



PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CONSULTATION REPORT

**REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE CONSULTATION RELATING TO
THE PROPOSAL TO:**

- **Establish a new primary school on a preferred site at Bertha Park, Perth;**
- **Establish a catchment area for the new primary school;**
- **Amend the catchment areas of Ruthvenfield Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School;**
- **Establish the transfer arrangements for directly affected primary pupils to attend secondary school; and**
- **Establish interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School until the new primary school opens in August 2026.**

21 September 2022

This Consultation Report has been issued by Perth and Kinross Council in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

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PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

This report has been prepared following consultation on the Council's proposal to:

- establish a new primary school on a preferred site at Bertha Park, Perth with effect from August 2026;
- establish a catchment area for the new primary school;
- amend the catchment areas of Ruthvenfield Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School;
- establish the transfer arrangements for directly affected primary pupils to attend secondary school; and
- establish interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School until the new primary school opens in August 2026.

Having had regard (in particular) to:

- (a) Relevant written representations received by the Council (from any person) during the consultation period;
- (b) Oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meetings held on 31 May 2022 and 13 June 2022; and
- (c) Education Scotland's report on the proposal.

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a consultation report prepared in compliance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 on the above proposal.

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide a record of the total number of written responses made during the Statutory Consultation period;
- Provide a summary of the written responses;
- Provide a summary of oral representations made at the public meetings held on 31 May 2022 and 13 June 2022;
- Provide a statement of the Council's response to those written and oral representations;
- Provide the full text of Education Scotland's report and a statement of the Council's response to this report;
- State how the Council reviewed the above proposal following the representations received during the Statutory Consultation period and the report from Education Scotland; and
- Provide details of any omission from, or inaccuracy in, the [Proposal Paper](#) and state how the Council acted upon it.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 22 June 2016, the Council allocated funding for a new primary school within the Composite Capital Programme ([Report No. 16/277 refers](#)). This new primary school is to be built to accommodate pupil numbers from housebuilding within the strategic sites at the north and north west of Perth as it was anticipated that the catchment schools for these strategic sites would not be able to accommodate the projected pupil numbers.

There is a chronology of decisions leading to this report including reports and options appraisals presented to Lifelong Learning Committee in relation to Ruthvenfield Primary School, the School Estate Transformation Programme and the new primary school at Bertha Park. These reports can be read if anyone wishes fuller background information about the background to the decision that a new primary school is required and where that new primary school should ideally be located. These are as follows;

- August 2016 - 'Securing the Future of the School Estate' ([Report No. 16/347 refers](#))
 - November 2016 - "Securing the Future of the School Estate – Next Steps" ([Report 16/485 refers](#))
 - March 2019 – School Estate Transformation Programme ([Report No. 19/94 refers](#))
 - September 2019 - "School Estate Transformation Programme Strategic Sites North West/North Perth" ([Report No. 19/240 refers](#))
 - 22 January 2020 Lifelong Learning Committee ([Report No. 20/18 refers](#)).
 - 25 August 2021 Lifelong Learning Committee ([Report No. 21/136 refers](#)).
- 2.2 In the report considered by Lifelong Learning Committee on 25 August 2021, it was agreed that the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) commenced a statutory consultation in respect of the new catchment areas and associated changes as required by the Schools Consultation (Scotland) Act 2010.
- 2.3 The duties in undertaking a statutory consultation on a relevant school proposal are outlined in the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010 and the accompanying Statutory Guidance](#).
- 2.4 Lifelong Learning Committee reports and the Proposal Paper referred to above are available on the Council's website www.pkc.gov.uk.

3. CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The main considerations relating to the proposal are fully explained in the [Proposal Paper](#), and the main points are highlighted as follows:
- 3.2 The Council's Corporate Plan identifies the vision of "a confident and ambitious Perth & Kinross with a strong identity and clear outcomes that everyone works together to achieve. Our area will be vibrant and successful; a safe secure and healthy environment: and a place where people and communities are nurtured and supported'.

- 3.3 This strategic approach embraces the vision for our area, our communities and our people as outlined in the Corporate Plan. Our key service priorities support the delivery of our commitments in the Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement and Corporate Plan, helping Education and Children's Services to focus on the local outcomes that will achieve meaningful improvements for the area, our local communities and our citizens.
- 3.4 Councils have a statutory duty in terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across their entire area for the current school population and future pattern of demand.
- 3.5 Councils also have a statutory responsibility in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 to achieve best value. To achieve best value and optimum efficiency, the organisation of the school estate is therefore kept under regular review, including the need for school provision and other factors, such as altering catchment areas.
- 3.6 The [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#) provides a strong, accountable statutory consultation process that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals of major 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.
- 3.7 [The Education \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#) amends the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000 by adding in new duties to address inequality of outcome. These duties apply in different ways to both Scottish Ministers and Education Authorities. Where the Education Authority is making or implementing strategic decisions about school education, it is required to have due regard to the need to carry out its functions in a way which is designed to reduce inequalities of outcome. This is particularly directed in the Act towards pupils who experience those inequalities through socio-economic disadvantage, but there is also a power to extend the range of pupils who are covered by this duty.

4. REASON FOR FORMULATING THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 There is a 30 year masterplan for housebuilding at the strategic sites of Almond Valley, Bertha Park and Perth West. In the next 10 years, based on the current Housing Land Audit (HLA), it is anticipated that 2512 houses will be built. This is estimated to generate approximately 678 primary school pupils who will need to be accommodated in schools near to where they live. Existing catchment schools will not be able to accommodate projected pupil numbers from housebuilding without the provision of a new primary school and changes being made to their catchment areas.

5. SCHOOL INFORMATION

- 5.1 Ruthvenfield Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in Ruthvenfield on the outskirts of Perth. The school roll as at Census 2021 is 60 pupils.

The catchment area currently covers a widespread rural area and is bordered by the Perth By-pass from Broxden to Crieff Road, Huntingtower Castle, Inveralmond Industrial Estate, Almondbank and round to Lochty and over to Blackruthven and Newhouse Farm on the outskirts of Perth City. The current catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School sits within the major housebuilding development of Almond Valley.

In addition, a part of the Perth West development (the Auld Mart) currently forms part of Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area. A new housing development site named H319 in the Local Development Plan also forms part of Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment area and is in close proximity to Ruthvenfield Primary School. The catchment area borders the existing Perth City boundary adjacent to Tulloch Primary School's catchment area.

- 5.2 Pitcairn Primary School is a non-denominational school situated in Almondbank on the outskirts of Perth. The school roll as at Census 2021 is 92 pupils. The catchment area covers a rural area and includes the settlements of Lochty, Almondbank and Pitcairngreen. The catchment area is bordered by the primary school catchment areas of Luncarty, Logiealmond and Methven. The current catchment area includes part of the strategic development site of Bertha Park.
- 5.3 Luncarty Primary School is a non-denominational school situated approximately six miles North West of Perth, turning off the A9 at the Luncarty signpost. The school roll as at Census 2021 is 122 pupils. The school is situated in Marshall Road, which is a cul-de-sac. The school's delineated boundary extends to the River Tay in the East, from Ordie Cottage in a North Westerly line to Woodend Farm and South East to Bertha Park which falls within the strategic site for Bertha Park.
- 5.4 Tulloch Primary School is a non-denominational Perth City primary school situated in Gillespie Place, Perth. The school roll as at Census 2021 is 378 pupils. The catchment area covers the Hillyland area of Perth contained by the Crieff Road and Dunkeld Road and stretches to Inveralmond and to the boundary with Ruthvenfield.
- 5.5 As part of an [options appraisal developed](#), information was collated regarding the options considered and rejected, along with feedback received during the pre-consultation exercise.
- 5.6 The Council has engaged with stakeholders and considered other options prior to formulating its proposal.

6. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 6.1 A link to the [Proposal Paper](#) was issued by letter to those individuals and bodies listed under Distribution within the document. The Proposal Paper was also published on the Council's website: www.pkc.gov.uk
- 6.2 The Proposal Paper informed consultees that the consultation period would run from Monday 16 May 2022 until Wednesday 29 June 2022 – a period of at least 30 school days.

6.3 The proposal on which consultation took place was to:

- establish a new primary school on a preferred site at Bertha Park, Perth with effect from August 2026;
- establish a catchment area for the new primary school;
- amend the catchment areas of Ruthvenfield Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School;
- establish the transfer arrangements for directly affected primary pupils to attend secondary school; and
- establish interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School until the new primary school opens in August 2026.

6.4 The requirements for consulting on a relevant proposal relating to schools are set out in the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

- A Proposal Paper was published on Monday 16 May 2022. All statutory consultees were written to providing a link to the proposal paper and details of where and how to obtain a paper copy. A copy of this document was available free of charge to the consultees listed within the document.
- The Proposal Paper was published on the Perth and Kinross Council website and was available in paper copy upon request. .
- Two public meetings were held to discuss the proposal on Tuesday 31 May 2022 and Monday 13 June 2022.
- The Consultation period ended on Wednesday 29 June 2022.
- Education Scotland's involvement consisted of the options appraisal and proposal paper documents being sent to them, and visits to the sites of Luncarty, Pitcairn, Ruthvenfield and Tulloch Primary Schools, including discussion with relevant consultees. They also received a copy of all online and representations and the minutes of the public meetings. They then prepared a report on the educational aspects of the proposal. This is attached as Appendix 6.

6.5 The following schools are affected by the proposal:

- Luncarty Primary School
- Pitcairn Primary School
- Ruthvenfield Primary School
- Tulloch Primary School

6.6 In accordance with statutory requirements and good practice, the following persons were consulted:

- The parents of the pupils and children at the affected schools
- The parents of children expected to attend the affected schools within 2 years of the date of publication of this proposal document
- The Parent Council of the affected schools
- Directly affected pupils at the affected schools
- The teaching and ancillary staff at the affected schools
- The trade union and professional association representatives of the above staff
- The Community Council
- Relevant users of the affected schools

- Elected Members of Perth and Kinross Council
- The Constituency MSPs and List MSPs covering the Constituency
- The Constituency MP
- The Executive Director, Communities, Perth and Kinross Council
- Tayside Contracts
- LiveActive Leisure
- Education Scotland

- 6.7 The number of letters issued with details of the Proposal Paper was 848.
- 6.8 During the consultation period, representations were sought from interested parties, either in oral or written form or electronically. An online response form and generic email account was set up by the Council to receive representations and enquiries on the proposal.
- 6.9 This Consultation Report is the Council's response to the issues raised during the consultation period on the Proposal Paper.
- 6.10 This Consultation Report is to be published on the Council's website for a period of no less than three weeks prior to final consideration by Learning & Families Committee on 2 November 2022.

7. THE PUBLIC MEETINGS

- 7.1 A public meeting was held in Bertha Park High School on Tuesday 31 May 2022. Nine members of the public attended. A full note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 1 which details the questions and issues raised at the meeting.
- 7.2 A second public meeting was held in Bertha Park High School on Monday 13 June 2022. Two members of the public attended. A full note of the meeting is attached as Appendix 2 which details the questions and issues raised at the meeting.

8. RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION EXERCISE

- 8.1 In all, 10 online response forms were received. Nine responses agreed with the Council's proposal and one response disagreed with the Council's proposal. However four online responses were invalid as they failed to provide a required name, address or email address to validate the response. The six valid online responses agreed with the Council's proposal. One written representation was received which disagreed with the Council's proposal.

The details of the respondents are contained within the Summary of Consultation Responses, attached as Appendix 3.

- 8.2 In summary, the oral and written responses and questions can be grouped broadly as follows:
- The proposal developed is a sensible approach in adapting the catchment areas.

- Families with children already attending Ruthvenfield Primary School wish to ensure that younger siblings will be able to attend the same school as their sibling.
- The proposed catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School includes the community of which it is the heart of, rather than splitting it down the middle.
- The interim admission arrangements take a pragmatic approach of considering children with siblings which is appreciated.
- The addition of a new school at Bertha Park and the associated catchment review shows a good understanding of the various communities being created with the new house building as well as clear connections with the existing communities for their secondary education at Bertha Park High School.
- The proposals for a new primary school will support the continued development of the Bertha Park community and support more active travel to and from school for pupils. Improved cycle routes should be included to aid safer journeys for children to attend school.
- The management of both Bertha Park High School and the new primary school should be managed by one management team.
- The houses currently in the new catchment for Ruthvenfield Primary School (less those that are planned to be developed) should be considered to be brought into catchment earlier than 2026.
- If the catchment area serving Huntingtowerfield was to be changed to the new school at Bertha Park, pupils could not walk to school as they do now. This does not help active travel and encourages use of cars which would add to congestion and pollution. Huntingtowerfield should remain in the catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School.

8.3 In summary, 848 letters were issued inviting comments and participation in the consultation. Ten online submissions and one written response was received in respect of the consultation and full details of these is attached as Appendix 4. Eleven members of the public attended the two public meetings to give oral representations.

8.4 Specific consultation meetings took place with directly affected pupils at Ruthvenfield, Pitcairn, Luncarty and Tulloch Primary Schools and full details of these is attached as Appendix 5.

9. EDUCATION AUTHORITY RESPONSE TO WRITTEN AND ORAL REPRESENTATIONS

9.1 **Clarification was sought regarding the new Ruthvenfield catchment area not extending to the Auld Mart and Perth West and whether this is because there is the potential for a new school to be built in Perth West.**
Housebuilding is expected to expand in the Almond Valley area so there may be a requirement for another primary school to be built at some point in the future within the 30 year plan.

As things stand, if the Council does not take steps now to reduce the catchment area of Ruthvenfield Primary School and with housebuilding continuing, there is a finite number of spaces within the school. Therefore, catchment children may not get into the school in the future and will have to be zoned to another school with space. This could mean parents may be left in a situation of not knowing where their child will go to school and those with siblings may not be able to enrol at the same school. The Council wants to avoid uncertainty for all parents and avoid the situation of siblings living in catchment not being able to attend the same school and this is reflected in the proposed catchment area to serve Ruthvenfield Primary School.

9.2 Clarification was sought regarding how many pupils the new school can accommodate.

The new primary school would have capacity for 434 pupils with 14 primary classrooms. The new school would not open initially with this number of pupils or classes. The Council will be modelling pupil numbers expected from August 2026. The Council closely monitors the Housing Land Audit for pupils from new housebuilding. Depending on how many pupils stay at their existing primary school and the number who choose to move to the new school when it opens, there could possibly be 1 or 2 classes on day one, or if all pupils move, there could possibly be 5 or 6 classes initially. The school will grow over time and the Council will be working to correlate pupil numbers in the year leading up to the new school opening. A number of children living in the strategic sites go to different schools currently, and the Council will be asking all parents in the new school catchment area of their enrolment intentions to allow class numbers and staffing to be planned for the new school opening. Registrations for the new school will begin in January 2026 for the school opening in August 2026.

9.3 Clarification was sought regarding what provision would be in place if there are any problems with recruitment for the new school and whether the children would remain in their existing school if staff could not be recruited.

The school registration process will commence in January 2026, this will give an indication of expected pupil numbers. The Council will also consider feedback from parents who will have been contacted to share their enrolment intentions and, during this period, the Council will also meet with Headteachers to assess their predicted pupil numbers. The Council has a Staffing Standard that will be applied and before the Council allocates school places the projected pupil numbers will determine what the required staffing will be as part of the annual staffing exercise. This is normal practice for planning the staffing requirements and managing vacancies for all schools for the new school session each year, and staff will be in place as required for the opening of the new school.

9.4 Clarification was sought regarding whether the school will open in August 2026 and when will building work start.

The Council has a process to follow and it is anticipated that building work would start in November 2024 and be completed in June 2026. The planning and design of the school will run concurrently with the statutory consultation. The Council will engage further with parents through the User Reference Group which will be established regarding design works, and it is expected that it will take 2 years to complete the design phase over the period October 2022 to October 2024.

9.5 It was queried if the nursery would be open in 2026.

The Council plans to open the nursery and the intensive support provision as part of the school, and all will open together in 2026.

9.6 Clarification was sought regarding projected pupil numbers for Ruthvenfield PS and Pitcairn PS and whether these would be breached.

The Council closely monitors pupil numbers during the school session. Ruthvenfield Primary School currently operates with 3 classes but has an additional classroom that could be used to accommodate a further class to accommodate additional catchment pupils. The approved capacity for Ruthvenfield Primary School is 91 pupils but this could be temporarily increased to 100 pupils, if necessary, to accommodate catchment pupils. The Council would only revert to this on an exceptional basis where catchment pupils could not be accommodated otherwise. Pitcairn Primary School does not have any unused classrooms and would potentially require temporary accommodation on site if capacity were to be breached before 2026. The pupils currently attending Pitcairn Primary School from Bertha Park would be in the proposed catchment for the new primary school and will have the option to move to the new primary school when it opens, or to remain at Pitcairn Primary School until the finish their primary education. The Council will undertake a detailed feasibility study of potential temporary accommodation which may be required, which may be at Pitcairn Primary School.

The Council has a duty to manage enrolments into Pitcairn Primary School and Ruthvenfield Primary School as it does for all schools, to ensure that there is space for catchment children, wherever possible, and to accommodate any increase in rolls without breaching physical capacity limits.

9.7 Clarification was sought regarding whether priority would always be given to existing and new catchment children to attend Ruthvenfield Primary School.

This would be the case until the new primary school is open and the new catchment areas are implemented. The Council's proposed interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School prioritise pupils living in the existing catchment area and then pupils living in the proposed new catchment area, and this will continue to be the case until August 2026.

9.8 A query was raised that If not enough children opted to go to the new primary school at Bertha Park, would temporary accommodation remain at Pitcairn Primary School.

No pupils would be forced to move school after they had commenced attending a particular school and the Council would honour these enrolments until the pupils left the school. If this resulted in a temporary increase in capacity and temporary accommodation, then this would remain in place until pupils had moved through the school and left or where the roll decreased, no longer requiring temporary accommodation.

9.9 Clarification was sought regarding whether there was a risk of a child not getting into Pitcairn Primary School between now until August 2026.

The Council will continue to manage enrolments until the new school is built and has a legal duty to ensure that there are enough school places for all children in Perth and Kinross. If it becomes necessary, temporary arrangements may need to be put into place for catchment children but this would not be a long term arrangement and only be in place for as long as it needed to be.

The Council's Admission Policy will continue to be applied and the proposed new arrangements would be operational from January 2026 for August 2026 enrolments.

9.10 Clarification was sought whether an older sibling can move from Pitcairn Primary School to the new primary school at Bertha Park.

This would absolutely be able to happen, and the Council recognises that moving forward, parents will start to consider this. The Council also recognises that everyone's circumstances are different and that this may depend on the individual pupil's class stage and friendship groups at the time of the new school opening, and it will be for parents to decide what they wish for their child. When the new primary school opens, pupils living in the catchment area for the new primary school may have been in another school for a number of years and choose to leave the school they started at to attend to the new primary school when it opens.

9.11 It was queried that if 150 homes are to be built in Ruthvenfield's catchment area, whether there will be space at Ruthvenfield Primary School to accommodate all potential children.

The Council uses the formula of 0.27 primary pupils per home to project future pupil numbers from housebuilding, but this can vary depending on the type and size of houses that are being built. The Council also monitors the build out rates agreed within the Housing Land Audit which sets out how many houses are to be built each year, as it will not be the case that all the houses will be built at the same time. Ruthvenfield Primary School is currently operating with 3 classes but can increase to 4 classes if required for catchment pupils to be accommodated. This could allow a maximum of 100 pupils in Ruthvenfield Primary School. Obviously, pupils will move through the school and leave, and it is important that the Council continues to manage the enrolments coming into Ruthvenfield Primary School to try to ensure that there will be space to accommodate all potential pupils living in the catchment area in the future.

9.12 Clarification was sought regarding whether any areas of the current Tulloch Primary School catchment area will become catchment for the new Primary School.

Double Dykes at Inveralmond is currently within the catchment area for Tulloch Primary School and is proposed to become part of the new Primary School catchment area.

9.13 Clarification was sought regarding whether the new Primary School would be the same size at Tulloch Primary School.

The new Primary School would have capacity for 434 pupils with 14 primary classrooms which is the same as Tulloch Primary School. Consideration has been given to the layout of the new Primary School and how to minimise noise within the open classroom layout. Similar consideration was given to the building of the new Riverside Primary School and will be applied to the building of the new Primary School in Bertha Park.

9.14 Clarification was sought regarding whether all the house building will go ahead.

Education and Children's Services must plan ahead based on the housebuilding that has been proposed and planned. The house building and build out rates will depend on the sales market position.

9.15 Clarification was sought regarding whether there is a risk that families living in Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment will want to go to the new Primary School when it opens for after school clubs and nursery, and will then move on to Bertha Park High School.

Perth and Kinross Council undertook a pre-consultation exercise where parents' views were gathered, and it was found that there was not a large number of Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment families who indicated that they wished their children to attend the new primary school. The feedback generally was that families who had children at Ruthvenfield Primary School wanted them to continue to attend Ruthvenfield Primary School. Perth and Kinross Council is aware that new schools can attract families from outwith the school's catchment area, but the number of outwith catchment pupils who would be able to attend will depend on how many classes and teachers there are in the school when the school opens. This will determine how many available places there would be for pupils from outwith the catchment area.

Parents have a legal right to apply to the school of their choice and the Council will continue to manage the pupil numbers during this time based on the Council's Admission Policy which is the case for all schools. Pupils living in the catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School and the new primary school are both within the catchment area for Bertha Park High School for secondary education.

9.16 A view was expressed that the houses currently in the new catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School should be considered to be brought into catchment early as it was not considered that it would lead to a significant volume of children that would cause an influx into the school and unlikely that they would all be eligible for the school at the same time.

The Council is proposing changes to the catchment areas of four primary schools and the timescale for all these changes is consistent with the opening of the new primary school. The Council has developed Interim Admission Arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School to give additional priority during the period until the new school opens to addresses which are proposed to become part of Ruthvenfield Primary School's catchment area in the future. It is considered that these interim arrangements are sufficient to ensure the management of admissions for the pupils from these areas during this period which are consistent with the Council's Admissions Policy for all schools.

It is acknowledged that a few parents may consider that this would guarantee placements in Ruthvenfield Primary School prior to the catchment area changing. However, the Council cannot guarantee placements for any pupils to attend any particular school. The Council's Admission Policy sets out that whilst the Council tries to provide enough places for all children in the catchment area to attend the catchment school, living within a catchment area does not guarantee a child a place at that school. The Council has set out what it considers is reasonable Interim Admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School for addresses which are proposed to become part of Ruthvenfield Primary School's catchment area in the future and for siblings should the catchment area be amended which are in line with the Council's Admission Policy.

- 9.17 **A view was expressed that it was hoped that both Bertha Park High School and the new primary school can be managed by one management team and not duplicated, offering a better value for money proposition with less duplicated roles.**

Staffing arrangements for the new primary school will be consistent with Perth & Kinross Council Staffing Standard for primary schools and other local agreements. Consultation will be undertaken with staff, Trade Unions and professional associations where appropriate on an implementation plan for staffing the new primary school.

- 9.18 **Clarification was sought regarding why the dates for the public consultation meetings included in letter sent to parents of Ruthvenfield Primary School had passed.**

Letters were sent by Royal Mail directly to all parents/carers of pupils attending Ruthvenfield Primary School, on 12 May 2022, prior to the consultation period starting on 16 May 2022. These were sent to the addresses held on the child's school record. These letters advised of the meeting dates of 31 May 2022 and 13 June 2022 and provided more than two weeks' notice for the first meeting and four weeks' notice of the 2nd meeting. The public meeting dates were also published on the Council Website on 16 May 2022.

- 9.19 **A view was expressed that pupils living in Huntingtowerfield who attend Ruthvenfield Primary School should not have their catchment area changed to the new primary school at Bertha Park as pupils couldn't walk to school as they do now so. This would encourage a greater use of cars and would add to congestion and pollution. Pupils from Huntingtowerfield should attend Ruthvenfield Primary School and then Bertha Park for secondary school when children are old enough to walk.**

No pupils currently in attendance at Ruthvenfield Primary School would be required to move schools to transfer to the new primary school when it opens. Pupils living in Huntingtowerfield who currently walk to Ruthvenfield Primary School will be able to continue to do so until they transfer to secondary school. If the proposal is agreed, future pupils from Huntingtowerfield who live more than 2 miles from the new primary school, or where there is no safe walking route for pupils accompanied by a responsible adult, would be provided with free home to school transport and would not require to be transported by parents' cars.

10. EDUCATION SCOTLAND REPORT

- 10.1 In accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, a report was produced by Education Scotland on the educational aspects of the proposal.
- 10.2 The purpose of the report is to provide an independent and impartial consideration of Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to establish a new primary school on the site of Bertha Park, Perth and associated matters relating to catchment areas, admission arrangements and transfer to secondary school arrangements.
- 10.3 Education Scotland visited Ruthvenfield, Pitcairn, Luncarty and Tulloch Primary Schools the week commencing 22 August 2022 to speak to relevant consultees.
- 10.4 The Education Scotland report is reproduced in full (Appendix 6).

10.5 The report supports the proposal and is summarised below:

- The council has set out clearly a number of educational benefits in its proposal paper. A new school has the potential to provide a high-quality learning environment. Stakeholders who spoke with HM Inspectors welcome the Council's commitment to designing a school which will allow spaces to be used flexibly. They are enthusiastic about the creation of different learning environments which could be used to encourage children to learn in different ways, such as through play-based, interdisciplinary and outdoor learning. Children are positive about the potential for the new school to offer a greater range of clubs and activities within their community. The new school is planned to include a nursery and Intensive Support Provision for children with complex additional needs and staff recognise the significant benefits these services will provide to children and families across the area. HM Inspectors agree that the proposed school has the potential to inspire and motivate children in their learning.
- Perth and Kinross Council recognise the potential adverse impact of a change of school to a child's wellbeing. Parents and children appreciate the Council, as part of the proposal, allowing children to remain at their existing school should they wish. Staff and children recognise that selecting a school could be difficult and that they and their families may need help to do this. A few senior leaders also identify that children changing schools in P7 may need enhanced primary to secondary transition support.
- The Council intends to establish a User Reference Group to contribute local information to support the design and development of the new school. This intended group would include staff from local schools, parents and members of the community. Should the proposal go ahead, the Council should consider how best to recruit for this group whilst the new catchment area is not yet established. They should also reflect on how children will be able to contribute their ideas for the development of the plans for the new school.
- Most of the parents who met with HM Inspectors want further information about the impact on their child's current school if a new school is built. Parents from Pitcairn Primary School and Ruthvenfield Primary School also seek clarity on the transition arrangements until the new school opens. They want to know if these schools will experience a short term increase to their school roll as additional families move into the area and if so, how the council plan to support this. A few parents of Ruthvenfield Primary School remain anxious about whether younger siblings will be offered a place at the school. The Council should continue to listen to these families and seek to address their concerns. Parents from Ruthvenfield Primary School are also worried that the proposals will lead to the school's catchment area being reduced. They are legitimately concerned that a reduction in the school roll may lead to the school being considered for closure again in the future. They seek further reassurance from the Council about how it intends to support the school to progress and thrive moving forward.
- Perth and Kinross Council has taken important steps to address the genuine concerns of parents about the school roll at Ruthvenfield Primary School. They have suggested an amendment to the school's admission arrangements until the new school opens.

This recognises the significant number of placing requests received by the school and the prioritisation of children moving into the new housing sites.

- HM Inspectors agree that the Council's proposal to build a new school at the Bertha Park site has clear educational benefits. A new school would provide a high-quality learning environment. The purpose-build design has the potential to offer flexible learning and social spaces. Stakeholders recognise the value of the new school to the local community, as well as the benefits of an additional nursery and Intensive Support Provision.
- Perth and Kinross Council should seek to support families through the transition to newly defined catchment areas. Parents value the option for their child to stay at their existing school should they wish. Stakeholders recognise this may not be an easy decision and children and families may need support through this process.
- A few parents reported to HM Inspectors that they did not find the consultation and supporting documents accessible or easy to understand.

10.6 Perth and Kinross Council's Response to Education Scotland's Report

The Council welcomes the report from Education Scotland and accepts its findings.

In response to the findings contained within the Education Scotland report, Perth and Kinross response is as follows:

10.6.1 The Council should consider how best to recruit for the User Reference Group whilst the new catchment area is not yet established. They should also reflect on how children will be able to contribute their ideas for the development of the plans for the new school.

The User Reference Group will be established with representation from the existing schools and communities serving the pupils and their families who live in the proposed new catchment area.

In respect of opportunities for children to contribute their ideas for the development of the plans for the new school, as part of preparing a strategic design brief for the new school, the Council has undertaken a pupil voice consultation. In order to learn lessons about Perth and Kinross Council's recent school designs, views from pupils at several new build primary schools were gathered. Focus groups of primary pupils at each of these schools were asked questions about their building, what they feel works well and what they feel could be improved in their learning environments so that these can be understood and considered as a part of developing a strategic direction for the design of the new primary school at Bertha Park. A pupil voice focus group will be formed with pupils from the directly affected schools which will form the catchment area for the new primary school to inform the ongoing design process and to capture the thoughts and ideas that pupils have for the new primary school.

10.6.2 Perth and Kinross Council should seek to support families through the transition to newly defined catchment areas.

If the proposals are approved, the Council will attend the affected schools following the Committee decision, offering initial meetings with parents to discuss the transition to the newly defined catchment areas and provide opportunities for individual parents to discuss any concerns or queries they may have.

As the opening of the new primary school approaches, the Council will be engaging with each individual family within the new catchment area to discuss and understand their views and potential plans for their children to either attend the new primary school or remain in their existing schools.

10.6.3 Most of the parents who met with HM Inspectors would value further information around the transition period and impact of the new school on existing provisions. Parents from Ruthvenfield Primary School also remain legitimately concerned about the long term future of their school. Moving forward, it is important that the Council continues to listen to these concerns.

The Council is committed to continuing to engage with, and listen to, the concerns of parents at Ruthvenfield Primary School. Following consideration of the proposal by Committee, officers will facilitate meetings with parents and staff to discuss the outcome and provide further information around the transition period and future admissions to the school and how these will be managed. This work will continue during the period leading up to the new primary school opening and beyond.

10.6.4 The Council should continue to consult and communicate effectively with all stakeholders to engage them fully in the future planning and design stages of the proposal.

The Council will continue to use a broad range of mechanisms for consulting and communicating with all stakeholders in the future planning and design stages. The Council has well established arrangements in place for projects such as these and will continue to build on the positive engagement opportunities which have been successful in similar school projects undertaken by the Council.

10.6.5 A few parents reported to HM Inspectors that they did not find the consultation and supporting documents accessible or easy to understand. The Council should seek to address this to ensure all stakeholders can fully engage in the process.

The Council is disappointed to note that a few parents advised that they did not find the consultation and supporting documents accessible. The Council published all documentation on its website as it is legally required to do. All parents were sent a letter by post which advised step by step how to access the documents online. In addition, the letter advised that anyone who experienced any difficulty could telephone or email the Council in order that a paper copy could be sent to them by post, or a copy emailed directly to them. The Council was not contacted by any parents advising they could not access the documents. It is noted that a few parents also advised that they did not find the documents easy to understand. This is regrettable and it is acknowledged that much of the required content of these documents is determined by the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010. The format of the documentation has been in use since 2010 for all statutory consultations relating to relevant school proposals and the Council will seek to review and amend future documentation to simplify this, where possible.

11. ALLEGED OMISSIONS OR INACCURACIES

11.1 Section (10) (3) of the 2010 Act also places a requirement on the Council to provide details of any inaccuracy or omission within the Proposal Paper which has either been identified by the Council or raised by consultees.

This section of the 2010 Act also requires the Council to provide a statement on the action taken in respect of the inaccuracy or omission, or, if no action was taken, to state that fact and why.

- 11.2 In the course of the consultation exercise, there were no areas identified by respondents as being inaccurate or omitted from the Proposal Paper during the consultation period.

12. COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 9(1) OF THE SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010

- 12.1 Section 9(1) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 states that: After the Education Authority has received Education Scotland's report, the Authority is to review the relevant proposal having regard (in particular) to:
- (i) written representations received by the Authority (from any person) during the consultation period;
 - (ii) oral representations made to it (by any person) at the public meetings; and
 - (iii) Education Scotland's report.
- 12.2 Following receipt of the Education Scotland report, six online representations, one written representations and oral representations made at the two public meetings held during the consultation period, officers reviewed the proposals.
- 12.3 The feedback from the consultation was considered by officers where all the questions and comments raised were considered in detail. This ensured that the Council met the requirements to review the proposal under section 9(1) and 13(5) of the 2010 Act.
- 12.4 Officers of the Education Authority have listened carefully to the points made at the public meeting and have considered equally carefully the Education Scotland report and the online representations. The proposal was reviewed to consider whether any of the representations led the Council to reconsider other options as being reasonable alternatives to the proposal.
- 12.5 None of the representations led officers to conclude that there were any other reasonable alternatives to the proposal, nor that the proposal should be reconsidered.
- 12.6 The educational benefits were reviewed in respect of the Education Scotland report and representations made.
- 12.7 There were no factors included in the Education Scotland report or representations made requiring any aspect of the educational benefits to be reconsidered.
- 12.8 Having reviewed the Education Scotland report and feedback from consultees, officers concluded that the basis of the original proposal continues to be the most appropriate response to establishing a new primary school, establishing a catchment area for the new primary school and the associated arrangements for interim admissions and transfer to secondary school for affected pupils.

- 12.9 It is considered that the proposal sets out a clearly defined catchment area to serve the new primary school, makes appropriate adjustments to the existing school catchment areas serving Ruthvenfield, Pitcairn, Luncarty and Tulloch Primary Schools. The proposal also provides appropriate interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School until the new primary school opens, and provides clarity on the transfer arrangements for directly affected pupils to attend secondary school.

13. LEGAL ISSUES

- 13.1 The Council has complied in full with the requirements of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 throughout this statutory consultation.
- 13.2 The Council is mindful of its duties in respect of equality and the Equality Impact Assessment did not identify that any parent, child or young person would be treated less favourably as a result of this proposal. The new primary school will comply with the Council's Accessibility Strategy and, therefore, would positively promote equal opportunities for any child who has a disability.

In terms of Socio Economic Impact, the assessment identified that having a new school located in the community of Bertha Park means that it is more accessible for those who may be economically disadvantaged.

- 13.3 Under the terms of the Schools (Scotland) (Consultation) Act 2010, it is a legal requirement that the Council should not reach any formal decision without waiting until a period of three weeks starting on the day on which this Consultation Report is published in electronic and printed form has expired.
- 13.4 As it is the intention that this Consultation Report should be published, both electronically and in written form, if required, on 26 September 2022, this meets the statutory requirement to publish this report for more than three weeks before consideration of the proposal by Learning & Families Committee on 2 November 2022.

14. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 Staffing arrangements for the new primary school will be consistent with Perth & Kinross Council Staffing Standard for primary schools and other local agreements. Consultation will be undertaken with staff, Trade Unions and professional associations where appropriate on an implementation plan for staffing the new primary school.

15. CONCLUSION

- 15.1 The Council now has 4 broad options to consider, namely:
- (a) adopt the proposal;
 - (b) withdraw the proposal;
 - (c) amend the proposal in some way which allows the proposal to proceed; or
 - (d) amend the proposal significantly and undertake a further consultation exercise on a new proposal.

- 15.2 Education Scotland has identified that the proposal to build a new school at the Bertha Park site has clear educational benefits. A new school has the potential to provide a high-quality learning environment. The purpose-build design has the potential to offer flexible learning and social spaces. Stakeholders recognise the value of the new school to the local community, as well as the benefits of an additional nursery and Intensive Support Provision.
- 15.3 If the Council adopts the proposal, it is understood that the educational benefits set out in the Proposal Paper would likely materialise.
- 15.4 The key points that have been highlighted during the consultation period are as follows:
- The report from Education Scotland acknowledges that the proposal has clear educational benefits for pupils. This includes the potential to provide a high-quality learning environment with purpose-build design which has the potential to offer flexible learning and social spaces. The value of the new school to the local community is recognised, as well as the benefits of an additional nursery and Intensive Support Provision.
 - The potential adverse impact of a change of school to a child's wellbeing has been recognised by the Council, and parents and children appreciate the Council allowing children to remain at their existing schools should they wish.
 - It has been acknowledged that the Council has been consulting and communicating effectively with stakeholders and should continue to engage them fully in the future planning and design stage, as well as continuing to support families through the process of transition to the new school and/or new catchment areas.
 - Feedback from stakeholders generally has been that the approach developed in determining the proposed catchment areas and interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School has been sensible and appropriate.
 - Stakeholders have considered the interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School as a pragmatic approach to considering children with siblings at the school and those who will reside within the proposed new catchment in determining the priorities for admission to the school. The addition of a new school at Bertha Park and the associated catchment review is considered sensible and shows a good understanding of the various communities being created with the new house building as well as showing clear connections with the existing communities for their further secondary education at Bertha Park High School.
 - The Council's proposals have generally been supported by those who participated in the consultation, and the majority of those consulted have raised no issues or opposition to the proposal.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 On the basis of the feedback received and taking account of the educational and social benefits of the proposal, it is recommended that the Council approves:

- the establishment of a new primary school on a preferred site at Bertha Park, Perth with effect from August 2026;
- the established catchment area for the new primary school as proposed;
- the amendment of the catchment areas of Ruthvenfield Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School as proposed;
- the transfer arrangements for directly affected primary pupils to attend secondary school as proposed; and
- the interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School until the new primary school opens in August 2026 as proposed.

Sheena Devlin
Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)
21 September 2022



Education & Children's Services

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Statutory Consultation Public Meeting

Minute of meeting held on Tuesday 31 May 2022
at 7:00p.m. in Bertha Park High School

Present:

Councillor John Rebbeck	Convener, Learning & Families Committee
Sheena Devlin	Executive Director (Education & Children's Services)
Karen Robertson	Service Manager – Business Services
Evelyn Gilruth	Team Leader – Resource Management

Present:

Gill Innes – Minutes	Perth and Kinross Council
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9 members of the public

Welcome and Introductions

Karen Robertson opened the meeting and welcomed the members of public in attendance to the Statutory Consultation Public Meeting. Karen Robertson introduced herself and the panel to the members of the public and thanked them for attending.

Format of meeting

Karen Robertson then explained the format the meeting would follow.

The Proposal

Karen Robertson explained the consultation proposal to the attendees. The Council proposes to:

- Establish a new primary school on a preferred site at Bertha Park, Perth;
- Establish a catchment area for the new primary school;
- Amend the catchment areas of Ruthvenfield Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School;
- Establish the transfer arrangements for directly affected primary pupils to attend secondary school; and
- Establish interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School until the new primary school opens in August 2026.

Presentation

Karen Robertson gave a [presentation](#) explaining the proposal in further detail and explained the background to the proposal and the reasons a new primary school is required. This proposal relates to the provision of a new, additional primary school in Perth and Kinross. The presentation outlined the current arrangements and the proposed catchment area for the new school. It was explained that the proposed timeline for the new primary school opening was August 2026. The presentation outlined the proposed interim admission arrangements and anticipated educational benefits.

Karen Robertson then went on to explain the statutory consultation process including the legal framework, consideration by Learning & Families Committee, the statutory consultation period and the different ways in which representations from interested parties could be made as the first part of the consultation process. Karen Robertson then went on to explain the next stages of the process which includes the involvement of Education Scotland, the preparation and publication of the consultation report and the final decision made by the Learning & Families Committee, currently anticipated to be November 2022.

Karen Robertson then opened up the meeting to any questions, comments or observations from the floor.

Q. The new Ruthvenfield catchment area does not extend to the Auld Mart and Perth West, is this because there is the potential for a new school to be built in Perth West?

A. Karen Robertson advised that housebuilding is expected to expand in the Almond Valley area so there may be a requirement for another primary school to be built at some point in the future within the 30 year plan. As things stand, if the Council does not take steps now to reduce the catchment area of Ruthvenfield Primary School and with housebuilding continuing, there is a finite number of spaces within the school. Therefore, catchment children may not get into the school in the future and will have to be zoned to another school with space. This could mean parents may be left in a situation of not knowing where their child will go to school and those with siblings may not be able to enrol at the same school. The Council wants to avoid uncertainty for all parents and avoid the situation of siblings living in catchment not being able to attend the same school.

Q. How many pupils can the new school accommodate?

A. Karen Robertson advised that the new primary school would have capacity for 434 pupils with 14 primary classrooms. The new school would not open initially with this number of pupils or classes. The Council will be modelling pupil numbers expected on day one. The Council closely monitors the Housing Land Audit for pupils from new housebuilding, and depending on how many pupils stay at their existing primary school and the number who choose to move to the new school when it opens, there could possibly be 1 or 2 classes on day one, or if all pupils move, there could possibly be 5 or 6 classes.

The school will grow over time and the Council will be working on correlating pupil numbers in the year leading up to the new school opening. A number of children living in the strategic sites go to different schools currently, and the Council will be asking all parents in the new school catchment area of their enrolment intentions to allow class numbers and staffing to be planned for the new school opening. Registration for the new school will begin in January 2026 for the school opening in August 2026.

Q. What provision would be in place if there are any problems with recruitment for the new school? Will the children remain in their existing schools?

A. Karen Robertson advised that the school registration process will commence in January 2026, this will give an indication of expected pupil numbers.

The Council will also consider feedback from parents who will have been contacted to share their enrolment intentions and during this period we will also meet with Headteachers to assess their predicted pupil numbers. The Council has a Staffing Standard that will be applied and before the Council allocates school places the projected pupil numbers will determine what the required staffing will be as part of the annual staffing exercise. This is normal practice for planning the staffing requirements for all schools for the new school session each year and staff will be in place as required for the opening of the new school.

Q. If this new school is to open in August 2026, when will building work start?

A. Karen Robertson and Evelyn Gilruth jointly advised that the Council's Project Support Team have a process to follow, and it is anticipated that building work would start in November 2024 and complete in June 2026. The planning and design of the school will run concurrently with the statutory consultation. The Council will engage further with parents through the User Reference Group which will be established regarding design works, and it is expected that it will take 2 years to complete the design phase over the period October 2022 to October 2024.

Q. Will the nursery open in 2026?

A. Karen Robertson advised that the Council plans to open the nursery and the intensive support provision as part of the school, and all will open together.

Q. When will projected pupil numbers for Ruthvenfield PS and Pitcairn PS be breached?

A. Karen Robertson advised that the Council closely monitors pupil numbers during the school session. Ruthvenfield Primary School currently operates with 3 classes but has an additional classroom that could be used to accommodate a further class to accommodate additional catchment pupils. The approved capacity for Ruthvenfield Primary School is 91 pupils but this could be temporarily increased to 100 pupils, if necessary, to accommodate catchment pupils. The Council would only revert to this on an exceptional basis where catchment pupils could not be accommodated otherwise. Pitcairn Primary School does not have any unused classrooms and would potentially require temporary accommodation on site if capacity were to be breached before 2026. The pupils currently attending Pitcairn Primary School from Bertha Park would be in the proposed catchment for the new primary school. The Council is still to undertake a detailed feasibility study of potential temporary accommodation which may be required, and which may be at Pitcairn Primary School.

The Council has a duty to manage enrolments into Pitcairn Primary School and Ruthvenfield Primary School as it does for all schools, to ensure that there is space for catchment children, wherever possible, and to accommodate any increase in rolls without breaching physical capacity limits.

Q. Would priority always be given to existing and new catchment children?

A. Karen Robertson responded to confirm that this would be the case as the Council's proposed interim admission arrangements are to prioritise pupils living in the existing catchment area and then pupils living in the proposed new catchment area.

Q. If not enough children opted to go to the new primary school at Bertha Park, would temporary accommodation remain at Pitcairn Primary School?

A. Karen Robertson advised that no pupils would be forced to move school after they had commenced attending a particular school and the Council would honour these enrolments until the pupils left the school.

If this resulted in a temporary increase in capacity and temporary accommodation, then this would remain in place until pupils had moved through the school and left or where the roll decreased, no longer requiring temporary accommodation.

Q. Is there a risk for a child not getting into Pitcairn Primary School from now until August 2026?

A. Karen Robertson advised that the Council would continue to manage enrolments until the new school is built and has a legal duty to ensure that there are enough school places for all children in Perth and Kinross. If it becomes necessary, temporary arrangements may need to be put into place for catchment children but this would not be a long term arrangement and only be in place for as long as it needed to be. The Council's Admission Policy will continue to be applied and the proposed new arrangements would be operational from January 2026 for August 2026 enrolments.

Q. Can an older sibling move from Pitcairn Primary School to the new primary school at Bertha Park?

A. Karen Robertson responded that this would absolutely be able to happen and advised that the Council recognises that moving forward parents will start to consider this. The Council also recognises that everyone's circumstances are different and that this may depend on the individual pupil's class stage and friendship groups at the time of the new school opening, and it will be for parents to decide what they wish for their child. When the new primary school opens, pupils may have been in a school for a number of years and choose to leave the school they started at to go to the new primary school.

Councillor Rebbeck, Convener, Learning & Families Committee shared with the parents attending that it was nice to see them and noted that he was keen to get their views as there would be a lot of nuances over the next 4 years. Councillor Rebbeck advised the parents of the importance to feedback into this consultation, confirming that the final decision is made by Elected Members who would pay attention to what is said during the consultation.

Sheena Devlin, Executive Director (Education & Children's Services) added that it was not possible to predetermine the outcome of the consultation until we have gone through each stage, and that the process is understandably long with a multi-million pound investment.

Sheena Devlin noted that this was an exciting and good news story and that the Council have put together a proposal to get the best fit for as many pupils as possible.

Sheena Devlin encouraged parents to look at the PKC web page relating to the consultation and to share their views, advising that all information received will be provided to Elected Members for their consideration to allow them to make a full and informed decision.

Karen Robertson thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.



Education & Children's Services

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Statutory Consultation Public Meeting

Minute of meeting held on Monday 13 June 2022
at 7:00p.m. in Bertha Park High School

Present:

Councillor John Rebbeck
Sharon Johnston
Karen Robertson

Convener, Learning & Families Committee
Head of Education and Learning
Service Manager – Business Services

Present:

Jodie Watt – Minutes

Perth and Kinross Council

2 members of the public

Welcome and Introductions

Karen Robertson opened the meeting and welcomed the members of public in attendance to the Statutory Consultation Public Meeting. Karen Robertson introduced herself and the panel to the members of the public and thanked them for attending.

Format of meeting

Karen Robertson then explained the format the meeting would follow.

The proposal

Karen Robertson explained the consultation proposal to the attendees. The Council proposes to:

- Establish a new primary school on a preferred site at Bertha Park, Perth;
- Establish a catchment area for the new primary school;
- Amend the catchment areas of Ruthvenfield Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Luncarty Primary School and Tulloch Primary School;
- Establish the transfer arrangements for directly affected primary pupils to attend secondary school; and
- Establish interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School until the new primary school opens in August 2026.

Presentation

Karen Robertson gave a [presentation](#) explaining the proposal in further detail and explained the background to the proposal and the reasons a new primary school is required. This proposal relates to the provision of a new, additional primary school in Perth and Kinross.

The presentation outlined the current arrangements and the proposed catchment area for the new school. It was explained that the proposed timeline for the new primary school opening was August 2026. The presentation outlined the proposed interim admission arrangements and anticipated educational benefits.

Karen Robertson then went on to explain the statutory consultation process including the legal framework, consideration by Learning & Families Committee, the statutory consultation period and the different ways in which representations from interested parties could be made as the first part of the consultation process. Karen Robertson then explained the next stages of the process which includes the involvement of Education Scotland, the preparation and publication of the consultation report and the final decision made by the Learning & Families Committee, currently anticipated to be November 2022.

Karen Robertson then opened up the meeting to any questions, comments or observations from the floor.

Q. If 150 homes are to be built in Ruthvenfield's catchment area, will there be space at Ruthvenfield Primary School to accommodate all potential children?

A. Karen Robertson advised that the formula of 0.27 primary pupils per home is used to project future pupil numbers from housebuilding, but this can vary depending on the type and size of houses that are being built. The Council also monitors the build out rates agreed within the Housing Land Audit which sets out how many houses are to be built each year, as it will not be the case that all the houses will be built at the same time. Ruthvenfield Primary School is currently operating with 3 classes but can increase to 4 classes if required for catchment pupils to be accommodated. This could allow a maximum of 100 pupils in Ruthvenfield Primary School. Obviously, pupils will move through the school and leave, and it is important that the Council continues to manage the enrolments coming into Ruthvenfield Primary School to try to ensure that there will be space to accommodate all potential pupils living in the catchment area in the future.

Q. We are slightly unclear of the current catchment area of Ruthvenfield Primary School.

A. Karen Robertson explained the catchment area of Ruthvenfield Primary School using a map from the PowerPoint presentation.

Q. Will any areas of the current Tulloch Primary School catchment area become catchment for the new Primary School?

A. Karen Robertson advised that Double Dykes is currently within Tulloch Primary School's catchment area and is proposed to become part of the new Primary School catchment area. Karen Robertson explained this using a map from the PowerPoint presentation.

Q. Will the new Primary School be the same size as Tulloch Primary School?

A. Karen Robertson advised that the new Primary School would have capacity for 434 pupils with 14 primary classrooms. The new school would not open initially with this number of pupils or classes. The Council will be modelling pupil numbers expected on day one. The Council closely monitors the Housing Land Audit for pupils from new housebuilding, and depending on how many pupils stay at their existing primary school and the number who choose to move to the new school when it opens, there could possibly be 1 or 2 classes on day one, or if all pupils move, there could possibly be 5 or 6 classes.

The school will grow over time and the Council will be working on correlating pupil numbers in the year leading up to the new school opening.

Sharon Johnston shared that consideration has been given to the layout of the new Primary School and how to minimise noise within the open classroom layout. Similar consideration was given to the building of the new Riverside Primary School and will be applied to the building of the new Primary School in Bertha Park.

Q. Will all the house building go ahead?

A. Councillor Rebbeck, Convener, Learning & Families Committee advised that as an Education Service we must plan ahead based on the housebuilding that has been proposed and planned. The house building will depend on the sales market position.

Q. Is there a risk that families living in Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment will want to go to the new Primary School when it opens for after school clubs and nursery, and will then move on to Bertha Park High School?

A. Karen Robertson advised that Perth and Kinross Council undertook a pre consultation exercise where parents' views were gathered, and it was found that there was not a large number of Ruthvenfield Primary School catchment families who indicated that they wished their children to attend the new Primary School. The feedback generally was that families who had children at Ruthvenfield Primary School wanted them to continue to attend Ruthvenfield Primary School. Perth and Kinross Council is aware that new schools can attract families from outwith the school's catchment area, but the number of outwith catchment pupils who would be able to attend will depend on how many classes and teachers there are in the school when the school opens. This will determine how many available places there would be for pupils from outwith the catchment area. Parents have a legal right to apply to the school of their choice and the Council will continue to manage the pupil numbers during this time based on the Council's Admission Policy which is the case for all schools.

There being no further questions or comments, Karen Robertson thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.



Perth & Kinross Council

Education and Children's Services

New Primary School at Bertha Park

Summary of Consultation Responses

The statutory consultation on the proposal to establish a new primary school and catchment area at Bertha Park commenced on Monday 16 May 2022 and closed on Wednesday 29 June 2022.

Details of the proposal document were issued to the list of consultees contained within the Proposal Paper. 848 letters were issued with a link to the proposal paper and details of where and how to obtain a paper copy. The Proposal Paper was also published on the Council website.

A specific email address was set up for representations and enquiries. This was in addition to the usual methods of submitting representations. An online response form was set up on the consultation webpage.

Online Response Forms

10 online response forms were received. 9 responses agreed with the Council's proposal and 1 disagreed with the Council's proposal. However 4 responses were invalid as they failed to provide a required name, address or email address to validate the response.

RESPONDENT GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	AGREE	DISAGREE
Parents	4	4	-
Pupils	1	1	-
Staff	-	-	-
Elected Members	-	-	-
Parent Councils	-	-	-
Community Members	-	-	-
Grandparents	-	-	-
Trade Unions	-	-	-
Other	1	1	-
Not disclosed (Invalid)	4	3	1
Total	10	9	1
Validated Total	6	6	-

Public Meetings

As part of the statutory consultation process, 2 public meetings were held on 31 May 2022 and 13 June 2022 at Bertha Park High School. The same presentation was given at each meeting.

Tuesday 31 May 2022 – Bertha Park High School

Attended by 9 members of the public.

The questions and comments were around:

- Ruthvenfield Primary School's proposed catchment area not including Auld Mart and Perth West and whether there was the potential for a new school to be built in Perth West in the future.
- The size of the new primary school.
- What provision would be made if there were problems recruiting staff for the new primary school.
- When building work will start for the new school opening in August 2026.
- If the nursery will also open in August 2026.
- When will Ruthvenfield Primary School and Pitcairn Primary School breach capacity.
- Whether priority will be given to existing and new catchment area pupils to attend Ruthvenfield Primary School.
- Whether temporary accommodation would remain at Pitcairn Primary School if pupils did not opt to move to the new primary school.
- Whether there was a risk that pupils will not be able to attend Pitcairn Primary School before the new primary school opens.
- Whether older siblings could move from Pitcairn Primary School to the new primary school when it opens.

Monday 13 June 2022 – Bertha Park High School

Attended by 2 members of the public.

The questions and comments were around:

- The planned housebuilding in Ruthvenfield Primary School's catchment area and whether the school would have capacity for all potential pupils.
- The current catchment area of Ruthvenfield Primary School.
- Which areas of Tulloch Primary School's current catchment area would become catchment for the new primary school.
- Whether the new primary school will be the same size as Tulloch Primary School.
- Whether all planned housebuilding will go ahead.
- Whether families living in Ruthvenfield Primary School's catchment area may choose to attend the new primary school to access nursery and out of school provision.

Written Representations

During the consultation period between 16 May 2022 and 29 June 2022, representations were invited from statutory consultees and interested parties. 1 written response was received in total:

RESPONDENT GROUP	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	AGREE	DISAGREE
Grandparents	1		1

The written representation stated they did not agree with the proposals.

The comments were around:

- Why would the catchment area serving Huntingtowerfield be changed to the new school at Bertha Park.

- Pupils could not walk to school as they do now so if green active travel is to be considered then this does not help. More use of cars would add to congestion and pollution.
- Huntingtowerfield should remain in the catchment area for Ruthvenfield Primary School and then Bertha Park for secondary school when children are old enough to walk.
- Ruthvenfield Primary is a lovely rural school offering a good education to local children and is part of our community. Bertha Park would not give this.

Comments Received on Response Forms

The comments were around:

- The proposals developed is a sensible approach in adapting the catchment areas.
- Families with children already attending Ruthvenfield Primary School wish to ensure that younger siblings will be able to attend the same school as their sibling.
- It is important for families living in the village of Ruthvenfield who are currently within the catchment area for Tulloch Primary School, for their children to attend the same school in the community in which they live.
- The catchment review takes the sensible approach of building a catchment for Ruthvenfield Primary School that includes the community of which it is the heart rather than splitting it down the middle.
- The interim admission arrangements take the pragmatic approach of considering children with siblings at the school and who will reside within the new catchment in the priorities for placement are appreciated.
- The addition of a new school at Bertha Park and the associated catchment review is very sensible and shows a good understanding of the various communities being created with the new house building as well as showing clear connections with the existing communities for their further secondary education at Bertha Park High School.
- The proposals for a new primary school which will support the continued development of the Bertha Park community are welcomed and the catchment area changes seem to be reasonable and support more active travel to and from school for pupils.
- It is hoped that both Bertha Park High School and the new primary school can be managed by one management team and not duplicated, therefore, offering a better value for money proposition with less duplicated roles.
- The houses currently in the new catchment for Ruthvenfield Primary School (less those that are planned to be developed) should be considered to be brought into catchment early. Ruthvenmill View and The Orchard would not have a significant volume of children that would cause an influx into the school.
It would also be unlikely that they would all be eligible for the school at the same time if they were brought into catchment early.
- Improved cycle routes should be included around the school to aid safer journeys for children to both schools.

Pupil Consultation

Consultation with pupils in stages P1 - P3 was undertaken in the 4 directly affected primary schools. Pupils in P4 - P7 are not affected by the new primary school as these pupils will be at secondary school in August 2026 when the new primary school opens. The consultation took place on 21 and 22 June 2022.

Ruthvenfield Primary School

19 pupils from P1 to P3 were involved in the session. Comments were around where the individual children lived, whether they would have to move school and whether Ruthvenfield Primary School would be closed.

14 agreed with the proposal and 5 were against the proposal.

Pitcairn Primary School

41 pupils from P1 to P3 were involved in the sessions. Questions were around moving school, not wanting too many children in Pitcairn Primary School, and why the Council is moving catchment boundaries.

37 agreed with the proposal and 4 were against the proposal.

Luncarty Primary School

This was undertaken as a focus group session as the proposed changes have a lesser impact for Luncarty Primary School, with representatives from P1, P2 and P3. There were 15 pupils in this session. They discussed catchment areas, the new house building, and what any impact would be on them and their school.

12 agreed with the proposal and 3 were against the proposal.

Tulloch Primary School

This was undertaken as a focus group session as the proposed changes have a lesser impact for Tulloch Primary School, with representatives from P1, P2 and P3. There were 13 pupils in this session. They discussed catchment areas, the new house building, and what any impact would be on them and their school.

11 agreed with the proposal and 2 were against the proposal.

Online and Written Responses

I hope that both Bertha Park High School and the new primary school can be managed by ONE management team and not duplicated therefore offering a better value for money proposition with less duplicated roles.

I welcome the proposals for a new primary school which will support the continued development of the Bertha Park community and the catchment area changes seem to be reasonable and support more active travel to and from school for pupils.

We live in the village of Ruthvenfield a [REDACTED] walk from the school and yet as a result of the existing catchment are currently expected to send our children to Tulloch a 26 min (2km) walk away. Our [REDACTED] eldest children have been fortunate enough to have successful applications to attend the school, our youngest will be due to register in [REDACTED]. It is really important for us for our children to attend the same school in the community in which we live. This new catchment review takes the sensible approach of building a catchment for Ruthvenfield school that includes the community of which it is the heart rather than splitting it down the middle. We also appreciate the interim admission arrangements which take the pragmatic approach of considering children with siblings at the school and who will reside within the new catchment in the priorities for placement. The addition of a new school at Bertha Park and the associated catchment review is very sensible and shows a good understanding of the various communities being created with the new house building as well as showing clear connections with the existing communities for their further secondary education at Berth Park High school. We are in firm agreement that the proposed approaches are the right ones for our children and to build strong foundations for the communities which they support. Thank You.

I believe that what has been developed is a sensible approach in adapting the catchment areas. My primary concern was around the catchment areas for Ruthvenfield Primary. Specifically the estate directly across from the school at [REDACTED] as I am purchasing a property in this area with a view that my [REDACTED] will be able to attend the school , the same school as his [REDACTED].

Improved cycle routes around the school to aid safer journeys for children to both schools

I believe for the houses currently in the new catchment (less those that are in plan to be developed) should be considered to be brought into catchment early. I dont believe that the area of Ruthvenmill View and the Orchard would have significant volume of Children that would cause an influx into the school. It would also be unlikely that they would all be eligible for the school at the same time if they were brought into catchment. In addition it was advised that the school currently works to a 2m per child rule and this could be flexed to 1.7 even in the unlikely event that this was going to cause and issue.

Firstly I would like to ask why are dates for public consultation included in letter sent to parents of Ruthvenfield primary school are past? Not very helpful! I live in Huntingtowerfield as does my [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] attends Ruthvenfield school along with many of [REDACTED] friends who also live in Huntingtowerfield. Why would catchment area be changed to proposed new school at Bertha Park? [REDACTED] couldn't walk to school as [REDACTED] does now so if green active travel is to be considered then this does not help. More use of cars would add to congestion and pollution. I have no problem with new catchment areas being made but Huntingtowerfield should be included in Ruthvenfields and then Bertha Park for secondary school when children are old enough to walk!

Ruthvenfield primary is a lovely rural school offering a good education to local children and is part of our community. Bertha Park would not give this. Please consider these arguments when making any decisions.

New School at Bertha Park Catchment Review Pupil Consultations – 21 and 22 June 2022

Anne Lemon, Quality Improvement Officer and Lorna Hamilton, Project Manager visited the four schools impacted by the formation of a catchment area for the new primary school, and the revision of the existing catchment areas.

Ruthvenfield Primary School

19 pupils from P1 to P3 were involved in the consultation exercise. The session focussed on the meaning of catchment areas, and checking the pupils' understanding of what this meant in terms of their school and other schools involved.

Discussion took place around what a change to the catchment area, as outlined in the proposal, would mean for these pupils, and any future pupils.

The pupils had opportunity to look at maps, and to ask questions and make comments.

Comments were around where the individual children lived, and whether they would have to move.

There was a question asking whether Ruthvenfield would be closed down.

Discussion took place around different sizes of schools, different sizes of catchment areas, and the new houses that were being built.

The pupils enjoyed the maps and showed good understanding of where the areas were and where the schools were.

Understanding of all the points was checked and then the pupils were asked to say what they thought of the proposal.

Voting was secret, to allow the pupils to make their own decisions.

Five were against the proposal

14 were for the proposal

Pitcairn Primary School

Due to the numbers involved, the sessions were split between classes, to encompass all P1, P2 and P3 pupils.

41 children were involved in the sessions.

The format was similar to that at Ruthvenfield.

The pupils understood what a catchment area was, and how it affected them at the school.

Questions were around moving school, not wanting too many children in Pitcairn, and why we were moving boundaries.

The pupils enjoyed the maps and showed good understanding of where the areas were and where the schools were.

Understanding of all the points was checked and then the pupils were asked to say what they thought of the proposal.

Four were against the proposal

37 were for the proposal

Luncarty Primary School

As the changes for Luncarty Primary would have a lesser impact than those of Ruthvenfield and Pitcairn, this was conducted as a focus group session, with representatives from P1, P2 and P3.

There were 15 pupils in this session, and the format followed that used at the other schools. They discussed catchment areas, the new house building, and what any impact would be on them and their school.

Maps were left with the school, for any future questions.

The pupils showed a good understanding of the proposal, and had a secret vote on whether they thought the proposal was a good idea or not.

Three were against the proposal

12 were for the proposal

Tulloch Primary School

This followed the same format as Luncarty.

There were 13 pupils in the focus group, and the questions and comments were similar to the other schools.

Two were against the proposal

11 were for the proposal

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Report by HM Inspectors of Education addressing educational aspects of the proposal by Perth and Kinross Council to:

- **establish a new primary school on the site of Bertha Park, Perth;**
- **establish a catchment area for the new school and amend the catchment areas of Luncarty Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Ruthvenfield Primary School and Tulloch Primary School;**
- **establish the transfer arrangements for affected primary pupils to attend secondary school; and**
- **establish interim admission arrangements for Ruthvenfield Primary School until the new primary opens in August 2026.**

August 2022

1. Introduction

1.1 This report from Education Scotland has been prepared by His 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 Perth and Kinross Council's proposal to establish a new primary school on the site of Bertha Park, Perth. 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 2010 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.

1.2 HM Inspectors considered:

- the likely effects of the proposal for children of the proposed school's catchment area; any other users; children likely to become pupils when the school opens; and other children and young people 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 the records of the public meetings held on 31 May 2022 and 13 June 2022 in connection with the council's proposals;
- 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 site of Luncarty Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Ruthvenfield Primary School and Tulloch Primary School, including discussion with relevant consultees.

2. Consultation process

2.1 Perth and Kinross Council undertook the consultation on its proposals with reference to the [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#).

2.2 The statutory consultation ran from 16 May 2022 to 29 June 2022. Copies of the consultation proposal were made available to statutory consultees. The council distributed 848 letters to consultees, including parents of the impacted schools, with a link to the proposal paper and details of how to obtain a paper copy. The proposal paper was also published on the council website.

2.3 Public meetings were held at Bertha Park High School on 31 May 2022 and 13 June 2022. Eleven stakeholders took part in these public meetings. They sought further information about the changes to the catchment areas, the size of the new primary school, and the transition

arrangements until the new school would be built. In order to seek further the views of stakeholders, the council arranged consultation sessions with children from Luncarty Primary School, Pitcairn Primary School, Ruthvenfield Primary School and Tulloch Primary School. Most children who participated in the consultation sessions agreed with the proposals. The council received ten responses to an online questionnaire relating to the public consultation, in addition to one email response from a stakeholder. Eighty two percent of these online responses were in favour of the proposal and 18% were against.

3. Educational aspects of proposal

3.1 Perth and Kinross Council are seeking to address a substantial increase in housebuilding in the Perth West region of the council area. The council estimate housebuilding will result in an additional 678 primary aged children who will need to be accommodated in schools near to where they live. The existing catchment schools will not be able to accommodate these projected pupil numbers. Perth and Kinross Council propose to create a new primary school at the Bertha Park site and adapt existing catchment areas. This will ensure all children can be educated in their local community.

3.2 The council has set out clearly a number of important educational benefits in its proposal paper. A new school has the potential to provide a high-quality learning environment. Stakeholders who spoke with HM Inspectors welcome the council's commitment to designing a school which will allow spaces to be used flexibly. They are enthusiastic about the creation of different learning environments which could be used to encourage children to learn in different ways, such as through play-based, interdisciplinary and outdoor learning. Children are positive about the potential for the new school to offer a greater range of clubs and activities within their community. The new school is planned to include a nursery and Intensive Support Provision for children with complex additional needs. Staff recognise the significant benefits these services will provide to children and families across the area.

3.3 Perth and Kinross Council recognise the potential adverse impact of a change of school to a child's wellbeing. Parents and children appreciate the council, as part of the proposal, allowing children to remain at their existing school should they wish. Staff and children recognise that selecting a school could be difficult and that they and their families may need help to do this. A few senior leaders also identify that children changing schools in P7 may need enhanced primary to secondary transition support.

3.4 The council intend to establish a User Reference Group to contribute local information to support the design and development of the new school. This intended group would include staff from local schools, parents and members of the community. Should the proposal go ahead, the council should consider how best to recruit for this group whilst the new catchment area is not yet established. They should also reflect on how children will be able to contribute their ideas for the development of the plans for the new school.

3.5 Most of the parents who met with HM Inspectors want further information about the impact on their child's current school if a new school is built. Parents from Pitcairn Primary School and Ruthvenfield Primary School also seek clarity on the transition arrangements until the new school opens. They want to know if these schools will experience a short term increase to their school roll as additional families move into the area and if so, how the council plan to support this. Perth and Kinross Council have taken important steps to address the genuine concerns of parents about the school roll at Ruthvenfield Primary School. They have suggested an amendment to the school's admission arrangements until the new school opens. This recognises the significant number of placing requests received by the school and the prioritisation of children moving into the new housing sites. A few parents of Ruthvenfield Primary School remain anxious about whether

younger siblings will be offered a place at the school. The council should continue to listen to these families and seek to address their concerns. Parents from Ruthvenfield Primary School are also worried that the proposals will lead to the school's catchment area being reduced. They are legitimately concerned that a reduction in the school roll may lead to the school being considered for closure again in the future. They seek further reassurance from the council about how it intends to support the school to progress and thrive moving forward.

3.6 A few parents reported to HM Inspectors that they did not find the consultation and supporting documents accessible or easy to understand. The council should seek to address this to ensure all stakeholders can fully engage in the process.

4. Summary

HM Inspectors agree that the council's proposal to build a new school at the Bertha Park site has clear educational benefits. A new school has the potential to provide a high-quality learning environment. The purpose-build design has the potential to offer flexible learning and social spaces. Stakeholders recognise the value of the new school to the local community, as well as the benefits of an additional nursery and Intensive Support Provision. Should the proposal be successful, Perth and Kinross Council should seek to support families through the transition to newly-defined catchment areas. Parents value the option for their child to stay at their existing school should they wish. Stakeholders recognise this may not be an easy decision and children and families may need support through this process. The council should consider how to develop an appropriate User Reference Group and ensure the views of children are considered by this group. Most of the parents who met with HM Inspectors would value further information around the transition period and impact of the new school on existing provisions. Parents from Ruthvenfield Primary School also remain legitimately concerned about the long term future of their school. Moving forward, it is important that the council continues to listen to these concerns. The council should continue to consult and communicate effectively with all stakeholders to engage them fully in the future planning and design stages of the proposal.

**HM Inspectors
August 2022**