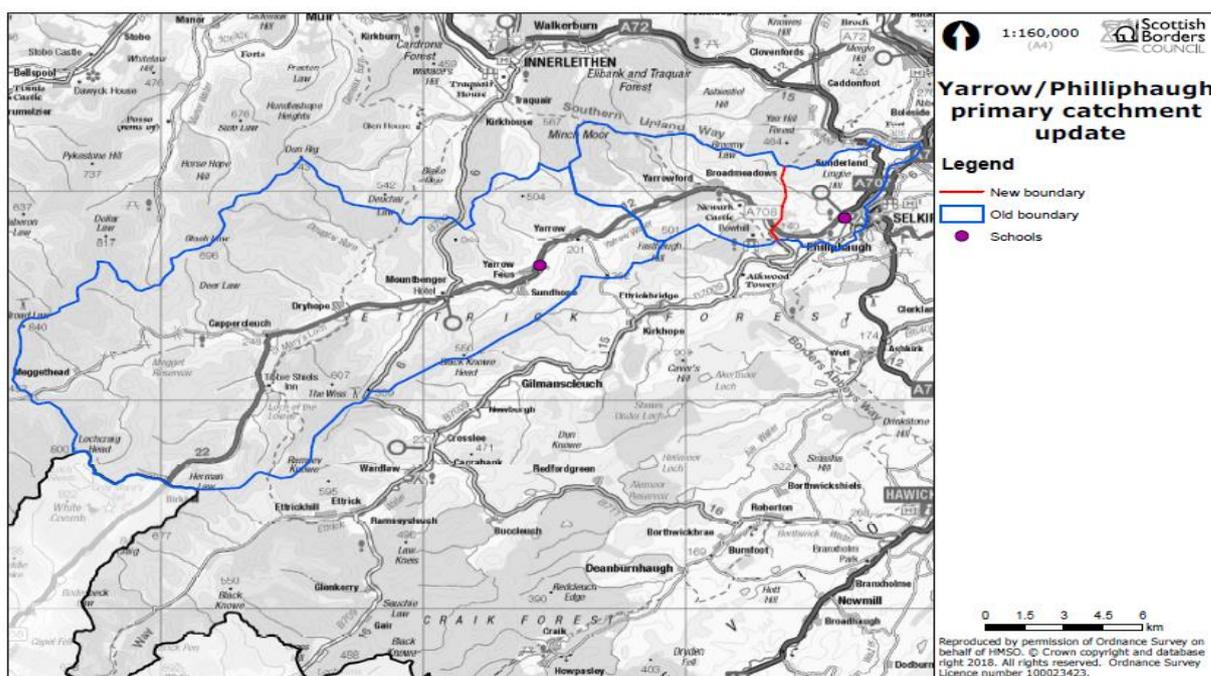


**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**

CONSULTATION REPORT

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CATCHMENT AREAS OF YARROW
PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PHILIPHAUGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL**



Please share your views on the Proposal or make any alternative suggestions by contacting us before 21 November 2019 at:-

Selkirk Catchment Review Consultation
Children and Young People's Services
Scottish Borders Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA; or

Email Address: schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk; or

Online: <https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/selkirkcatchment>

This Consultation Report has been issued by Scottish Borders Council's Children and Young People's Services in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended.

SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS FOR THIS CONSULTATION REPORT

Introduction

- 1.1 This Consultation Report has been issued as part of a statutory consultation process required in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended (**2010 Act**). The 2010 Act sets out the consultation process that local authorities must follow when proposing a permanent change to any of their schools – such as a closure, relocation or change of catchment area.
- 1.2 This consultation has been undertaken following a decision by Scottish Borders Council's Executive Committee on 30 April 2019 to commence a statutory consultation process regarding a proposal to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School in accordance with the plans annexed to the Proposal Paper (the **Proposal**).
- 1.3 This Consultation Report, in conjunction with the Proposal Paper (attached as **Appendix 1**), details the Council's compliance with the terms of the 2010 Act.

Proposal Paper

- 1.4 A Proposal Paper detailing the Proposal and the Council's reasons for making the Proposal was published on 10 May 2019. A copy of the Proposal Paper was made available free of charge in these locations: –
 - Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells
 - Yarrow Primary School, Yarrow, Selkirk
 - Philiphaugh Community School, Selkirk
 - Selkirk Library, Ettrick Terrace, Selkirk

and published on the Scottish Borders Council website:

<https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/selkirkcatchment>

Advertising and Notice of Proposal Paper

- 1.5 The publication of the Proposal Paper was advertised in Southern Reporter, providing details and dates of the consultation period and the public meeting. There were also press releases and social media postings at the start of the consultation process, before the public meeting and before the end of the consultation period.
- 1.6 Formal notice of the Proposal was sent by Letter or email to:
 - the parents/carers of the children within the Yarrow and Philiphaugh catchment areas and Selkirk High School;
 - the Parent Councils of the affected schools;
 - the parent/carers of any children likely to attend Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School or any affected school within two years of the date of the publication of the Proposal Paper;
 - any Trade Union which is representative of the staff;
 - the staff (teaching and non-teaching) at the affected schools;
 - the Community Councils of Ettrick & Yarrow and Selkirk;
 - Community Planning Partnership partners;
 - the constituency Member of the Scottish Parliament;

- the constituency Member of Parliament; and
- the List Members of the Scottish Parliament.

Length of Consultation period

- 1.7 The consultation period for the Proposal ran from 10 May 2019 until 25 June 2019 (both dates inclusive). This period allowed in excess of the statutory minimum of 30 school days. There were 32 responses received in respect of this statutory consultation both on line and in writing. The responses are summarised and responded to in **Section 4** below.

Public meetings

- 1.8 Public meetings were held on:

30 May 2019 at 5.30pm at Philiphaugh Community School (No members of the community attended)

30 May 2019 at 7.30pm at Yarrow Primary School (10 members of the community attended).

Minutes were taken at the meeting and views were sought following a presentation being given. Copies of the meeting notes are included as **Appendix 2**

Meetings with Pupils and Staff

- 1.9 Meetings were held with pupils and staff at Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School. A summary of these discussions is in **Section 3**.

Involvement of Education Scotland

- 1.10 Education Scotland was notified in advance of this Statutory Consultation process being approved. On completion of the Statutory Consultation period, a copy of the Proposal Paper was sent by Scottish Borders Council to Education Scotland. Education Scotland also received a copy of all relevant additional materials, minutes of public meeting, a copy of the written representations and replies received by the Council during the consultation period.
- 1.11 Education Scotland has prepared a report on the educational aspects of the Proposal, based on the representations and documents mentioned above as well as their interviews with pupils, parents, staff, and associated schools. In preparing their report, Education Scotland visited the affected schools and made reasonable enquiries as they considered appropriate. Their report can be found at **Appendix 3** and also on the Education Scotland Website [Education Scotland Consultation Reports](#).
- 1.12 Education Scotland state in their report that the Proposal has clear educational benefits and will provide a more viable and sustainable rural school option with parity of access to learning and opportunities for children in the Yarrow valley. The Issues raised in the Education Scotland Report with regards to the Proposal along with the Council's responses are set out in **Section 5** of this Consultation Report.

Preparation of Public Consultation Report

- 1.13 Council officers have reviewed the Proposal having regard to the Education Scotland Report, the discussions at the public meeting, comments from pupils and staff and all the responses received during the consultation period. This Consultation Report has been prepared by Scottish

Borders Council Children and Young People's Services team as a result. This report will be published in electronic and printed formats. It will be available on the Council web-site, from Council Headquarters, Selkirk library and the affected schools, free of charge. Anyone who made written representations during the consultation period will also be informed about the report, if contact details have been provided.

Publication of the Consultation Report

1.14 This Consultation Report was published at on 24 October 2019 and is available for further consideration until 21 November 2019. **The intention is that interested parties should have time to consider the Consultation Report and if they so wish, to raise concerns and pose alternative solutions by making written or electronic submissions to:**

Selkirk Catchment Consultation
Children and Young People's Services
Scottish Borders Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA; or

Email Address: schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk

Consultation Site:
<https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/selkirkcatchment>

If you wish to respond by letter or electronically, you are invited to state your relationship with the school – for example, “pupil”, “parent”, “carer”, “relative”, “former pupil”, “teacher in school”, “member of the community” etc. Responses from Parent Councils, Staff and Pupil Councils are particularly welcome.

For any written or electronic response to be considered it must be received by the Council no later than the last day of the consultation period, 21 November 2019.

Distribution

1.15 A copy of the Consultation Report will be made available free of charge for public consultation from **24 October 2019 to 21 November 2019** in these locations –

- Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, TD6 0SA
- Yarrow Primary School, Yarrow, Selkirk
- Philiphaugh Community School, Selkirk
- Selkirk Library, Ettrick Terrace, Selkirk

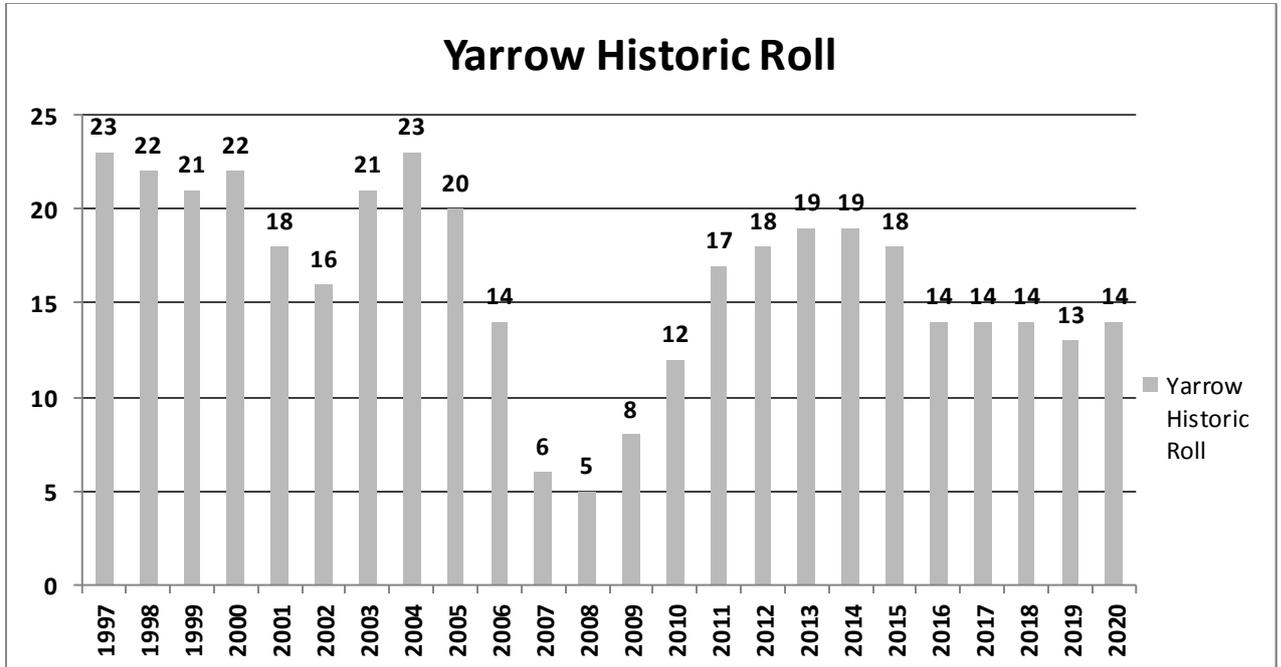
and published on the Scottish Borders Council website:
<https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/selkirkcatchment>

Decision

1.16 This report together with all other relevant documentation will be considered by Scottish Borders Council's Executive Committee who will be asked to make a decision on or around 21 January 2020.

BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In February 2016 Scottish Border Council's Executive (Education) Committee agreed to commence a School Estate Review process regarding the current school estate provision and what it should aspire to look like across the region. The Council undertook to engage with all stakeholders to obtain information and opinions regarding the current school estate and to seek views and ideas in respect of the vision of the future school estate.
- 2.2 The five strategic principles that were adopted when reviewing the school estate were:-
- 2.2.1 Increased educational opportunities for all generations in the community;
 - 2.2.2 Improved outcomes for children and young people;
 - 2.2.3 Sustainability;
 - 2.2.4 Future proofing the school estate; and
 - 2.2.5 Affordability.
- 2.3 The Review included engagement with all schools with a roll of under 50 pupils; seeking to work with the school and parents on ways to boost the roll and improve sustainability. As part of the School Estate Review engagement, Council officers met with parents of Yarrow pupils, who indicated that they had concerns regarding the declining school roll and indicated that they wished to work with the Council to attempt to increase the roll and improve the sustainability of their school. One of the options discussed was whether there was potential to extend the Yarrow catchment zone to increase pupil numbers
- 2.4 Yarrow Primary School is a non-denominational primary school in the Yarrow valley in the Scottish Borders and is within Selkirk High School's catchment zone. The roll has fluctuated over the years, reflecting both changes in demographics and parental choice:-



- 2.5 The school has capacity for 50 pupils. There are currently 14 children attending the school (this includes 3 children attending through placement requests). One child enrolled into P1 at the school in August 2019.
- 2.6 Council officers have worked with parents and the community to identify a proposal regarding proposed catchment area changes for consultation. A drop in engagement session was held in

Yarrowford in December 2018, where community members were invited to share their views on the catchment zones. The Proposal seeks to increase the school roll and improve the school's sustainability.

- 2.7 The decision was made by the Council's Executive Committee on 30 April 2019 to commence a statutory consultation process regarding a proposal to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School and seeks to increase the size of Yarrow's catchment area to include the Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area.

PUPILS AND STAFF

- 3.1 Discussions were held with the pupils at Yarrow Primary School. Key points raised at these discussions with pupils were:-

- Some of the children thought it would be good to have more children at the school as there would be more opportunities for friendships and for there to be a bigger mix of people.
- The children who are the only one in their year group had mixed feelings; one said it can be a bit lonely while the other thought it was good as if you are absent from school then you do not need to catch up.
- The children clearly have a strong bond across the school and within their age groups.
- The children said they were slightly concerned that they might not get as many trips if the school was to get bigger.
- They were slightly concerned about the dynamic changing and there being more arguments, with friendships being diluted and less strong. They were worried that bullying might happen.
- There were worries that they would get less attention and support from the staff.
- The children thought about 16 pupils would be the right number for the school and there was no appetite for there to be 2 classes.
- The children were satisfied with the transition support for High School and were unaware of anyone having issues after transitioning to secondary school.

- 3.3 Discussions were also held with the staff at Yarrow Primary School. The key points raised at these discussions were:-

- The staff were keen to see the school become more sustainable as they had concerns about the potential distance some of the children would have to travel if school was no longer viable.
- The staff considered that the travel times from Broadmeadows to Yarrow Primary and Philiphaugh were fairly similar.
- The staff were passionate about the school and what it could offer in terms of experience and opportunities for the children.
- The staff considered that the Proposal would have little impact on Philiphaugh Community School but could make a huge difference to Yarrow Primary.
- It was also considered that the children could benefit from there being a greater mix of pupils at the school as they need to learn to deal with different and more challenging situations and relationships.
- The staff did think that if the roll grew much larger then this could compromise the special events that are currently offered at the school.
- The staff do not consider that the children miss out from team events and festivals as they collaborate with smaller schools across the Borders.

- 3.4 Discussions were also held with a group of pupils at Philiphaugh Community School. The group comprised pupils who reside in the Broadmeadows and Yarrowford area, pupils from the Bowhill area and pupils from Selkirk. The main points raised in this discussions were:-

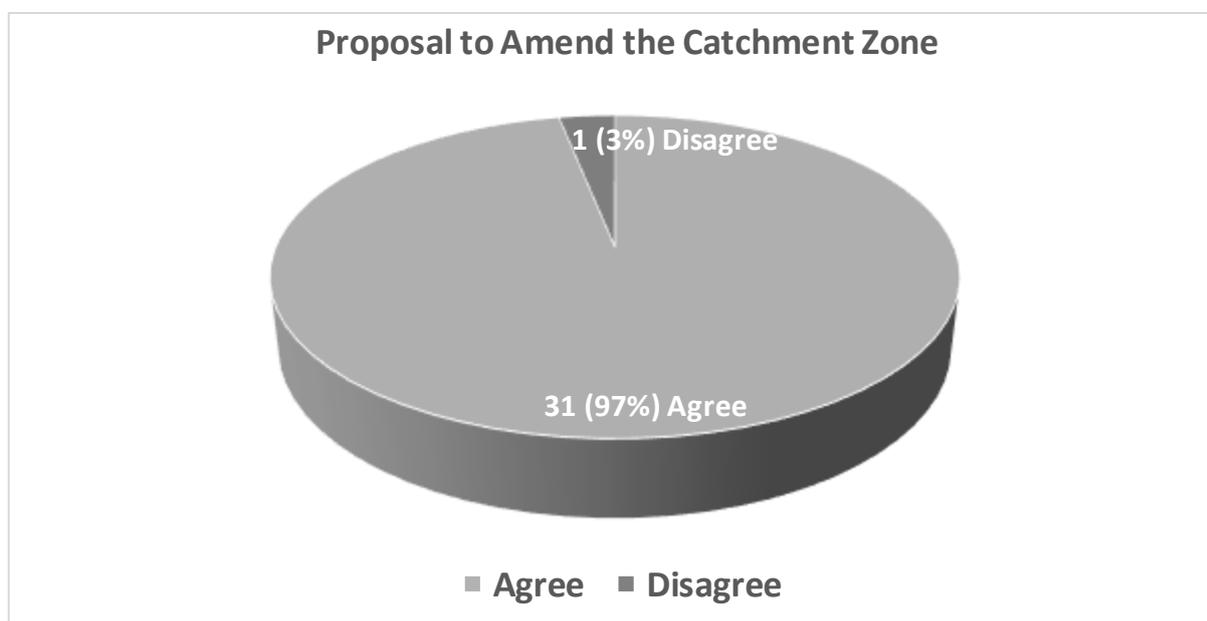
- The children were concerned that they would be “made to” change school. They were reassured by the Council officer that they would have the choice and that they would still get transported to school as they do currently.
- The children were interested if one bus would take children to both schools. It was explained that there would transport provided in both directions by separate vehicles.
- The children were interested in knowing more about Yarrow Primary School and thought that families and children should visit both before making a decision. Several of them know pupils at Yarrow.
- The pupils all said they were happy at their current school. Almost all of them said their preference would be to remain at their current school.
- When asked if they thought the Proposal was a good idea most of them didn't know but all agreed that it would be good for Yarrow to have more pupils.

3.5 The staff at Philiphaugh were relaxed about the Proposal. The numbers at Philiphaugh have fallen this year so the school now has 5 rather than 6 classes. The impact of losing more pupils, if the catchment was changed, was not considered to be significant albeit they would be disappointed if some of the children chose to move school.

RESPONSES

4.1 There were 32 responses made during the consultation period in respect of the Proposal.

Do you agree with the Proposal to permanently amend the catchment zones of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School?



Consultee – Analysis

We have analysed the information provided by consultees and the breakdown of the responses is detailed in full below. A significant majority of responses came from the Yarrow community, reflecting the depth of opinion in the catchment. Only one responder identified as being from Yarrowford and there was a low level of response from the Philiphaugh catchment.

Responders – Interest	Number
Parents/Carers	17
Pupil	7
Staff	2
Relative of Pupil	14
Parent Council Member	3
Elected Member/MSP/MP	0
Community Planning Partner	0
Community Member	12

Parents – School Interest	Number
Yarrow Primary School	11
Philiphaugh Primary School	1
Kirkhope Primary School	4
Selkirk High School	1

Staff – School Interest	Number
Yarrow Primary School	0
Philiphaugh Primary School	0
Kirkhope Primary School	2
Selkirk High School	0

Pupil – School Interest	Number
Yarrow Primary School	4
Philiphaugh Primary School	0
Kirkhope Primary School	1
Selkirk High School	2

Relative of Pupil– School Interest	Number
Yarrow Primary School	11
Philiphaugh Primary School	0
Kirkhope Primary School	2
Selkirk High School	1

Parent Council Member – School Interest	Number
Yarrow Primary School	3
Philiphaugh Primary School	0
Kirkhope Primary School	0
Selkirk High School	0

Community Member – School Interest	Number
Yarrow Primary School	6
Philiphaugh Primary School	0
Kirkhope Primary School	4
Selkirk High School	2

Questionnaire Comments	Council Responses
<i>It would provide a choice for pupils and parents. I was very worried about sending my children to such a small school but it's been the best decision and they are flying. I don't want the numbers to put people off and I feel that the school could benefit from more children. I am terrified that the school numbers fall too low as snowballing Yarrow as well as Ettrick would be a disaster.</i>	Noted. All the comments received from parents and children attending the school were very favourable about Yarrow Primary School. Council officers will continue to work with the school regarding its sustainability.
<i>We live in Yarrowford, at present the catchment is Philiphaugh but for a few reasons would like to use Yarrow.</i>	Noted.
<i>Yarrowford and Broadmeadows are in a largely rural area and so it makes sense for pupils to go to a rural school.</i>	Noted.
<i>Changing the catchment area this close to Selkirk means the pupils that would've had a short commute to Selkirk will have a substantial commute to Yarrow. The increased risk of this commute every morning surely can't be worth an extra few pupils for Yarrow.</i>	Noted. The safety of the children is the most important factor to the Council. Council officers have considered the route and the distance and it is considered to be similar time (9 minutes) and distance (c4.8 miles) between Yarrowford and both the primary schools. Safe Routes to Schools has been a material consideration. There have been several discussions with the Council's School Transport team and officers are satisfied that the children can be transported safely to Yarrow Primary School.
<i>If the proposed catchment change gives the chance of increased roll at Yarrow Primary School then this has to be positive. We all want our children to do well in life both academically and sociably. Yarrow School is an amazing place to learn and can only benefit everyone if children from a wider catchment area are able to attend with transport provided by the Council.</i>	Noted.
<i>Yes it would be beneficial to all if the catchment change were to go ahead. It is important to secure the future of a crucial school in the Yarrow valley to prevent young pupils from further down the valley having to travel up to Selkirk. It would benefit the pupils at Philiphaugh as the reduced pupil numbers will mean more teacher time per pupil and those effected that will move catchment to Yarrow would benefit from a great education at a small rural school.</i>	Noted.
<i>Yarrow needs some additional children so it makes sense to extend out towards Selkirk.</i>	Noted.
<i>Bring some more children to the school.</i>	Noted.

<i>There are not enough children in the valleys alone (on either side Yarrow and Ettrickbridge) therefore we need to move towards Selkirk where there are lot more children and see if we can bring them into Yarrow Primary to sustain the school. It is not good socially for the children to have such a small group in the school. Whilst the teaching is excellent, the social engagement side is almost as important and I do feel that this is lacking in such small schools.</i>	Noted. Council officers agree that socialisation is an important part of education and the Curriculum for Excellence places a significant emphasis on group, peer and collaborative working. As part of its School Estates Review Council officers will continue to work with the school to improve its sustainability. The smaller schools across the region also work closely and in collaboration with each other to provide more opportunities and experiences for the children.
<i>To ensure the long term sustainability of Yarrow Primary School.</i>	Noted.
<i>Increase the number of pupils attending the village schools, ensuring Yarrow and Kirkhope PS remain in operation.</i>	Noted.
<i>I strongly agree with the proposal to amend the catchment areas to maintain the sustainability of Yarrow Primary School and to offer all the children in the area the opportunity to attend a small rural school and gain from all associated benefits, in line with SBC's GIRFEC policy. As well as the wider benefits to the community and sustainability of the Yarrow valley as detailed in the Proposal Paper.</i>	Noted.
<i>Benefits for Yarrow School and no obvious disadvantages.</i>	Noted.
<i>I think that it's a shame that people living in Yarrowford and Broadmeadows are currently forced due to transport issues to send their children to a school that quite frankly I perceive to be lacking. I have personal experience of both schools and consider the education and support at Yarrow is superior.</i>	Noted.
<i>I think that this location should have always been part of Yarrow catchment.</i>	Noted.
<i>I reside in Yarrowford and cannot understand why children from my community have to attend Philiphaugh.</i>	Noted.
<i>This makes so much sense.</i>	Noted.
<i>To increase the Yarrow School roll.</i>	Noted.
<i>I think that people in Broadmeadows should have the choice of Philiphaugh and Yarrow.</i>	Noted. If the decision is made to amend the catchment, pupils currently attending Philiphaugh Community School (as well as younger siblings), if they choose, will still be transported free of charge to Philiphaugh. All other children in the Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area will be in the catchment area for Yarrow Primary School

<i>Need to keep the valleys alive and without children it won't happen.</i>	Noted.
<i>We are very happy with the school and it's the best thing for my granddaughter. I think the catchment should have changed when the Eildon houses were built in Yarrowford as a few children would have liked the opportunity to go to Yarrow. I hope the school gets more pupils – it would be a big loss if there are not enough pupils.</i>	Noted.
<i>I think that the proposed areas are good a people in Yarrowford regard themselves from Yarrow and not Selkirk so this makes much sense.</i>	Noted.
<i>This will help the roll of Yarrow Primary School and keep valley children in their local school.</i>	Noted.
<i>I believe that Yarrowford should NEVER have been in the Philiphaugh catchment area. It makes sense that the children in and around Yarrowford should attend Yarrow Primary School.</i>	Noted.
<i>This seems like a sensible means for increasing the pupil count at Yarrow PS without adversely affecting Philiphaugh Community School.</i>	Noted.
<i>It will give parents in the valley more scope to let their children attend a good small school.</i>	Noted.

Please tell us if you have any further comments or alternative suggestions regarding the Proposal

Response Comments	Council Response
<i>We fully support this proposal and feel it's the best option to keep a good rural school open. It makes sense and seems the most suitable option.</i>	Noted.
<i>If unable to change the catchment then maybe the Council could be more open and supportive on ways to increase the school roll at Yarrow. Perhaps if a parent from Selkirk shows interest and would like their child to attend Yarrow then assistance with transport could be looked at, rather than just saying it is outwith catchment therefore no transport funded. Perhaps shared funding? Changing the catchment however is the most sensible/ realistic option.</i>	Noted. The budget for schools transport is always under pressure and the Council would be unable to provide transport or funding in such instances as this could then lead to similar demands across the area. Support could be provided by Council officers, if the community wished to fund such a transport provision.

<i>Combine with Kirkhope Primary School.</i>	Noted.
<i>I agree with the proposal to extend the catchment of Yarrow PS to include Yarrowford and Broadmeadows.</i>	Noted.
<i>As well as the proposed changes, it would be beneficial to increase Kirkhope's catchment towards Selkirk too to make it easier for them to attend either small school.</i>	Noted. Council officers have considered the options to extend Kirkhope's catchment at length and have been unable to identify a proposal to take forward as there are very limited numbers of children residing in the area towards Selkirk.
<i>All children should have the choice to attend a school which is best suited to their personal needs in line with SBC's GIRFEC policy. Some children will be better suited to the smaller school environment and that is why these smaller schools must continue to be supported and kept sustainable.</i>	Noted. The Council policy is currently to support all placement requests as far as possible (grounds for refusal include requirement to employ a further teacher/create a new class). Free transport can only be provided to children attending their catchment school.
<i>Yarrow catchment going all the way to Selkirk boundary to include Bowhill kids.</i>	Noted. Council officers have considered this option but do not consider that it would be reasonable to transport children further up the valley when they reside much closer to Selkirk and some can currently walk to school.
<i>It makes no sense that the children who are part of the Yarrow community should not have the option/availability of transport to Yarrow Primary.</i>	Noted.
<i>I would like our local children to attend Yarrow Primary, my granddaughter goes there and is thriving.</i>	Noted.
<i>If I could go back to Primary we would choose Yarrow.</i>	Noted.
<i>I think if parents in Yarrowford were asked to visit school and the transport was arranged I am sure this would be welcomed.</i>	Noted.
<i>As a last resort can Kirkhope and Yarrow Primary Schools be joined?</i>	Noted. Officers will continue to work with both schools to improve their sustainability.
<i>Having experienced both primaries I chose Yarrow even though I live in Selkirk. I would expect my nearest school to be within the community I lived. I strongly suspect that as there has always been a bus in the direction of Selkirk High families in the proposed catchment were forced to choose Philiphaugh.</i>	Noted.

5 EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

5.1 In line with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was

provided by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the Proposal. Education Scotland's report is attached as **Appendix 3**

5.2 Issues raised and comments made in the Education Scotland Report with regards to the proposed closure of Hobkirk Primary School are set out below:

Education Scotland Comments	Council Responses
<i>Parents, children and staff who spoke with HM Inspectors were in agreement with the Council's proposal.</i>	Noted and agreed – this reflects the opinions shared with Council officers before and during the consultation process.
<i>The council has set out a reasonable case for the proposal to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School</i>	Noted and agreed.
<i>The proposal recognises the educational benefits of attending a small rural school and the learning experience offered. The proposal to amend the catchment area will increase the sustainability of Yarrow Primary School through increasing the school roll and provide a viable rural school option for families within the area. The school will remain a key part of the local Yarrow Valley community.</i>	Noted and agreed.
<i>There will be improved opportunities for children currently attending Yarrow Primary to engage with a wider peer group, make new friends and participate in team sports/recreational events. The provision of transport from Yarrowford to Yarrow Primary School will ensure that children in the Yarrow Valley have parity of access to learning and opportunities in their communities.</i>	Noted and agreed.
<i>All parents, staff and children from Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School who met with HM Inspectors were supportive of the proposal. Staff and parents at Yarrow Primary School welcomed the longer term sustainability for the school</i>	Noted and agreed.
<i>Any concerns about the potential impact of the loss of the school on the community were allayed. They thought engagement with a wider peer group at age and stage would improve their children's learning. The provision of transport from Yarrowford to Yarrow Primary School was seen as</i>	Noted and agreed.

<p><i>supportive to families. Children at Yarrow Primary School welcomed the potential for improved social interaction and a chance to make new friends. However, they were concerned that the addition of new children might disrupt the harmonious atmosphere they currently experienced. Parents and staff at Philiphaugh Community School did not see the proposal having any detriment to their school as the numbers involved would be minimal.</i></p>	
<p><i>Scottish Borders Council's proposal to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School has clear educational benefits.</i></p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p>
<p><i>Children will benefit from attending a small rural school and the positive learning experience offered. Increasing the Yarrow Primary School roll has the potential to provide a more viable and sustainable rural school option for families within the area. Children in the Yarrow Valley will have parity of access to learning and opportunities. The school will remain a key part of the local Yarrow Valley community.</i></p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p>

INACCURACY IN THE PROPOSAL PAPER

6. There have been no material errors, omissions or inaccuracies identified in the Proposal Paper or any of the other documentation that has been published as part of the Consultation process.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- 7.1 Scottish Borders Council thanks all the members of the Community for their time and participation in this consultation process and invites them to make any further comments, observations or suggestions regarding the Proposal prior to the final decision being made by Councillors on 21 January 2020.

7.2 Please take this opportunity to have your say and share your comments by 21 November 2019 at:-

Selkirk Catchment Consultation
Children and Young People's Services
Scottish Borders Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA; or

Email Address: schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk

Consultation Site:
<https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/selkirkcatchment>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Easingwood', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stuart Easingwood

Interim Service Director, Children & Young People's Services

24 October 2019



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES
PROPOSAL PAPER**

**STATUTORY CONSULTATION IN RESPECT OF PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS TO THE CATCHMENT AREAS OF YARROW
PRIMARY SCHOOL, YARROW AND PHILIPHAUGH COMMUNITY
SCHOOL, SELKIRK**

CONSULTATION PERIOD:

10 MAY 2019 to 25 JUNE 2019

PUBLIC MEETINGS :

PHILIPHAUGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL
SELKIRK
ON 30 MAY AT 5.30PM

YARROW PRIMARY SCHOOL
YARROW BY SELKIRK
ON 30 MAY AT 7.30 PM

This Consultation Proposal Document has been prepared by Scottish Borders Council Children and Young People's Services in terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended

1. THE PROPOSALS

Scottish Borders Council (the Council) is seeking your comments on proposals to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School.

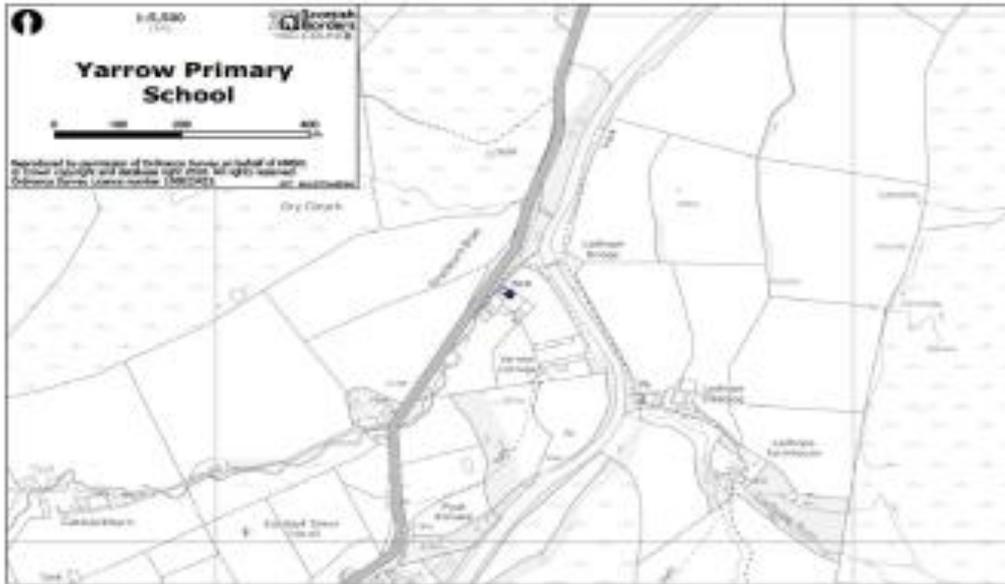
2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROPOSALS

- 2.1 In February 2016 Scottish Border Council's Executive (Education) Committee agreed to commence a School Estate Review process regarding the current school estate provision and what it should aspire to look like across the Region. The Council undertook to engage with all stakeholders to obtain information and opinions regarding the current school estate and to seek views and ideas in respect of the vision of the future school estate.
- 2.2 The five strategic principles that were adopted when reviewing the school estate were:-
 - 2.2.1 Increased educational opportunities for all generations in the community;
 - 2.2.2 Improved outcomes for children and young people;
 - 2.2.3 Sustainability;
 - 2.2.4 Future proofing the school estate; and
 - 2.2.5 Affordability.
- 2.3 The Review included engagement with all schools that have roll under 50 pupils; seeking to work with the school and parents on ways to boost the roll and improve sustainability. As part of the School Estate Review engagement, Council officers have met with parents of Yarrow pupils, who indicated that they had some concerns regarding the declining school roll and indicated that they wished to work with the Council with attempts to increase the roll and improve the sustainability of their school. One of the options discussed was whether there was potential to extend the Yarrow catchment zone to increase pupil numbers.

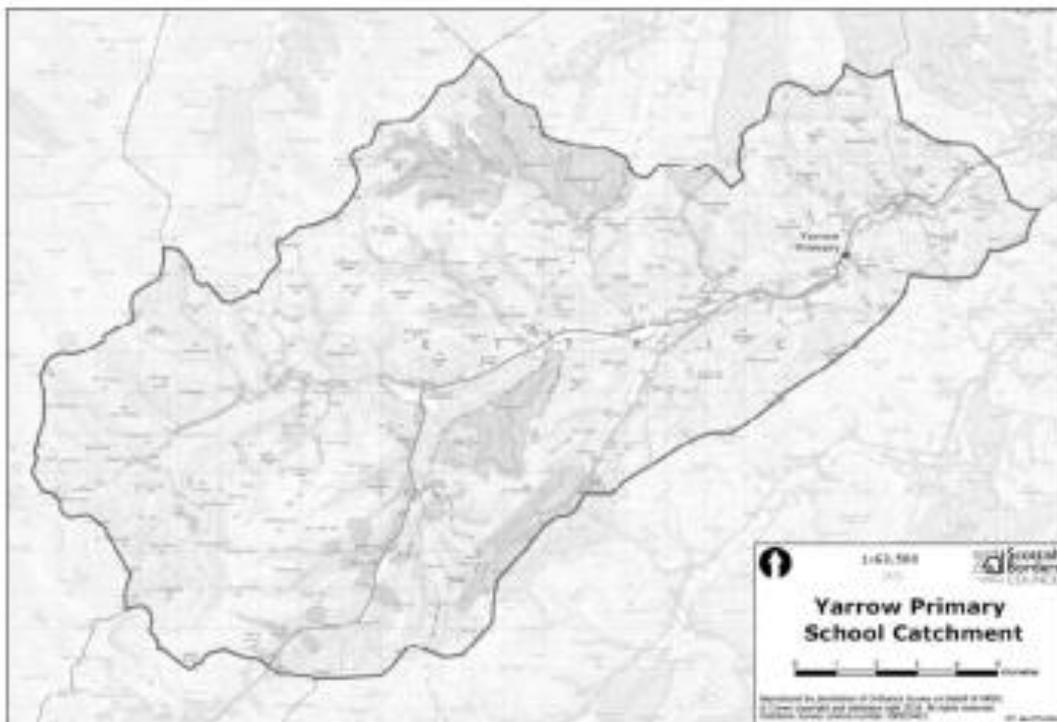
3. YARROW PRIMARY SCHOOL

- 3.1 Yarrow Primary School is a non-denominational primary school in the Yarrow valley in the Scottish Borders and is within Selkirk High School's catchment zone. The current catchment zones for Selkirk High School cluster schools are shown in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Yarrow Primary School is classified by the Scottish Government to be a Remote Rural School in accordance with its Rural Schools List¹. Yarrow Primary School's location is shown below:-

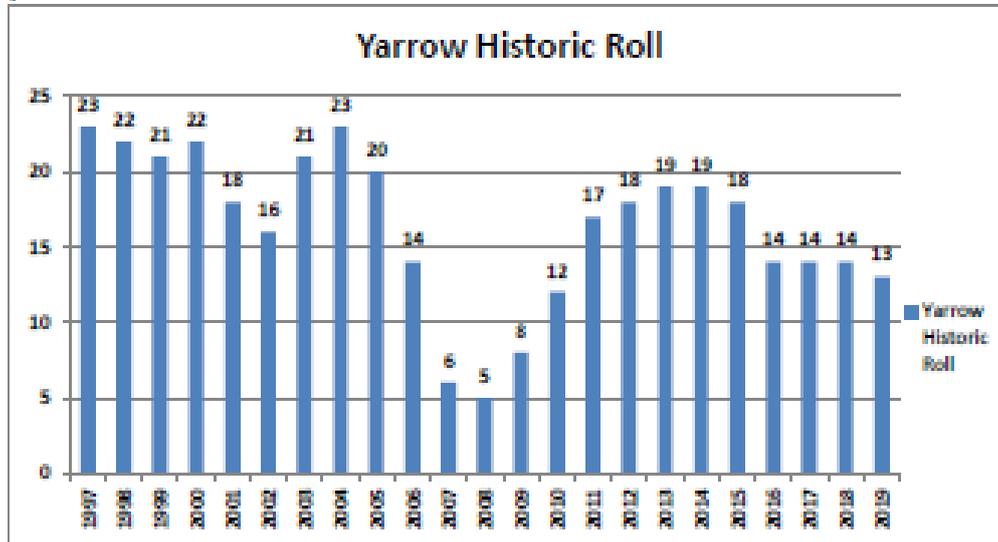
¹ [Scottish Government's Rural School List May 2017](#)



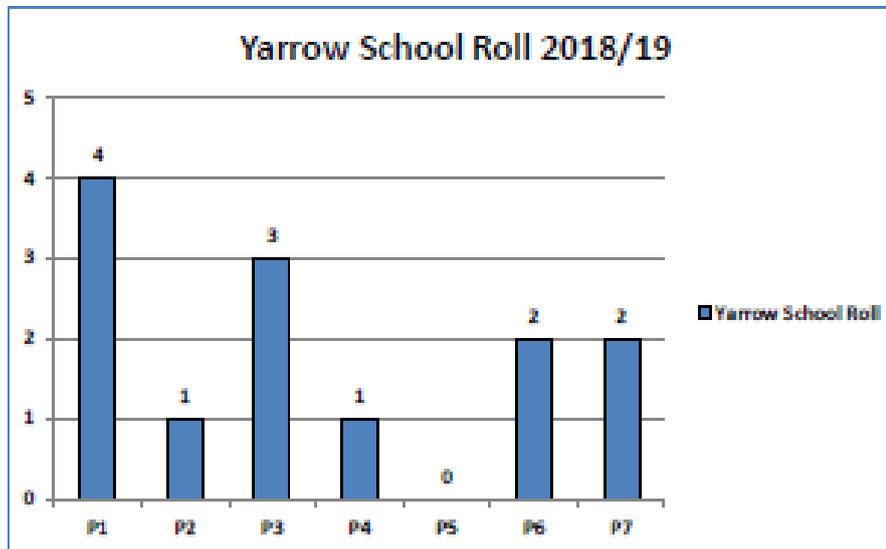
3.3 Yarrow's catchment is shown here:



3.4 The roll has fluctuated over the years, reflecting both changes in demographics and parental choice:-



3.5 The school has capacity for 50 pupils. There are currently 13 children attending the school (this includes 2 children attending through placement requests). There are no children currently enrolled to enter into P1 at the school in August 2019. It is currently projected that the school roll will drop to 11 pupils for the 2019/20 session



- 3.6 Council figures indicate that there are currently 11 primary aged pupils living within the catchment for Yarrow Primary School. Based on the Council's current records there is currently only one pre-school aged child within the catchment area. Current projections for pupil numbers indicate that the school roll is not projected to grow.

4 PHILIPHAUGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL

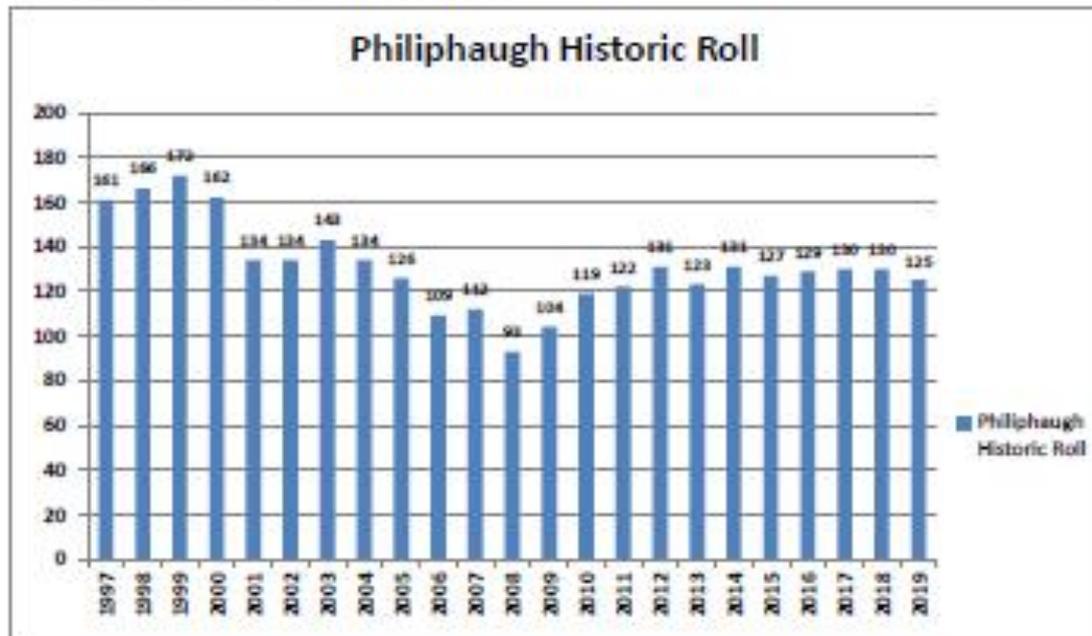
- 4.1 Philiphaugh Community School is a non-denominational primary school located in Selkirk. The school's location is shown here:



4.3 The school's catchment area is shown here:-



4.4 The school has capacity for 150 pupils. There are currently 125 pupils attending the school which equates to 83% occupancy.



5 REASONS FOR THE PROPOSALS

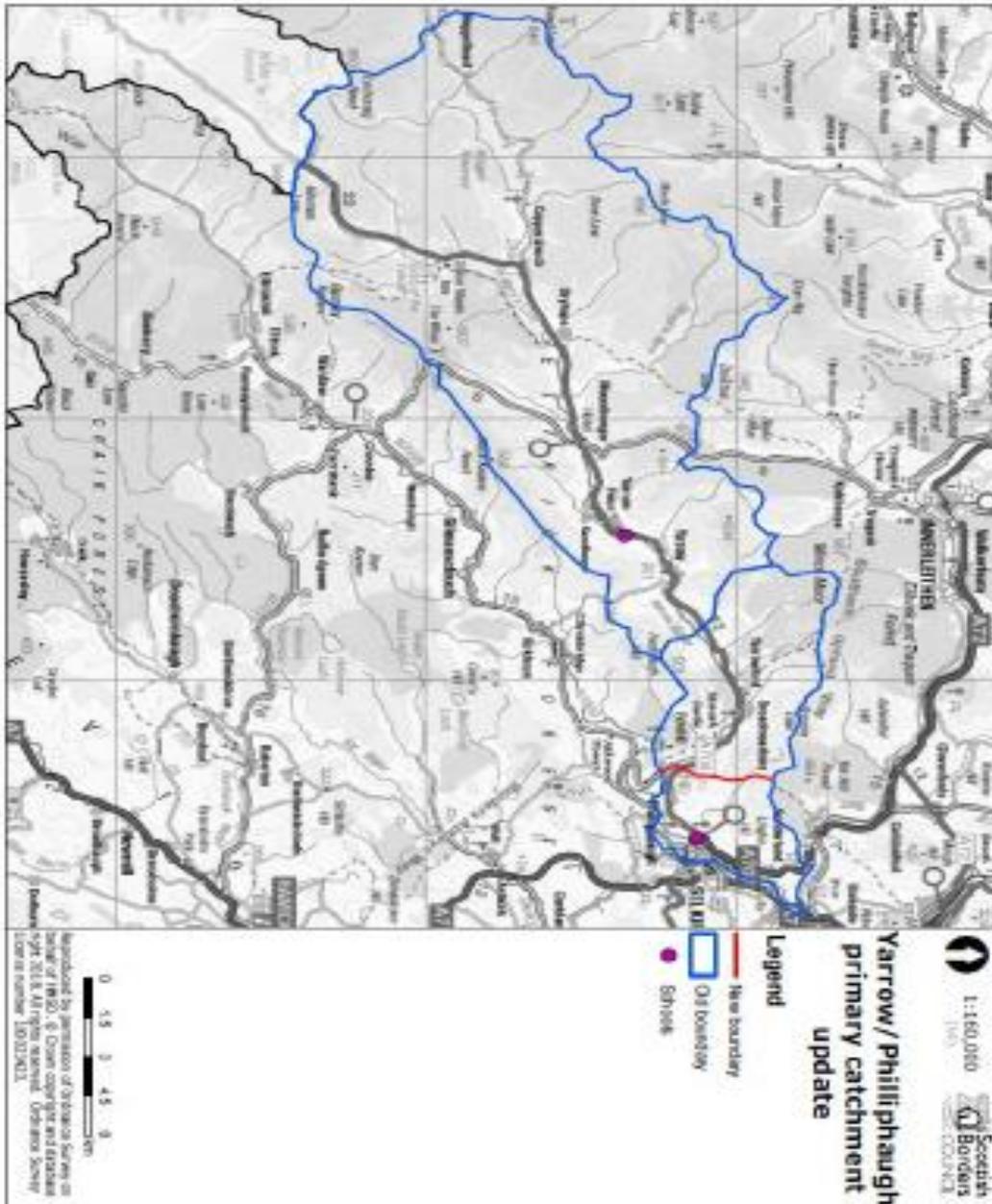
- 5.1. The Council wishes to consult with parents, pupils, staff and the community on the proposal to amend the current catchment areas for Yarrow Primary School and Philpfaugh Community School. The proposal seeks to increase the size of the Yarrow catchment zone to include the Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area.
- 5.2 There are a number of reasons why the Council wishes to consult on this proposal:-
 - 5.2.1 The Yarrow school roll has diminished significantly over recent years; operating at an average occupancy of 36.4% over the last 5 years, with a fall in the current school year to 26%. Current projections do not indicate growth in pupil numbers;
 - 5.2.2 Yarrow Primary School is included in the Scottish Government's List of Rural Schools of May 2017 as an Remote Rural School ². Taking cognisance of the important role that rural schools can play in rural communities, Council officers have worked with the school and the parents to try and boost the school roll and the sustainability of the school;
 - 5.2.3 One of the options that has been considered is a review of the catchment boundaries to establish whether amending the catchment areas would provide an opportunity to increase the school roll and improve the sustainability of the school. Officers reviewed the current catchment boundaries and have identified an area at Yarrowford and Broadmeadows that could be consulted upon to determine whether it should form part of the Yarrow catchment area or the Philpfaugh catchment area;
 - 5.2.4 An engagement session was held on 11 December 2018 at Yarrowford Village Hall, regarding catchment areas and boundaries. 12 members of the community attended, all of whom considered that Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area was part of the Yarrow valley community and that their preference would be for the Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area to form part of the Yarrow Primary School catchment area;
 - 5.2.5 Council records indicate that there are currently 8 pupils in the Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area attending Philpfaugh Community School and 2 pre-school aged children in the area. Officers are therefore seeking views from the community to establish whether there is support for the proposed re-alignment of the catchment area;
 - 5.2.6 It is not anticipated that the proposal to amend the catchment area will have a material impact on Philpfaugh Community School. The numbers in the area under consideration are small and the Philpfaugh roll has been at a consistent level for a number of years. If there is support for the proposals and Councillors decide to amend the catchment area, the children that currently attend Philpfaugh and their future siblings will have a choice whether to attend Yarrow or Philpfaugh. The Council will provide transport to both schools as required in line with the schools transport policy.

² [Scottish Government - Rural Schools in Scotland](#)

6 PROPOSALS

- 6.1 It is proposed that the catchment area is amended before at or around 3 July 2019 accordance with the plans below:-

Proposed New Yarrow Catchment Area



Proposed New Catchment Boundary



- 6.2 It is proposed that following the consultation (if the decision is made to amend the catchment areas) that school transport will be provided to and from school in line the Council's school transport policy.
- 6.3 It is also proposed that the children currently attending Philliphaugh Community School, and future siblings, can continue to attend Philliphaugh if they wish, with transport being provided by the Council.
- 6.4 It is Council policy to, as far as possible, support parental choice regarding school choice and placement requests will continue to be considered on the current basis.

7 EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR THE PUPILS

- 7.1 Council officers have been considering options to increase Yarrow Primary School's roll. The roll has declined significantly in recent years and based on the current catchment area is not projected to grow in the next 5 years.
- 7.2 The importance of rural schools in the community is recognised by the Council and the possible educational benefits of attending a school setting within a community have been identified:
 - 7.2.1 A school can play an important role in the community and provide opportunities for members of the community to become involved in learning. Closer ties to the community can provide specific learning opportunities and experiences which can enhance the sense of community across the generations.
 - 7.2.2 Students at small schools may be engaged in their school community, leading to a sense of personal responsibility for the community. Pupils may have greater

exposure to friends across a wider age range, which can assist with social skills and development

- 7.2.3 Students at smaller schools can develop strong relationships with their peers and their teachers. This can increase confidence and reduce the fear of making mistakes
- 7.2.4 The nature of composite classes can encourage pupils to work together across the age ranges and abilities which can have a positive impact on all learners.
- 7.3 It is recognised that smaller schools can offer a different learning experience for some children compared to a larger school environment. However there are other points to consider which include :-
 - 7.3.1 Pupils attending a school with a small peer group may not be able to experience the variety of learning and teaching experiences and breadth of curriculum that could arise at a larger school with more pupils and staff.
 - 7.3.2 Opportunities for collaborative working with peers can be limited.
 - 7.3.3 A smaller roll and a smaller peer group may result in pupils requiring more support in the transition to secondary school.
 - 7.3.4 A small roll can restrict opportunities for team sports/recreational activities and the arts
- 7.4 All the points at section 7.3 above must be considered in the context of the active role that the local community plays in the school and the close ties that exist across the Selkirk cluster. Some of these factors can be overcome by:-
 - 7.4.1 Transporting the pupils to participate in activities in a neighbouring schools; however that in itself involves time out of school travelling there and back; and
 - 7.4.2 Providing the appropriate level of support from experienced staff, with a close understanding of each child.

IMPACT ON STAFF

- 7.5 The impact of the proposal on staff is not considered likely to be significant; however the proposed catchment area amendment could contribute to Yarrow having a more sustainable pupil roll which should assist with efforts to attract, support and retain effective teacher and staff levels.

IMPACT ON PUPILS AT OTHER SCHOOLS IN THE COUNCIL AREA

- 7.6 The proposal to amend the catchment area seeks to ensure that a small rural school option is retained for pupils in the Yarrow valley.

IMPACT UPON THE COMMUNITY

- 7.7 This proposal seeks to assist the rural community in the Yarrow valley in their efforts to make the primary school more sustainable. The area has experienced significant changes in the demographics over the years and these proposals seek to re-align the catchment area to increase the sustainability of the school and provide a viable rural school option for families within the area.

8. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

These proposals will assist in ensuring that children in the Yarrow valley can have parity of access to learning, opportunities and facilities in their communities. All children will have access to the same early years' experience, primary and secondary schools as those in their community which should assist with the transition throughout their learning journey.

9. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 9.1 The children being transported from the Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area to Philphaugh Community School are transported on the bus from the Yarrow valley into Selkirk for High School. It is not projected that there will be any savings from this contract if any pupils from this area decide to attend Yarrow Primary School as the same size of vehicle will continue to be required.
- 9.2 Based on the number of children currently in the area being consulted upon, it is estimated that one vehicle would be required to transport the children to Yarrow Primary School and that this would cost in the region of £15,000 per annum. This costing has been calculated in line with the Council's School Transport team and their detailed knowledge of the transport contract procurement process and market in the area.

10. SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS FOR THIS PROPOSAL PAPER

- 10.1 This Proposal Paper has been prepared by the Council's Children and Young People's Services in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended (2010 Act). The 2010 Act sets out a consultation procedure that a Local Authority must follow for certain proposals affecting schools in their area. The 2010 Act and its explanatory notes are available for reference at the following websites, respectively:

[Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#)

[Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010 - Explanatory Notes](#)

- 10.2 The proposal to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philphaugh Community School is deemed a relevant proposal in terms of the 2010 Act (the Proposals) and is therefore subject to the statutory consultation procedure specified in the 2010 Act.
- 10.3 The Proposal Paper will be available for inspection, free of charge, at:
- Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose,
 - Yarrow Primary School, Yarrow, Selkirk,
 - Philphaugh Community School, Selkirk
 - Selkirk Library, Ettrick Terrace, Selkirk

and published on the Scottish Borders Council website:

<https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/selkirkcatchment>

10.4 Copies of this Proposal Paper are available in English (and other languages upon request) from:

Yarrow and Philliphaugh School Catchment Consultation
Children and Young People's Services
Scottish Borders Council
Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA

Telephone: 01835 825080

E-mail: schools@scotborders.gov.uk

10.5 Formal notice of the Proposal and relevant Information will be given and be made available, free of charge, to the consultees listed as follows:

- the parents/carers of the children who attend an affected school;
- the Parent Council of an affected school;
- the parent/carers of any children likely to attend an affected school within two years of the date of the publication of the Proposal Paper;
- the pupils attending an affected school;
- the Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at an affected school;
- any Trade Union which is representative of the staff;
- Etrick & Yarrow Community Council and Selkirk Community Council;
- the community planning partnership (as defined in section 4(5) of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015) for the area where an affected school is situated or any other community planning partnership that the Education Authority considers relevant;
- the constituency Member of the Scottish Parliament;
- the constituency Member of Parliament;
- the List Members of the Scottish Parliament.

10.6 **Advertisement in Local Media**

Advertisements will be placed in the relevant local media the week beginning 13 May 2019, giving the dates for the consultation period and for the public meeting. Press releases were made on and around 10 May 2019, advertising the consultation in the local press and social media.

10.7 **Consultation Period**

The consultation for these Proposals will run from 10 May 2019 and will end on 25 June 2019. This period allows for the statutory minimum of six weeks, including at least thirty school days.

10.8 Public Meetings

Public meetings will be held, the details of which are set out below:

At 5.30pm on 30 May 2019
Philphaugh Community School
2 Lingle Road
Selkirk
TD7 5LT

and

At 7.30pm on 30 May 2019
Yarrow Primary School
Yarrow
By Selkirk
TD7 5NE

10.9 Format of Public Meeting

Anyone wishing to attend the public meeting is invited to do so. The meeting, which will be convened by Scottish Borders Council, will be addressed by an officer from Children and Young People's Services and other relevant parties.

The meetings will provide an opportunity to:

- Hear more about the Proposal
- Ask questions about the Proposal
- Have your views recorded so that they can be taken into account as part of the consultation process.

A note will be taken at the meeting of comments, questions and officer responses. These notes will be published on the Council website and a copy will be made available on request. These notes will be forwarded to Education Scotland, along with other submissions and comments received by the Council during the consultation process.

11 HAVE YOUR SAY – HOW YOU CAN RESPOND TO THE PROPOSALS

11.1 A consultation regarding a proposed change to your child's or your community's school is your chance to share your views. Your responses can really shape and influence future decisions; you can play your part by:

- Submitting a written or electronic response to the Council as outlined below;
- Attending one of the public meetings to ask questions; raise concerns/issues; make suggestions to be held on 30 May 2019:-
 - 5.30 pm at Philphaugh Community School; and
 - 7.30pm at Yarrow Primary School;
- Speaking to your local Councillors;
- Engaging with your school's Parent Council. The Parent Council can play a key role in engaging with the Council throughout the process;
- Make representations as part of your Community;
- Informing Scottish Borders Council if you think that this Proposal Paper has significant inaccuracies or omissions.

- 11.2. All Interested parties are invited to respond to the Proposal by making written or electronic submissions to:

Yarrow and Phillphaugh Catchment Consultation
Children and Young People's Services
Scottish Borders Council
Council Headquarters
Newtown St Boswells
Melrose
TD6 0SA
Or

Web Address: <https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/setkirkcatchment>

- 11.3. A response form is available from Children & Young People's Services, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA or online at <https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/setkirkcatchment>. A copy of the response form is attached as Appendix 2.
- 11.4. Use of the response form is not compulsory. If you wish to respond by letter or electronically, you are invited to state your relationship with the school – for example, "pupil", "parent", "carer", "relative", "former pupil", "teacher in school", "member of the community" etc. Responses from Parent Councils, staff and Pupil Councils are particularly welcome.
- 11.5. Those sending in a response, whether by letter or electronically, should note that their response will be open to public scrutiny and may be supplied to anyone making a reasonable request to see it. If they do not wish their response to be made publicly available, they should clearly write on the document: "I wish my response to be considered as confidential with access restricted to Councillors and Council Officers of Scottish Borders Council". Otherwise, it will be assumed that the person making the response agrees to it being made publicly available.
- 11.6. All written responses must be received by the last day of the consultation period, 25 June 2019.
- 11.7. Education Scotland has prepared guidance regarding School Consultations. This can be accessed at [Education Scotland's Guidance on School Consultations](#).

12. INVOLVEMENT OF EDUCATION SCOTLAND

A copy of this Proposal document will be sent to Education Scotland by the Council. Education Scotland will also receive a copy of any relevant written representations that are received by the Council from any person during the consultation period or, if Education Scotland agree, a summary of them. Education Scotland will further receive a summary of any oral representations made to the Council at the public meeting that will be held and, as available (and so far as otherwise practicable), a copy of any other relevant documentation. Education Scotland will then prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal not later than 3 weeks after the Council has sent them all representations and documents mentioned above. In some cases, it is possible for them to extend the 3 weeks with the agreement of the Authority. However, for the avoidance of doubt, the 3 week period will not start until after the consultation

period has ended. In preparing their report, Education Scotland may enter the affected school(s) and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there as they consider appropriate and may make such reasonable enquiries of such other people as they consider appropriate.

13. PREPARATION OF CONSULTATION REPORT

- 13.1 The Council will review the Proposal having regard to the Education Scotland report, the written representations that it has received and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting. It will then prepare a Consultation Report.
- 13.2 This Report will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be advertised in local newspapers. It will be available on the Council website and from Council Headquarters, the public library in Selkirk, as well as both primary schools, free of charge. Anyone who made written representations during the consultation period will also be informed about the report. The report will include a record of the total number of written representations made during the consultation period, a summary of the written representations, a summary of the oral representations made at the public meeting, the Authority's response to the Education Scotland Report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the Education Scotland Report and any other relevant information, including details of any alleged inaccuracies and how these have been handled.
- 13.3 The Consultation Report will be published and available for further consideration for a period of three weeks, before it is presented to Full Council at the next scheduled Council meeting.
- 13.4 No decision will be taken in regard to the Proposal or any changes put into effect by either the Council or the Council's Executive (Education) Committee until the statutory consultation process has been properly completed.

14. NOTE ON CORRECTIONS

If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in this Proposal Paper, either by Scottish Borders Council or any person, Scottish Borders Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or there has been an inaccuracy. It will then take appropriate action which may include the issue of a correction or the re-issuing of the Proposal Paper, or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period, if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and Education Scotland will be advised.

STUART EASINGWOOD
INTERIM SERVICE DIRECTOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

10 May 2019

This consultation is being conducted in accordance with the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as amended. The 2010 Act's principal purpose is to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other changes to schools. These consultation processes are expected to be robust, open, transparent and fair, and seen to be so. They are also expected to be consistent across Scotland.

APPENDIX 1 SELKIRK SCHOOLS CATCHMENT PLAN



APPENDIX 2

STATUTORY CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Children and Young People's Services
Statutory Consultation - Proposal Response Form



SCHOOL ESTATE CONSULTATION IN RELATION TO PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE CATCHMENT AREAS OF YARROW PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PHILIPHAUGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL, SELKIRK

Detail of the Proposal

Scottish Borders Council is seeking views on proposals to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School, with the aim of increasing Yarrow's school roll and seeking to improve the school's sustainability as an accessible rural school near Selkirk.

The proposed changes can be seen on the maps attached to this form:-

Introduction

1. What is your name?

2. What is your email address?

3. What is your postcode?

4. Please tick the most relevant box below to indicate which school(s) you are connected with

- Yarrow Primary School
- Philiphaugh Community School
- Kirkhope Primary School
- Knowepark Primary School
- St Joseph's RC Primary School
- Selkirk High School
- Other – please state in box below

5. Please tick the most relevant box below to indicate your interest in the in the School(s)

<i>Parent/carer</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Staff</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Pupil</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Relative of Pupil</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Parent Council Member</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Elected Member/MSP/MP</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Community Planning Partner</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Community Member</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Other</i>	

6. Do you agree with the proposal to amend the catchment areas for Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School?

Please select only one item

Agree

Disagree

Don't Know

Please state your reasons

7. Please provide us with your comments or alternative suggestions regarding the catchment areas for Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Primary School



CONFIDENTIALITY OF RESPONSE

Your response, but not your personal information, will form part of a report that is submitted to Education Scotland and will be available to the public. Do you wish your comments to be considered as confidential so they will only be seen by Elected Members and officers of Scottish Borders Council and Education Scotland?

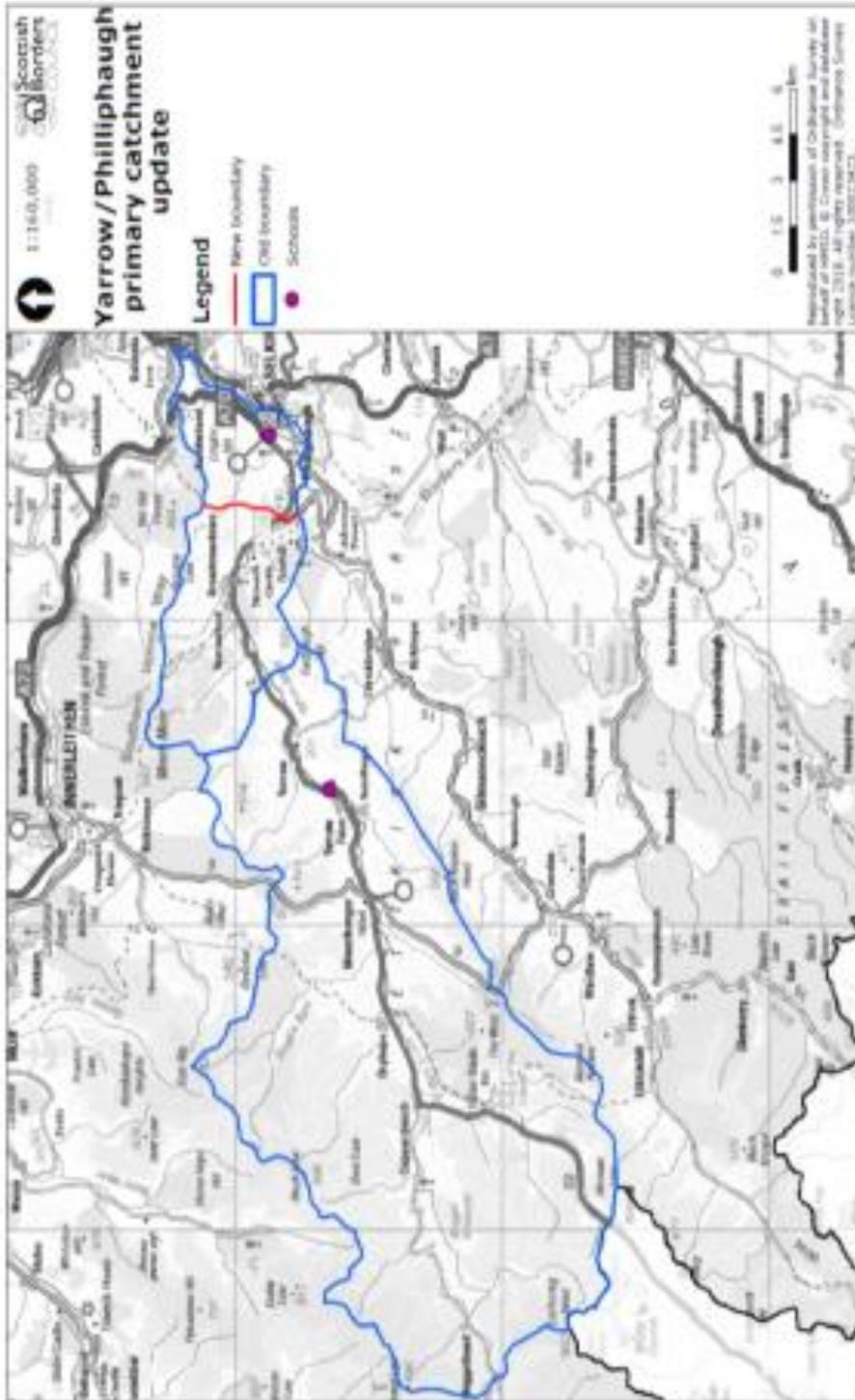
Yes No

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO GIVE US YOUR VIEWS

Your completed form can be handed into your local school or posted to: Yarrow and Philiphaugh School Consultation, Children and Young People's Services, Scottish Borders Council, Newtown St Boswells TD6 0SA. You can also give us your views online at - <https://scotborders.citizenspace.com/children-and-young-people/selkirkcatchment>

BY 25 JUNE 2019

If you have any queries, please email: schoolestates@scotborders.gov.uk



Appendix 2 – Minutes of Public Meeting

Minutes of Public Meeting Yarrow Primary School 30 May 2019 at 1930

Present from SBC

Lesley Munro - Lead Officer School Estates

Gillian Sellar – Solicitor, School Estates

Christian Robertson – Senior Lead Officer, Education

Michelle Hoppé – Acting Headteacher, Yarrow Primary School

Alison Brown – Classroom Assistant, Yarrow Primary School

Jenny Kieran – Teacher, Yarrow Primary School

Fiona Hewson – School Administrator

Elected Members

Elaine Thornton-Nicol

There were 10 members of the public in attendance

Introduction

Lesley Munro gave an overview of the background to the consultation and the proposal.

It was explained that under the School Estates Review Council officers were working with all schools with a roll under 50, seeking to improve sustainability. The roll at the school is currently 13 and projected to be 11 in the 2019/20 session. Officers have been keen to work with the school and parents to create a sustainability plan as there is currently only 1 composite class at the school and the roll is currently projected to remain at similar levels.

The parents at the school have been keen to investigate whether the catchment could be extended. The Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area has been identified as an area for consultation as many people in the valley consider that that area forms part of the Yarrow Valley community and lies more naturally within the Yarrow Primary School catchment area. There have been several opinions expressed that the lack of transport to Yarrow Primary School has been a barrier to several children who may have wished to attend the school.

Gillian Sellar explained the consultation process and that the legislation was designed to give a voice to pupils, parents, staff and the community and urged people to share opinions and suggestions and to ask questions. The process being followed is in line with the provisions of the legislation. Gillian explained that Education Scotland would visit the schools after the summer holidays and speak with pupils, parents and staff regarding the proposals. Education Scotland will consider the Educational Benefits of the proposal. Following receipt of Education

Scotland's report, Council officers will prepare a Consultation Report which will consider all the responses received during the consultation process. Responses will then be invited from the community on the Consultation Report for a minimum of 3 weeks after which a decision will be reached by the Councillors regarding the proposal.

Lesley Munro then described the proposal regarding the catchment and advised that if the decision is made to change the catchment area, that transport would then be provided to Yarrow Primary School.

Questions

Will the children currently attending Phillphaugh lose their funded transport to the school?

Lesley Munro confirmed that the children currently attending Phillphaugh and their younger siblings would still receive transport to Phillphaugh if the decision is taken to amend the catchment.

What are the cost implications of the additional transport?

Gillian Sellar advised that while it is uncertain how many children would chose to come to Yarrow from the Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area, it has been assumed that 1 vehicle would be required. Based on the current market prices it is estimated that this would cost c £15k pa.

Does the proposal mean that children in the Yarrowford and Broadmeadows will have the right to choose either school?

If the decision is made to amend the catchment area, Lesley Munro advised that the children currently attending Phillphaugh and their younger siblings could chose, to ensure that parents are not being asked to have their children at different primary schools. All children who are not yet at primary school would have Yarrow Primary School as their catchment school, although if any wanted to attend Phillphaugh they may be able to access a place on the school bus going into Selkirk for a small fee.

How many children are currently being transported to Phillphaugh?

Gillian Sellar advised that there are cumently 8 pupils in Yarrowford and Broadmeadows area attending Phillphaugh Community School.

Discussions

One parent stated that the lack of transport has been a barrier to some choosing to attend Yarrow Primary School. It is believed that more parents within Selkirk would chose the valley schools if transport was available. Lesley Munro and Christian Robertson noted this, advising that budgetary constraints are also an issue for the Council

There was discussion regarding the school strengths and the Yarrow parents seemed keen for the proposal to proceed as the school is an important part of the community, with high levels of community involvement and interest. The decline in the numbers of children in the valley and the change in demographics was discussed, with Christian Robertson advising that a one time there was 4 primary schools in the Yarrow Valley.

Early Learning and Childcare was discussed as some parents used Phillphaugh Community School. The links with Kirkhope Primary School was discussed, which also has an Early Learning and Childcare setting.

Lesley Munro thanked everyone for the time and for attending the meeting. She advised how positive the children had been about their school and the learning experiences and opportunities they enjoyed at their school. The children were all very happy with the school and very positive about being in a composite class together. They were positive about the transition to high school and obviously had strong relationships with each other and the staff. Lesley shared with the meeting that the children thought that 13 pupils was the perfect size for their school and they didn't want things to change too much as they were all happy with the status quo.

Appendix 3 – HMIE Report dated



Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by Education Scotland addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Scottish Borders Council to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School, Yarrow and Philiphaugh Community School, Selkirk.

August 2019

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education (HM Inspectors) in accordance with the terms of the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) ("the 2010 Act"). The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Scottish Borders Council's proposal to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School on or before 31 December 2019. Section 2 of the report sets out brief details of the consultation process. Section 3 of the report sets out HM Inspectors' consideration of the educational aspects of the proposal, including significant 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 this report and must contain an explanation of how, in finalising the proposal, it has reviewed the initial proposal, including a summary of points raised during the consultation process and the council's response to them. The council has to publish its final consultation report three weeks before it takes its final decision. Where a council is proposing to close a school, it needs to follow all statutory obligations set out in the 2010 Act, including notifying Ministers within six working days of making its final decision and explaining to consultees the opportunity they have to make representations to Ministers.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the schools; any other users; 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
- the educational benefits the council believes will result from implementation of the proposal, and the council's reasons for coming to these beliefs.

1.3 In preparing this report, HM Inspectors undertook the following activities:

- 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; and
- visits to the sites of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Scottish Borders Council undertook the consultation on its proposal(s) with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The formal consultation ran from 10 May 2019 to 25 June 2019. Copies of the proposal were made available electronically on the council website. An online response form was set up on the consultation website. The consultation was advertised in the local press. Public meetings were held at Philiphaugh Community School and Yarrow Primary School. Both meetings were held on 30 May 2019. No members of the public attended the public meeting at Philiphaugh Community School. Ten members of the public attended the public meeting at Yarrow Primary School. The majority were supportive of the proposal.

2.3 The council received 32 responses. Of these, 31 were in support of the proposal. The potential benefits were identified as ensuring the long term sustainability of Yarrow Primary School and improving social engagement opportunities for children.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Yarrow Primary School is a non-denominational primary school in the Yarrow Valley and is within Selkirk High School's catchment zone. It is classified by the Scottish Government as a remote rural school. Council figures indicate that there are currently 11 primary aged pupils living within the catchment for Yarrow Primary School. The current school roll has diminished significantly over time with the school now operating at 26% capacity. Future projections do not indicate a growth in pupil numbers. Philiphaugh Community School is a non-denominational primary school located in Selkirk. It has a capacity for 150 pupils. There are currently 125 pupils in attendance. This equates to 83% occupancy.

3.2 The council has set out a reasonable case for the proposal to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School. The proposal recognises the educational benefits of attending a small rural school and the learning experience offered. The proposal to amend the catchment area will increase the sustainability of Yarrow Primary School through increasing the school roll and provide a viable rural school option for families within the area. The school will remain a key part of the local Yarrow Valley community. There will be improved opportunities for children currently attending Yarrow Primary School to engage with a wider peer group, make new friends and participate in team sports/recreational events. The provision of transport from Yarrowford to Yarrow Primary School will ensure that children in the Yarrow Valley have parity of access to learning and opportunities in their communities.

3.3 All parents, staff and children from Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School who met with HM Inspectors were supportive of the proposal. Staff and parents at Yarrow Primary School welcomed the longer term sustainability for the school. Any concerns about the potential impact of the loss of the school on the community were allayed. They thought engagement with a wider peer group at age and stage would improve their children's learning. The provision of transport from Yarrowford to Yarrow Primary School was seen as supportive to families. Children at Yarrow Primary School welcomed the potential for improved social interaction and a chance to make new friends. However, they were concerned that the addition of new children might disrupt the harmonious atmosphere they currently experienced. Parents and staff at Philiphaugh Community School did not see the proposal having any detriment to their school as the numbers involved would be minimal.

4. Summary

Scottish Borders Council's proposal to amend the catchment areas of Yarrow Primary School and Philiphaugh Community School has clear educational benefits. Children will benefit from attending a small rural school and the positive learning experience offered. Increasing the Yarrow Primary School roll has the potential to provide a more viable and sustainable rural school option for families within the area. Children in the Yarrow Valley will have parity of access to learning and opportunities. The school will remain a key part of the local Yarrow Valley community.

**HM Inspectors
August 2019**