
NEW Island Communities Impact Assessments

Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS	Responses
<p>Please provide a brief description or summary of the policy, strategy or service under review for the purposes of this assessment.</p>	<p>Whether Skeld Primary School should be mothballed from August 2024. The school roll has fallen to below 20% (the figure at which consideration is given as to whether a school should be mothballed as per Council policy).</p>
STEP 1 - Develop a clear understanding of your objectives	Responses
<p>What are the objectives of the policy, strategy or service?</p>	<p>The overall objective is to sustain education across Shetland to provide children with the best opportunity to achieve positive outcomes. The process of considering Mothballing a school where children and young people are still in the catchment area, has been Council document since February 2023.</p>
<p>Do you need to consult?</p>	<p>There is no consultation process set out in legislation for a proposal to mothball a school.</p> <p>The Scottish Government’s guidance published under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 recommends that when children and young people remain in the catchment area, a decision to mothball the school should be taken in consultation with the parents and carers involved.</p> <p>The Council’s decision on 7th February 2023 set the principle that should a school roll fall below the figure of 20% of the schools capacity, that triggers consideration to be given to entering into consultation with the school community about mothballing.</p> <p>The Council on 6th June 2022 also approved the Northern Alliance</p>

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

	<p>Mothballing Toolkit to be followed when considering whether or not to mothball a school.</p>
<p>How are islands identified for the purpose of the policy, strategy or service?</p>	<p>This policy covers all schools on mainland Shetland.</p> <p>At present, schools on outer islands (Fair Isle, Fetlar, Foula, Papa Stour, Skerries) will not be considered for mothballing unless the pupil roll drops to zero. There is no differentiation between the island communities on mainland Shetland and inner islands (Unst, Whalsay and Yell) when applying the trigger for considering whether or not to mothball a school. Skeld Primary School is on the mainland of Shetland.</p>
<p>What are the intended impacts/outcomes and how do these potentially differ in the islands?</p>	<p>The intended outcome is to sustain education across Shetland to provide children with the best opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.</p> <p>There is no difference between these, and elsewhere in Scotland, including other remote rural areas, nor between one area of Shetland and another. With the exception of our outer islands who will not be considered for mothballing unless the pupil roll drops to zero.</p>
<p>Is the policy, strategy or service new?</p>	<p>The trigger of 20% to look at the possibility of mothballing and the use of the Mothballing Tool Kit was agreed by Council on 7th February 2023.</p> <p>Prior to this, schools were mothballed when no pupils were in attendance.</p>

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

STEP 2 - Gather your data and identify your stakeholders	Responses
What data is available about the current situation in the islands?	Capacities for each school, current rolls, projected rolls, projected capacities, catchment areas, placing requests, staff vacancies, school floor plans and room sizes, suitability assessments, condition assessments, fire risk assessments, access audit, effective utilisation of space annual questionnaires, health and safety data, attainment results.
Do you need to consult?	<p>There is no consultation process set out in legislation for a proposal to mothball a school.</p> <p>The Scottish Government’s guidance published under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 recommends that when children and young people remain in the catchment area, a decision to mothball the school should be taken in consultation with the parents and carers involved.</p> <p>The Council’s decision on 7th February 2023 set the principle that should a school roll fall below the figure of 20% of the schools capacity, that triggers consideration to be given to entering into consultation with the school community about mothballing.</p> <p>The Council on 6th June 2022 also approved the Northern Alliance Mothballing Toolkit to be followed when considering whether or not to mothball a school.</p>
How does any existing data differ between islands?	School rolls vary across Shetland’s School Learning Estate, and are monitored by Children’s Services.

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

Are there any existing design features or mitigations in place?	N/A
STEP 3 - Consultation	Responses
Who do you need to consult with?	<p>The Council on 6th June 2022 approved the Northern Alliance Mothballing Toolkit to be followed when considering whether or not to mothball a school. Within Section 2 there is guidance around meeting with all current and future parent and carers and the Parent Council. The Toolkit also includes consultation with staff.</p> <p>Therefore, consultation has taken place with current and future parents and carers, pupils, staff and the Parent Council. This is what Children’s Services determine is the “school community” for the purposes of carrying out consultation to inform whether or not Skeld Primary School should be mothballed.</p>
How will you carry out your consultation and in what timescales?	<p>Group meetings were held on 29th January 2024 for staff and parent and carers: to discuss the current situation, consider the education for the children, possible solutions and options.</p> <p>Individual meetings were held with staff on 19th and 21st February, and with parent and carers on 5th, 14th and 15th March 2024.</p> <p>Further group meetings were held on 19th March 2024, with staff and parent and carers.</p> <p>A Parent Council meeting was held during the week commencing 25th March 2024.</p>

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

	<p>A survey has been sent to all staff and all parent and carers.</p> <p>This timeline was put in place so that a decision can be taken on 15th April 2024, at Education and Families Committee.</p>
<p>What questions will you ask when considering how to address island realities?</p>	<p>The consultation has taken the form of conversation and survey to establish impacts and options.</p> <p>As the Mothballing Toolkit is currently applicable across all Shetland Schools, there has been no need to ask specific island related questions.</p>
<p>What information has already been gathered through consultations and what concerns have been raised previously by island communities?</p>	<p>Wider community engagement (a public meeting and online petition) has highlighted that there is resistance within the local community. For example, plans are in place for development in the area which will create jobs and could potentially bring more children into the catchment area.</p>
<p>Is your consultation robust and meaningful and sufficient to comply with the Section 7 duty?</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>STEP 4 - Assessment</p>	<p>Responses</p>
<p>Does your assessment identify any unique impacts on island communities?</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>The impacts/outcomes do not differ in the islands compared to other very rural areas in Scotland.</p>
<p>Does your assessment identify any potential barriers or wider impacts?</p>	<p>Early Learning and Childcare within the Skeld community will also be mothballed. The impact of this will be that families will have to take their children elsewhere for this provision. This situation is not unique in Shetland because there are no catchment areas for Early Learning and Childcare.</p>

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

How will you address these?	There is currently no plans to address this as there is no statutory obligation for local authorities to provide transport to Early Learning and Childcare settings.
-----------------------------	--

You must now determine whether in your opinion your policy, strategy or service is likely to have an effect on an island community, which is significantly different from its effect on other communities (including other island communities).

If your answer is **NO** to the above question, a full ICIA will NOT be required and **you can proceed to Step SIX.**

If the answer is **YES**, an ICIA must be prepared and **you should proceed to Step FIVE.**

To form your opinion, the following questions should be considered:

- Does the evidence show different circumstances or different expectations or needs, or different experiences or outcomes (such as different levels of satisfaction, or different rates of participation)? **No.**
- Are these different effects likely? **N/A.**
- Are these effects significantly different? **No.**
- Could the effect amount to a disadvantage for an island community compared to the mainland or between island groups? **Not for the mothballing of Skeld Primary School.**

STEP 5 – Preparing your ICIA	Responses
In Step Five, you should describe the likely significantly different effect of the policy, strategy or service:	
Assess the extent to which you consider that the policy, strategy or service can be developed or delivered in such a manner as to improve or mitigate, for island communities, the outcomes resulting from it.	
Consider alternative delivery mechanisms and whether further consultation is required.	
Describe how these alternative delivery mechanisms will improve or mitigate outcomes for island communities.	
Identify resources required to improve or mitigate outcomes for island communities.	

Island Communities Impact Assessment

Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

STEP 6 - Making adjustments to your work	Responses
Should delivery mechanisms/mitigations vary in different communities?	Not in relation to considering the mothballing of Skeld. However, this process has highlighted the need to assess the Mothballing Toolkit for the Outer Isles.
Do you need to consult with island communities in respect of mechanisms or mitigations?	N/A
Have island circumstances been factored into the evaluation process?	N/A
Have any island-specific indicators/targets been identified that require monitoring?	N/A
How will outcomes be measured on the islands?	N/A
How has the policy, strategy or service affected island communities?	Not differentially.
How will lessons learned in this ICIA inform future policy making and service delivery?	This process has highlighted the need to assess the Mothballing Toolkit for the Outer Isles.
STEP 7 - Publishing your ICIA	Responses
Have you presented your ICIA in an Easy Read format?	No
Does it need to be presented in Gaelic or any other language?	No
Where will you publish your ICIA and will relevant stakeholders be able to easily access it?	Shetland Islands Council website.
Who will sign-off your final ICIA and why?	Helen Budge, Director of Children's Services.

ICIA completed by:	Samantha Flaws
Position:	Executive Manager, Education and Learning
Signature:	S Flaws
Date complete:	28/03/2024

Island Communities Impact Assessment
Consideration of Mothballing of Skeld Primary School

ICIA approved by:	Helen Budge
Position:	Director of Children's Services
Signature:	Helen Budge
Date approved:	02/04/2024