

Learning Directorate
People and Infrastructure Division

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Ms Helen Budge
Director of Children's Services
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By email: Helen.budge@shetland.gov.uk

21 January 2014

Dear Mrs Budge,

SCHOOLS (CONSULTATION) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2010: SHETLAND ISLANDS COUNCIL: DECISION TO CLOSE SKERRIES SCHOOL SECONDARY DEPARTMENT

Thank you for notification to the Scottish Ministers of your Council's decision of 11 December 2013 to implement its proposal to close Skerries School Secondary Department.

As required under section 15(4) of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act"), a three week period began on 11 December for any person to make representations to the Scottish Ministers requesting that the decision should (or should not) be called in by them for further investigation. That period expired on Saturday 4 January 2014 and I can inform you that 26 representations were received, 25 requesting that Ministers call in the Council decision and 1 requesting that they do not.

Under section 17 of the 2010 Act, the Scottish Ministers may only issue a call-in notice if it appears to them that the education authority may have failed:

- (a) in a significant regard to comply with the requirements imposed on it by (or under) the 2010 Act so far as they are relevant in relation to the closure proposal; or
- (b) to take proper account of a material consideration relevant to its decision to implement the proposal

The Scottish Ministers have examined the content of the Council's proposal paper, consultation report and the additional information the Council provided as it is required to do under section 17(3) of the 2010 Act, together with the representations received. After careful consideration, the Ministers have concluded that Shetland Islands Council has fulfilled its obligations under the 2010 Act and, consequently, will not be issuing a call-in notice for this proposal.

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Shetland Islands Council may implement its decision to close Skerries School Secondary Department from June 2014, as set out in its proposal paper.

In coming to this view, the Scottish Ministers have commented that they would like Shetland Islands Council to try to find ways of altering either the school day or the ferry timetable (or both) to allow pupils from Skerries to travel to school on a Monday morning rather than a Sunday night. I would be grateful if you could keep me informed of your thinking and developments in this area so I in turn can brief Ministers.

Yours sincerely



JONATHAN MOORE
Head of School Infrastructure Unit