feel that attainment has shown much improvement in recent years but are aware that this has been partly due to enhanced staffing with the current decant arrangement. They feel that stakeholders may not fully appreciate that this enhanced staffing would not continue with implementation of the proposal.
- 2.6 Members of the community have mixed views. Some from the Crawfordjohn community fear that there will be a detrimental effect on their community if the proposal goes ahead. They feel that the primary school played an important part in the life of the village and its permanent closure would have a negative impact on the wider community. They fear that as a result, parents with young children will be discouraged from moving to the village and the community may be less integrated. If the proposal does go ahead the community would welcome support from the council to mitigate against such adverse effects. The community would also welcome clarity on the future use of the former Crawfordjohn Primary School site if the proposal goes ahead. A number describe the site of the former Crawfordjohn Primary School as very unattractive. A few members of both the Abington and Crawfordjohn communities do not feel that rebuilding Crawfordjohn Primary School is the best use of council funding whilst appreciating the feelings of loss that people will inevitably experience. A few questioned the educational benefits as outlined in the proposal.
- 2.7 There were some common views expressed by a few staff, parents and pupils. This included a view that should the proposal go ahead, consideration be given to a new school identity to support the transition process. One widely held opinion across all stakeholder groups is that the uncertainty over the Crawfordjohn Primary School rebuild and its future needs to be resolved. Stakeholders have been unsettled and a few felt that this had significantly lowered morale.

3. Educational aspects of the proposal

- 3.1 A new build for the current Abington Primary School is programmed to commence in August 2015. The proposed new build will be able to accommodate up to 66 pupils. It will provide sufficient purpose built and up-to-date accommodation for the pupils of both schools. The council's consultation paper details some sound educational benefits for children arising from the proposal. In a larger establishment comprising of Crawfordjohn and Abington Primary School, children will have more opportunities to learn together with other children of their own age and/or stage. They will have enhanced opportunities to learn

effectively through collaborative approaches such as peer assessment and cooperative learning. There will be greater flexibility for effective group working across all aspects of the curriculum. Children will potentially benefit through greater opportunities to engage with a wider range of children in their age group. Children will be able to take part in a wider range of educational activities. The increased distance which children need to travel at the end of the school day and the reliance on parents for this travel, potentially may prevent some children from benefiting from after school activities. The proposal will not adversely affect the quality of education for children presently in Crawfordjohn and Abington Primary Schools.

- 3.2 Abington Primary School currently houses the Rigside and Rural Communities Nursery with pre-school children from the Crawfordjohn catchment area in attendance. A dedicated and enhanced early years facility is planned for inclusion in the rebuild of Abington Primary School. The potential for a seamless transition as children progress from nursery to P1 in the same educational establishment is enhanced if the proposal is implemented. Children from both Crawfordjohn and Abington Primary Schools currently transfer to Biggar High School and there is no planned change to existing arrangements. There are potential social and emotional benefits for children transferring to Biggar High School from having more peers with whom they are familiar as they make this move.
- 3.3 The council's proposal indicates that it will enable efficiencies accruing from the discontinuation of Crawfordjohn Primary School of £1.7 million capital and £70,000 annual revenue costs. The council needs to set out more clearly in its final consultation report, the benefits the efficiencies will achieve for the children in the council area.
- 3.4 The council is planning an extensive transition programme involving both establishments and the designated Quality Link Officer to facilitate the transition and establishment of a shared identity. It is not clear from the proposal how this process will be managed to ensure that the proposal brings sustained educational benefits for children.
- 3.5 As the proposal will lead to the closure of a rural school as defined in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, HM Inspectors also took account of the council's consideration of the viability of alternatives to closing the school. The council took reasonable steps to consult with parents of children at Crawfordjohn Primary School before proceeding to consult on discontinuing education there. The council has also considered the viability of rebuilding Crawfordjohn Primary School on the existing site as previously planned. This original plan was delayed for various reasons. Funding for the new build at Crawfordjohn is already included in the council's capital programme if this proposal does not go ahead. The council has already identified funding for the rebuild of Abington Primary School. The council needs to set out clearly in its final consultation report the full cost of building a new primary school in Crawfordjohn and the impact of this on its budgets in the event of the current proposal not going ahead.
- 3.6 The council has given reasonable consideration to the effect of the proposal on the local community. The council reports that the former Crawfordjohn Primary School building was let by the Parent Council only and was not used for community events as Crawfordjohn has a community-owned village hall. As part of the transition and integration process, the council has indicated that the Crawfordjohn Village Hall would continue to be used for school events which would ensure links with the community are maintained in the future. Current information available to the council shows no additional housing developments are planned throughout the period ending in 2018/19.
- 3.7 Abington Primary School is 5.5 miles from the site of Crawfordjohn Primary School with a journey time of approximately 15 minutes. Additional transport arrangements have been in place for the last two years as a result of the decant to enable Crawfordjohn Primary children to travel to Abington. The existing travel arrangements in place for pupils currently attending Abington Primary School from the Crawfordjohn community would remain in

place. The council needs to work with parents to address their concerns about the potential impact of any adverse weather.

4. Summary

- 4.1 The council has outlined some clear educational benefits of the proposal. Children could benefit from a broader staff expertise and range of learning and teaching approaches. There would be better opportunities for children to discuss, plan and review their work together in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. They would have increased opportunities to learn from each other and engage in group work across all areas of the curriculum. Children could benefit socially and emotionally through having increased opportunities to engage in social activities with others of similar age and stage. Implementation of the proposal has the potential to improve transition arrangements from nursery to primary school and from primary to secondary school. Teachers will have better opportunities for professional development as they work collaboratively with a greater number of colleagues. There would be no detriment to children's education if the proposal was to go ahead. The council needs to make clear how it will monitor the indicated educational benefits of the proposal and ensure that they are achieved.
- 4.2 Of those that responded to the council's consultation process, a slight majority oppose the proposal for a variety of reasons. Concerns were raised about the possible negative impact on the Crawfordjohn community. The council needs to make clear how it plans to mitigate against this. It also needs to make clear how it will minimise the impact of adverse weather on children affected by the proposal.

**HM Inspectors
Education Scotland
September 2013**