



To: Chair and Members of the Furness Locality Board

# Agenda

Dear Member

## **FURNESS LOCALITY BOARD**

A meeting of the Furness Locality Board will be held as follows:

Date: Tuesday, 28 November 2023  
Time: 6.00 pm  
Venue: Drawing Room - Barrow Town Hall,

**Linda Jones**  
Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer  
Westmorland and Furness Council

Enquiries and requests for supporting papers to: **Katie Pepper**  
Direct Line: **01229 876314**  
Email: **Katie.Pepper@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Cllr T Assouad  
Cllr T Biggins  
Cllr D Brook  
Cllr A Burns  
Cllr T Callister  
Cllr F Cassidy  
Cllr D Cassidy  
Cllr A Coles  
Cllr D Edwards  
Cllr L Hall

Cllr K Hamilton  
Cllr A Husband  
Cllr B McEwan  
Cllr B Morgan  
Cllr J Murphy  
Cllr N Phillips  
Cllr B Shirley  
Cllr D Taylor  
Cllr R Worthington

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

### Agenda and Reports

Copies of the agenda and Part I reports are available for members of the public to inspect prior to the meeting. Copies will also be available at the meeting.

The agenda and Part I reports are also available on the Westmorland and Furness website

<https://westmorlandandfurness.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=269>

## **A G E N D A**

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive any apologies for absence.

### **2. Declarations of Interest/Dispensations**

To receive declarations of interest by members of any interests on respect of items on this agenda, and to consider any dispensations.

Members may however, also decide, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to declare at this point in the meeting, any such disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared in the Register, as well as any other registerable or other interests.

### **3. Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item on the agenda.

### **4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

To consider the minutes of the previous meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2023. (copy enclosed).

**(Pages 5 - 12)**

### **5. Public Participation**

To receive any questions or statement which have been received from members of the public and to receive any petitions.

*(note questions or statement must be received in writing (including email) by the Council at least 3 clear working days before the day of the meeting (not including the day of the meeting). So, for example, if the meeting is on Tuesday requests must be received by 11.59 pm on the previous Wednesday by the person named on the front of the agenda. Petitions must have been presented to the Monitoring Officer 9 working days before the date of this meeting to be valid).*

### **6. Urgent Items**

To consider any urgent items of business.

### **7. Consultation on a proposal to close North Walney Primary and Nursery School**

To receive a report from the Director of Childrens' Services on the Consultation on a proposal to close North Walney Primary and Nursery School.

**(Pages 13 - 34)**



# Agenda Item 4

## WESTMORLAND AND FURNESS COUNCIL FURNESS LOCALITY BOARD

Minutes of a Meeting of the **Furness Locality Board** held on Wednesday, 18 October 2023 at 6.00 pm at Drawing Room, Barrow Town Hall, Barrow-in-Furness

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### **PRESENT:**

Cllr T Assouad  
Cllr T Biggins  
Cllr D Brook (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr A Burns  
Cllr T Callister (Chair)  
Cllr D Cassidy  
Cllr F Cassidy  
Cllr A Coles  
Cllr D Edwards  
Cllr K Hamilton  
Cllr A Husband  
Cllr B McEwan  
Cllr B Morgan  
Cllr J Murphy  
Cllr N Phillips  
Cllr B Shirley  
Cllr D Taylor  
Cllr R Worthington

### **Officers in attendance:**

Alison Meadows ( Senior Manager - Safe & Strong Communities)  
Emma Haughin (Senior Lawyer)  
Katie Pepper (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer)  
Tim Simpson (Project Lead – Sustainable Travel & Transport)

### **Also in attendance:**

Mike Cummings (Cumbria Association of Local Councils)

## **PART I ITEMS CONSIDERED IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

### **20. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/DISPENSATIONS**

Councillor Shirley declared an interest in any matters relating to BAE Systems.

Councillor Worthington declared an interest in any matter relating to Barrow Town Council as he was a members of that Council.

## **22. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That the press and public not be excluding during the consideration of any items on the agenda.

## **23. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

## **24. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

RESOLVED: - To note that no questions, representations, deputations or petitions had been received in respect of the meeting.

## **25. URGENT ITEMS**

There were not urgent items of business for consideration on this occasion.

## **26. NORTH WALNEY PRELIMINARY DESIGN ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME**

Tim Simpson, Project Lead, Capital Programme presented the North Walney Preliminary Design Active Travel Scheme report.

He stated that a preliminary design has been prepared for the funded active travel scheme on North Walney, Barrow-in-Furness. The design had been developed by consultants WSP UK Ltd and was underpinned by engagement and consultation with key stakeholders, the public, Members, Officers and Active Travel England. The preliminary design would form the basis of the detailed design and build for the scheme, for which procurement had been planned to commence in October 2024.

### LCWIP

The Barrow-in-Furness Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was approved at Cumbria County Council's Local Committee in March 2022, endorsed by Barrow Borough Council in May 2022 and launched and published in July 2022. The LCWIP identified and prioritised routes to improve for cycling, walking and wheeling and provided an indication of the type of infrastructure improvements that could be delivered. The LCWIP was not a funded plan and funding to deliver the infrastructure improvements identified within it, needed to be sought.

### Funding

Funding had been secured from Active Travel Fund 3 (ATF3) (£1.579M) to deliver active travel improvements on North Walney between Earnse Bay and the Promenade adjoining Jubilee Bridge. The deadline for spend of the funding was

March 2024 however, the Council were in the process of formalising an amendment to September 2024 through Active Travel England's change control process.

### Design

The scheme had now been developed to the next stage of design and presented as a preliminary design. Technical work had been undertaken to ensure the design was fully compliant with the latest standards for active travel infrastructure and the estimated delivery costs did not exceed the grant funding awarded.

### Estimated Delivery Costs

In developing the preliminary design, assurance had been sought that delivery costs did not exceed the total amount of grant funding awarded. Estimated costs had been built up from a bill of quantities using recognised market rates and risk, where possible, had been quantified.

The estimated scheme costs at preliminary design were within the budget of the funding awarded through ATF3 (£1.57M).

### Next Steps

Following endorsement of the design a two-stage detailed design and build contract would be procured through the Council's Capital Works Framework. The build stage of the contract would not be awarded until the detailed design was completed to gain greater assurance of the project costs and enable risks to be mitigated as so far was possible before construction commences. It had been envisaged that detailed design would be completed by Spring 2024 and construction by Autumn 2024.

The scheme will look to deliver against the Council's Plan main visions:

A great place to live – improved cycling, walking and wheeling infrastructure would provide more opportunities for our communities, including young people, to live healthy, happy lives by ensuring alternatives for travel. People who travelled more actively would see benefits to their physical and mental wellbeing.

A great place to work – the project would provide the physical infrastructure and connectivity within that people need to access learning facilities, employment, business and leisure opportunities. It would offer an alternative way for people to travel safely to these facilities. The route connected to infrastructure that provided onwards links from Barrow town centre as well as the new facilities associated with the Earnse Bay Community Hub.

A great place to thrive – the project would deliver against the wider vision to provide excellent walking and cycling routes across the Council area.

A public consultation on the emerging preliminary design options was undertaken for three weeks between the 19 May and 9 June 2023. The consultation sought opinions on the proposed infrastructure improvements and key elements of the design.

Information on the proposals was presented in a 'Consultation Document' with attached survey questions, 3D computer generated imagery and large-scale arrangement drawings. The survey asked questions on how supportive respondents were of the overall proposal along with questions on how satisfied respondents were with key elements of the design. A total of 111 paper and online survey responses were received during the consultation period. The feedback had been analysed and summarised in a Consultation Report with key action points considered in the development of the preferred preliminary design. 55% of respondents were in support or expressed no opinion on the overall proposals.

In addition to the survey, officers led a series of focus group sessions and workshops with key stakeholder groups. External groups included Women's Community Matters, Love Barrow Families, Furness Academy and Youth Ability. Blue Light services (fire, police and ambulance) had also been consulted. Feedback received through these sessions had also been analysed and used to inform the preferred preliminary design.

The public consultation was advertised widely through press releases and social media and internal communications.

A councillor asked if there if there were plans for maintenance.

Tim stated that there was a gap in the funding for future maintenance however with the construction there was a 2 year guarantee to make ensure it was built to a suitable standard.

It was moved by Councillor Cassidy and seconded by Councillor Husband and;

RESOLVED: -

- i. To endorse the preliminary design for the North Walney active travel scheme.
- ii. To agree that minor amendments to the design can be made prior to the design being used as the basis for the detailed design procurement, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Furness Locality Board.

## **27. SAFE AND STRONG COMMUNITIES REPORT**

Alison Meadows, Senior Manager - Safe & Strong Communities presented the Safe and Strong communities report.

She stated the report brought together information from across Thriving Communities. Future reports would include updates from thematic workstreams, in line with priorities, highlight issues, actions and risks and provide an update on the devolved budget positions.



The report updated members on the recent thematic working groups meetings and informal elected member briefing sessions. In the report were the recommendations to mechanisms for awarding grants and agree grant awards from 2023/24 within the devolved budget.

### Thematic Working Groups

During August the three of the four thematic working groups took place with the Furness Locality Board Members who had elected to sit on the working groups and updates were provided as below.

The priorities for Furness Locality Board were:

Health & Wellbeing – supporting everyone to start well, live well and age well.

Poverty Proofing – supporting their disadvantaged communities to access and increase opportunities.

At the meeting of 6th June 2023, Cabinet agreed to delegate a further one-off funding. This comprised £230,400 for Sustainable Travel and Transport Fund, £100,000 for Strong and Connected Communities Programme, £80,800 Household Support Fund for the Furness Locality Board.

Alison advised the committee there had been a change to recommendations 2.9 and 2.10 and it was recommended that Furness Locality Board: -

2.9 Agree to the establishment of a Community Transport Grants Panel to award grants (including bus grants) to community transport providers. The Director of Thriving Places in consultation with the Chair of the Locality Board is given the delegated authority to determine the relevant schemes and criteria to distribute the investment for community transport grant awards

If agreed, nominate five members to form this Community Transport Panel as described in (3.20.9).

2.10 Recommend that the Director of Thriving Places in consultation with the Chair of the Furness Locality Board utilise the sum of £1750 of the Local Sustainable Travel and Transport Fund for the Friends of X112 scheme and agree for officers to progress the proposal to improve the public right of way at The Hags as described in paragraph 3.20.3.

The amended recommendations were agreed by the locality board.

RESOLVED: - That Councillors Brook, Callister, Hamilton, McEwan, Murphy, Phillips and Shirley be appointed members of the Community Transport Panel.

A Councillor raised a issue regarding the strong connected communities programme stating there was a risk that wards such as Dalton North could be forgotten.

Mike Cumming raised his concern regarding the X7 bus service.

Councillor Shirley advised that a meeting had been arranged regarding this between the trustees and the stagecoach managing director in the area.

Alison reported that the Christmas Support project supported the most vulnerable families and individuals with food, toiletries, household essentials, toys, vouchers and warm packs. Referrals were made through a referral form by organisations, Schools, churches, statutory services for the family or individual to be supported as appropriate and referrers could identify those that needed support as they would be working with them. Referrals come through to the Community Development Team for checking and sent through to the appropriate organisation who also do a further check. The referrer obtains consent from the family or individual for information to be shared. A database is held by the third-sector organisations to record referrals this also avoids duplication.

The partnership comprises Barrow Foodbank, Spring Mount, Furness Education Consortium, representative (Schools), Salvation Army, Age UK, Family Action, Project John, and the Furness Community Development Team. The partnership would also link with Women's Community Matters who also ran a similar appeal to ensure a joined-up approach.

Councillor Hamilton asked for recognition to be given to Housing Services who provide toys each year to their tenants with children.

It was moved by Councillor Hamilton and seconded by councillor McEwan and;

RESOLVED: -

- i. To note the status of the Furness Locality Board discretionary budgets and the commitments and expenditure to date as in Appendix 1.
- ii. To note the updates included in this report including the thematic working groups, partnerships and grant programmes.
- iii. Agree the mechanism for awarding Community Grants as described in paragraph 3.5.2.
- iv. Agree the mechanism for awarding 0-19 Grants as described in paragraph 3.5.2. 21 Agenda Item 8.
- v. Agree the mechanism for awarding 11-19 Grants as described in paragraph 3.5.2.
- vi. Agree the mechanism for awarding the DWP (Department of Work and Pensions) Household Support Fund as described in paragraph 3.5.2.
- vii. Agree the mechanism for awarding the Strong Connected and Communities Programme as described in paragraph 3.19.4.

- viii. Agree to the establishment of a Community Transport Grants Panel to award grants (including bus grants) to community transport providers. The Director of Thriving Places in consultation with the Chair of the Locality Board is given the delegated authority to determine the relevant schemes and criteria to distribute the investment for community transport grant awards
- ix. Recommend that the Director of Thriving Places in consultation with the Chair of the Furness Locality Board utilise the sum of £1750 of the Local Sustainable Travel and Transport Fund for the Friends of X112 scheme and agree for officers to progress the proposal to improve the public right of way at The Hags as described in paragraph 3.20.3.
- x. Agree that decisions on budget allocations and grants from the General Budget, Community Grants, 0-19 Budget, 11-19 Universal Service Grant and the Household Support Fund of up to £5,000 are delegated to the Senior Manager, Safe and Strong Communities, with the agreement of the Chair and Vice Chair of Furness Locality Board and relevant ward member(s). Any approvals for amounts above £5,000 will be brought as a recommendation to the Furness Locality Board for a decision.
- xi. Agree to allocate Project John £27,670 towards the Christmas Project from the following budgets. £15,600 from DWP Household Support fund and £12,070 from Locality Board Priorities fund as outlined in the report in paragraphs 3.17 to 3.29.

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

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## Westmorland and Furness Council

<b>Report Title:</b>	Consultation on a proposal to close North Walney Primary and Nursery School
<b>Meeting:</b>	Furness Locality Board Meeting
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	Tuesday 28 November 2023
<b>Report Author:</b>	Milorad Vasic, Director of Childrens' Services
<b>Lead Cabinet Member(s):</b>	Sue Sanderson, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
<b>Wards Affected?</b>	Walney North and Walney South
<b>PUBLIC, PART EXEMPT OR FULLY EXEMPT</b>	
<b>List of Appendices (if any)</b>	Appendix A – Consultation Document Appendix B – Frequently Asked Questions Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Westmorland and Furness Council is currently consulting on a proposal to close North Walney Primary and Nursery School from 31 August 2024.
- 1.2 Westmorland and Furness Council is concerned about the increasing pressure upon both the school's leadership and staff to continue to provide a quality educational offer given the decline in the number of pupils at the school and the resulting impact on the school's financial position. Given this, the Council considers that it has a responsibility to all members of the North Walney school community to formally consult on the school's future sustainability.
- 1.3 This proposal is being presented to Furness Locality Board for the Board's response as part of the consultation process.
- 1.4 A copy of the consultation document and the associated frequently asked questions relating to the proposal are attached for information at **Appendices A and B**.

### 2. Recommendation

It is recommended that Members of the Furness Locality Board note:

- 2.1 the rationale and details of the consultation proposal and respond to the consultation as board members feel appropriate.
- 2.2 that Cabinet will consider all responses arising from the consultation, including any response made by the Furness Locality Board, before deciding on whether or not to proceed to the next stage of the statutory process.

### **3. Information: Rationale for the Proposal**

3.1 The Local Authority recognises that it is to the credit of the school's leadership, staff, parents and pupils that the school has continued to provide a quality educational offer during what has proven to have been a challenging period for the school.

#### **3.2 Current Pupil Numbers and Future Projections**

As of September 2023, the confirmed number of pupils on roll at North Walney Primary school was 27. The total capacity of the school based upon the school's current published admission number is 161.

3.3 There has been a continuous drop in numbers across all year groups over recent years. In 2019/20 the number on roll was 84, by 2021/22 this number had fallen to 67 with a further reduction to 22 by 2022/23. The number of pupils on roll is predicted to remain low.

3.4. In line with national trends, the number of births in the North Walney catchment area has reduced in recent years, as it has across Walney Island. In addition, there is little opportunity for pupil growth from new housing developments as a result of inward migration to the area. Given this, there is little prospect of a significant increase in pupil numbers for North Walney Primary and Nursey School in the foreseeable future.

3.5. There are five schools within a two-mile radius of North Walney Primary School, with four of them located on Walney Island. The Walney Island area has a significant number of surplus places overall with the projected percentage of surplus places projected to be at 30% from September 2024.

#### **3.6. Financial Position**

School budgets are directly linked to the number of children on roll at that school. Many costs are fixed regardless of pupil numbers, and it follows that, where the numbers on roll at a school are decreasing, there is less money available to the school to support teaching and learning. This makes it increasingly challenging for a school to provide a broad and balanced quality educational offer. Whilst the school has taken steps to reduce costs over the years, the impact of the falling pupil roll has made balancing the budget very challenging with no potential to address projected deficits.

#### **3.7. Quality of Education**

The Local Authority recognises that it is to the credit of the school's leadership, staff, parents and pupils that the school has continued to provide a quality educational offer during what has proven to have been a challenging period for the school.

3.8. However, the Local Authority is concerned that the school's current financial position is increasing the workload on school staff to levels that the Council believes is reaching an unsustainable level. This will inevitably impact on teaching standards and would likely give a reduced rating under the current Ofsted inspection framework. The current framework requires all schools to evidence a 'good' quality of education over time, demonstrating a broad, rich curriculum sequenced in a logical progression to enable all children to acquire the intended knowledge and skills from Reception to Year Six.

3.9. The Local Authority is concerned that staffing instability and funding have also hampered development of leadership at subject level and impacted on the professional development, workload and well-being of staff.

#### **4. Link to Council Plan Priorities: (People, Climate, Communities, Economy and Culture, Customers, Workforce)**

4.1. This proposal is being consulted upon in order to ensure that the Local Authority meets its statutory duties to ensure that appropriate standard of care and education is being delivered, contributing to a thriving community.

#### **5. Consultation Outcomes (with services, ward councillors & public consultation where required)**

5.1 A public consultation exercise on the closure proposal is currently underway. The consultation began on 1 November 2023 and will end on 12 December 2023. This report is being presented to the Local Board as part of this consultation process.

5.2 A post-consultation report, setting out all of the responses raised during the consultation, will be presented to Cabinet in January 2024 for a decision as to whether, or not, to proceed to the next stage of the statutory school organisation process.

5.3 If the Council's Cabinet decide to proceed to the next stage of the statutory process the Local Authority will be required to formally publish a statutory notice setting out the proposal to close the school. This will allow all stakeholders a further four weeks to make 'representations' about the proposal. Following the completion of the four-week statutory representation period a report will be submitted to the Cabinet in March 2024 for a final decision as to whether, or not, the school should close on 31 August 2024.

#### **6. Alternative Options Considered**

6.1 Take no action and allow the school to continue to operate without consulting on the school's future sustainability.

6.2 The Local Authority appreciates the concerns that a school closure proposal is likely to generate within the school community and the wider local community and, as such, has not taken the decision to consult on this proposal without a strong rationale.

- 6.3 Westmorland and Furness Council is concerned about the increasing pressure upon both the school's leadership and its staff to continue to provide a quality educational offer given the ongoing decline in the number of pupils at the school and the resulting impact on the school's financial position. Given these risks, taking no action is not an option as the Council considers that it has a responsibility to all members of the North Walney school community to formally consult on the school's future sustainability.

## **7. Financial Implications and risk**

- 7.1 North Walney Nursery and Primary School is a maintained school funded through the Schools Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Funding is based on the National Funding Formula meaning the majority of the funding is linked to numbers of pupils in school on the October census day.
- 7.2 The school closed financial year 2022/23 with a cumulative deficit of £161k and has been in deficit since 2012/13. If the school closes any deficit at the point of closure will transfer to the Council and be funded from the DSG contingency budget.

SM 02.10.23

## **8. Legal & Governance Implications**

- 8.1. In accordance with 14.12.3(c) of the Constitution the Locality Board is able to consider the policies and actions of the Cabinet as to their appropriateness to the needs and aspirations of local communities. Also 14.12.3(e) Act as a forum for discussion on matters of local interest and in particular to elicit/hear the views of local bodies and organisations.
- 8.2. The Locality Board may note the contents of this report and provide a response to the consultation as members feel appropriate for Cabinet to consider.
- 8.2 It is the responsibility of local authorities, proposers and school governing bodies to ensure that they act in accordance with the relevant legislation and have regard to statutory guidance when seeking to open or close a maintained school. Cabinet as the decision maker, will need to be satisfied that the consultation and representation period were appropriate, fair and open, and that the proposer has given full consideration to all the responses to the consultation. [EJH 21.11.23]



## **9. Human Resources Implications**

- 9.1 The Local Authority understands that staff at the North Walney Primary and Nursery School will have both professional and personal concerns about the implications of the consultation. During the consultation, officers from the Local Authority will be listening very carefully to the views of the school staff and their union representatives to ensure that all members of staff are given appropriate advice and support depending on their individual circumstances.
- 9.2. If following the completion of statutory school organisation process, then Local Authority takes the final decision to close the school then the Local Authority will consult with school staff in accordance with relevant employment related policies, procedures and statutory timescales.

## **10. Equality & Diversity Implications (including the public sector equality duty, Armed Forces Families, Care Leavers and Health inequalities implications)**

- 10.1. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) relating to this proposal is attached at **Appendix C**. This EIA is an evolving document and will be updated as appropriate following the completion of the consultation process.
- 10.2. The Local recognises that pupils and parents will be concerned about this proposal and recognises the responsibility that arises from taking the decision to consult on a proposal to close a school. The school will continue to run as it currently does throughout the consultation and decision-making process.
- 10.3. If the decision is taken in March 2024 to close the school in August 2024, then the Local Authority will contact the parents of all the pupils at the school to discuss their individual circumstances.
- 10.4. Given the level of surplus school places across the area the Local Authority is confident that there are sufficient places available at other school to enable pupils to be accommodated at other schools in line with parental preference.
- 10.5. A package of support will be devised to assist parents in applying for new school places, discuss their transport arrangements, assist parents with the purchase of school uniform and ensure that all children, including those children that may have EHCP's and SEND needs, are fully supported to transition to their new school.

## **11. Background Information & Sources (used in preparation of this Report)**

- 11.1. Ofsted report – North Walney Primary Nursery & Pre-School – June 2019
- 11.2. Office of National Statistics (ONS) Data

- 11.3. Department for Education School Census Data
- 11.4. GP registration data
- 11.5. Open and closing maintained schools: statutory guidance for proposers for decision makers – January 2023



# Consultation on a proposal to close North Walney Primary and Nursery School



## Introduction

This consultation is about the potential closure of North Walney Primary and Nursery School, Duddon Drive, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 3TN from 31 August 2024.

Westmorland and Furness Council is concerned about the increasing pressure upon both the school's leadership and staff to continue to provide a quality educational offer given the ongoing decline in the number of pupils at the school and the resulting impact on the school's financial position.

Given this, the Council considers that it has a responsibility to all members of the North Walney school community to formally consult on the school's future sustainability.

This document sets out the background to the consultation, the timescale for the consultation process and how interested parties can participate in the consultation process.

## Background

As set out in Table A below, as of September 2023, the confirmed number of pupils on roll at North Walney Primary school was 27. The total capacity of the school based upon the current published admission number is 161.

**Table A - Number of Pupils on Roll at North Walney Primary -September 2023**

Year Group	PAN	Current Class Size
Reception	23	3
Year 1	23	3
Year 2	23	8
Year 3	23	1
Year 4	23	4
Year 5	23	2
Year 6	23	6
Total	161	27

**Table B - North Walney Primary School Numbers on Roll - Historic and Projected.**

	Historic				Current	Forecast			
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Reception	12	10	9	2	3	3	5	5	4
Year 1	11	9	8	5	3	3	3	5	5
Year 2	9	11	5	1	8	3	3	3	5
Year 3	13	10	17	3	1	8	3	3	3
Year 4	11	13	10	1	4	1	8	3	3
Year 5	12	11	13	6	2	4	1	8	3
Year 6	16	12	10	4	6	2	4	1	8
Total	84	76	67	22	27	24	27	28	31

Table B shows that there has been a continuous drop in numbers across all year groups over recent years. In 2019/20 the number on roll was 84, by 2021/22 this number had fallen to 67 with a further reduction to 22 by 2022/23. The number of pupils on roll is predicted to remain very low.

In line with national trends, the number of births in the North Walney catchment area has reduced in recent years, as it has across Walney Island. For the foreseeable future there is little prospect of significant growth in pupil numbers for North Walney School. The forecast data above is based upon live birth data from two separate sources ONS Birth Data and General Practitioner Registrations.

Table C also illustrates that there is little opportunity for pupil growth as a result of inward migration to the area from new housing developments.

**Table C - Housing Developments relating to North Walney Primary School**

	Forecast			
	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Projection	27	24	27	28
Housing 5 year plan	0	0	0	0
Projections plus 5 year plan	27	24	27	28
Housing S106	0	0	0	0
Projections plus S106	27	24	27	28

There are five schools within a two-mile radius of North Walney Primary School, with four of them located on Walney Island.

Charts A and Chart B, illustrate that Walney Island area has a significant number of surplus places overall. There is a marked projected increase in surplus places for Key Stage 1 by September 2026 with 37% of the overall number of places unallocated.

**Chart A - Projected Percentage of Surplus Primary School Places in Walney Island Area**

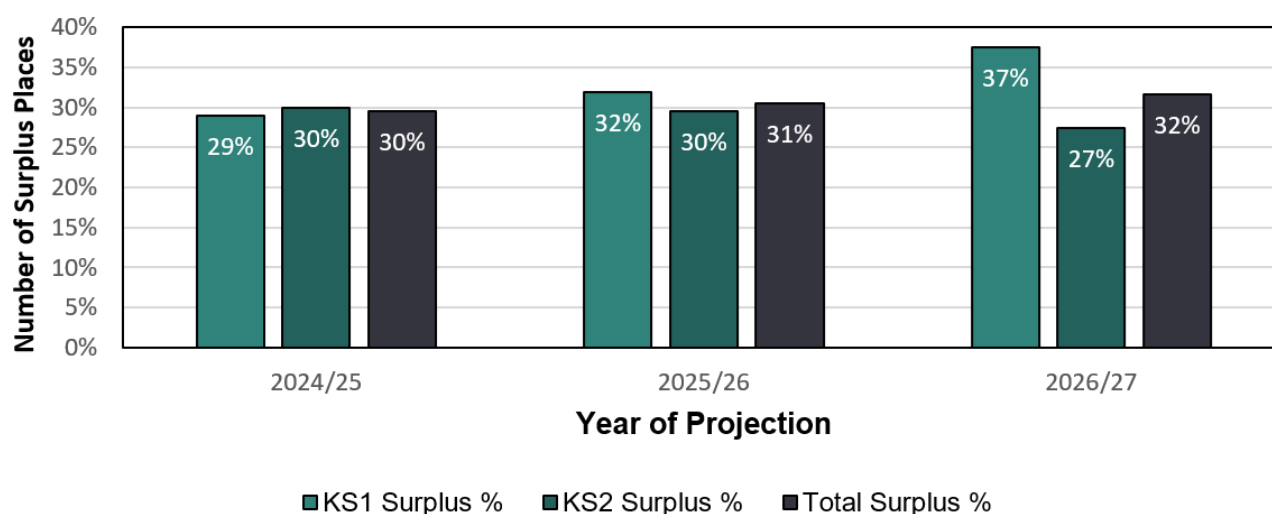
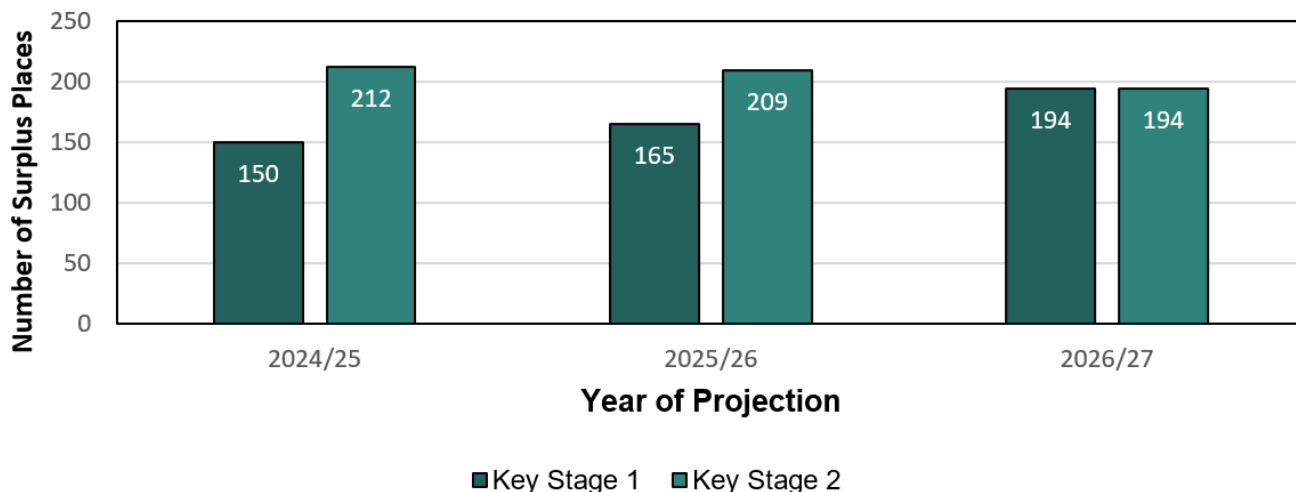




Chart B - Projected Number of Surplus Primary School Places in the Walney Island Area



## Financial Viability

School budgets are directly linked to the number of children on roll at that school. Many costs are fixed regardless of pupil numbers, and it follows that, where the numbers on roll at a school are decreasing, there is less money available to the school to support teaching and learning. This makes it increasingly challenging for a school to provide a broad and balanced quality educational offer.

Whilst the school has taken a number of measures to reduce costs over the years, the impact of the falling pupil roll has made balancing the budget very challenging with no potential to address projected deficits.

## Quality of Education

The Local Authority recognises that it is to the credit of the school's leadership, staff, parents and pupils that the school has continued to provide a quality educational offer during what has proven to have been a challenging period for the school.

However, the Local Authority is concerned that the school's current financial position is increasing the workload on school staff to levels that the Council believes is reaching an unsustainable level. This will inevitably impact on teaching standards and would likely give a reduced rating under the current Ofsted inspection framework.

The current framework requires all schools to evidence a 'good' quality of education over time, demonstrating a broad, rich curriculum sequenced in a logical progression to enable all children to acquire the intended knowledge and skills from Reception to Year Six.

The Local Authority is concerned that staffing instability and funding have also hampered development of leadership at subject level and impacted on professional development, workload and well-being of staff.

## We are consulting on the following proposal:

Proposal to close North Walney Primary and Nursery School on 31 August 2024.

## Who is this consultation for?

This document is for parents, staff and governors of North Walney Primary School and everybody with an interest in education in the area.

## Where can I find out more information about this proposal?

You can find out more information by:

- Following the attached link to the Frequently Asked Questions document that is available on the Council's website.  
<https://legacy.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/lss/school-organisation/Consultations.asp>
- Attending one of the consultation meetings that will be held at the school on Wednesday 8th November 2023. Times are set out below.

## How can I make my views known?

In addition to completing the online questionnaire using the link below you can attend a consultation meeting. This will be held on Wednesday 8th November 2023 at North Walney Primary School. There will be separate meetings for the staff, governors, parents and other stakeholders at the times below. Representatives from the Local Authority will be available to answer any questions that you might have

- School Staff only - 4pm to 5pm
- Governors only - 5.15pm to 6.15pm
- Parents & other stakeholders - 6.30pm to 7.30pm

## What happens next?

Once the consultation period has closed, the Council's Cabinet will receive a report summarising all the responses that have been received. Cabinet will then decide whether to proceed to with the proposal or not to progress. Following the Cabinet decision, any decision affecting the school will be published with a further four-week representation period.

At the end of that representation period, the Cabinet will again consider all responses that have been submitted and will then make a final decision.

## It is important that the Council's Cabinet gets to hear your views.

This consultation runs for six weeks from 1 November 2023 until 12th December 2023.

To respond to the consultation you can complete the online questionnaire here:

<https://consult.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/education/consultation-on-a-proposal-to-close-north-walney-p/>, or, send your comments either by via email

[school.organisation@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:school.organisation@cumbria.gov.uk), or post to: **School Organisation, Westmorland and Furness Council, Post Box 305, LA9 9GZ**. Please explain your reason for interest in the proposal.

### Please note:

It is not possible to respond to individual correspondence, but Westmorland and Furness Council will ensure that all points raised during the consultation process are addressed in the post-consultation report.

All comments received as part of the consultation process will be re-produced in the post consultation report. All comments will be redacted so that individuals cannot be identified, unless the individual or individuals hold a formal position that needs to be clearly identified.

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# **Consultation on a proposal to close North Walney Primary and Nursery School from 31 August 2024**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

We have put together this list of questions that are most frequently asked about school closure proposals. If you have any further questions that you feel are not answered in this list then please email [school.organisation@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:school.organisation@cumbria.gov.uk) and a member of the team will be pleased to assist with your enquiry.

### **What is the timescale for the consultation and decision-making process?**

The consultation will run until the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023. After the consultation ends, the Council's Cabinet will consider all consultation responses and make a decision about whether or not to proceed with the proposal. If the decision is taken to proceed, then the Council is required to publish a statutory notice setting out its intention to close the school. This will mean that there will be a further four- week period when all interested parties will get the opportunity to give their views. The Council's Cabinet will be asked to make a final decision on the proposal in April 2024.

### **I am the parent of a child who currently attends North Walney Primary School. Do I need to start applying for a new school place for my child?**

No, the Council is currently consulting on the proposal to close the school from 31 August 2024 so the school will continue to run as it currently does. Following the consultation and statutory process, the Council's Cabinet will be asked to make a final decision on the proposal in April 2024. If the decision is taken to close the school, the Local Authority will contact the parents of all the pupils at the school to discuss their personal circumstances, support them in applying for new school places and ensure that their child is supported to transition to their new school.

### **What advice and support will be provided to staff at the school?**

The Local Authority recognises the ongoing commitment of the leadership and staff at North Walney Primary School to ensuring that the school continues to provide a quality educational offer for all pupils. The Local Authority understands that the staff will be concerned about the proposal and what it means for them personally and professionally. During the consultation, the Local Authority will be listening very carefully to the views of staff and their representatives, to ensure that if a decision is taken to close the school from 31 August 2024, that all staff are given appropriate advice and support depending on their individual circumstances.

### **If a final decision is taken to close North Walney Primary School what will happen to the school building?**

The Council is currently consulting on a proposal to close North Walney Primary School. It would be prejudicial to the outcome of any consultation process to enter into discussions about the potential use of a school building during this consultation process.

If following the consultation process, a final decision is taken to close the school from 31 August 2024 then discussions would commence at an appropriate time regarding the most appropriate future use of the building.

## How do I make sure that Westmorland and Furness Council is aware of my views on this proposal to close North Walney Primary School?

You can make sure the Westmorland and Furness Council is aware of your views by:

- Completing the online questionnaire  
<https://consult.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/education/consultation-on-a-proposal-to-close-north-walney-p/>
- Completing and returning the paper questionnaire that is attached to the consultation leaflet.
- Emailing [school.organisation@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:school.organisation@cumbria.gov.uk)
- Attending one of consultation meetings at the school on Wednesday 8 November 2023. There will be separate meetings for the staff, governors, parents and other stakeholders at the times below. Representatives from the Local Authority will be available to answer any questions that you might have.
  - School Staff only - 4pm to 5pm
  - Governors only – 5.15pm to 6.15pm
  - Parents & other stakeholders– 6.30pm to 7.30pm

## Equality Impact Assessment – School Organisation Change

### ***Consultation on the potential closure of North Walney Nursery and Primary School***

Directorate	Children's Services
Functional Area	Education and Skills
Assistant Director Responsible for EIA	TBC
Functional Area of EIA or Proposal	School Organisation

#### **Aims of the EIA**

Purpose of the EIA	To identify risks associated with the potential closure of North Walney Nursery and Primary School
Summary of findings	<p>There are some potential negative impacts that have been identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children currently at the school will need to be found places in alternative schools in the area.</li> <li>• Some nursery provision will be lost.</li> <li>• Closure will result in loss, or changes of employment, for staff at the school.</li> </ul> <p>These issues could be reduced in their impact through the actions proposed. Any other issues identified during the consultation process will be addressed appropriately at a later stage and added to this assessment.</p>
Scope of the EIA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One directorate</li> <li>• Cross directorate</li> <li>• Outsourced organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One Directorate – Children's Services</li> <li>• Schools with abutting catchment areas</li> <li>• The local community</li> </ul>

## Phase 1: Gathering information

List examples of background information that you think are **relevant**. If carrying out an assessment of a proposal this section should include the data used to establish whether the proposal has an impact.

Type of information	Findings
The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/3109/contents/made">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/3109/contents/made</a>
Equality Needs Analysis 2023	<a href="https://cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/535/609/38323/44648152628.pdf">https://cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/535/609/38323/44648152628.pdf</a>
Cumbria Observatory (Children's Centre Profiles)	North Walney Primary School lies in the Bram Longstaffe Children's Centre Footprint. Profiles of the Children's Centre footprints can be found at: <a href="https://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/childrens-centre-footprint-profiles/">https://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/childrens-centre-footprint-profiles/</a>
Education	Ofsted Inspection Report: June 2019 'Good'  <a href="https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50089137">https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50089137</a>
Ethnicity	7.5% of all pupils are from a Minority Ethnic background (January 2023 School Census) and there are 86 languages spoken in Cumbria's schools.
Special Educational Needs	Schools monitor pupils by category of Special Educational Need rather than disability. The population of children with different Special Educational Needs is monitored to help ensure we have the provision as well as the policies to meet these needs, thus improving equality of opportunity.
Gender	In line with national data there is an attainment gap between girls and boys at KS1 and KS2. In Cumbria in 2019, the gap between the performance of the boys and girls for reading, writing and maths combined at KS1 was 12.1 percentage points for those achieving the expected standard. For KS2 the gap was 7.5 percentage points for reading, writing and maths combined.
Social Care	The Children's Social Care service collects data on age, gender, ethnicity and disability. Issues arising from an analysis of the information include the proportion of BME and mixed-race children seeking adoption compared to White British families and the supply of BME fosterers and adopters.

## Phase 2 Impacts

From the evidence above use this section to identify the risks and benefits according to the different characteristics protected by the Equality Act.

**All/general:** Any issue that cuts across a number of protected characteristics

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
<p>Overall Deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation, measures deprivation across seven domains as follows: Income; Employment; Education, Skills and Training; Health and Disability; Crime; Barriers to Housing and Services; and Living Environment).</p>	<p>Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is from 2019. A decile of 1 refers to the 10% most deprived communities in England, while a decile of 10 refers to the 10% least deprived communities in England.</p> <p>In relation to overall levels of deprivation, the 2019 IMD classified the area where North Walney Primary School is located as sitting within decile 2 (the 10% most deprived of communities in England). Based on the LSOA</p>		<p>Awareness of issues -action will be taken in accordance with Westmorland &amp; Furness Council (WFC) policies where appropriate.</p>
<p>Geographical Barriers to Services (Sub-Domain of the Index of Multiple Deprivation, which measures physical proximity to essential services)</p>		<p>In relation to geographical barriers to services, the 2019 IMD classified the area where North Walney Primary School is located as sitting within decile 10 (within the 10% least deprived of communities in England).</p>	
<p>Impact on education of children from the closure of the school and nursery</p>	<p>Birth rates in the area are falling and those children moving to alternative schools in the area will</p>	<p>Some children will be moving to an alternative school 'mid-phase'.</p>	<p>Support will be given through the process by WFC</p>

	help to maintain more viable numbers in those schools.	A number of associated nursery places will be lost. Alternative provision exists at Vickerstown, St Columba's, South Walney Infant, Walney Central pre-school and Barrow Island.	officers and school staff.  WFC officers will seek to source additional nursery places.
Employees – potential redundancy/displacements		Staff currently in the school face losing their employment or the disruption of moving to an alternative school.	WFC officers and HR providers will work with those affected.
Transport	There are a number of alternative schools and nursery providers within walking distance, including 3 other schools on Walney Island.		No action required.

**Disability and health and wellbeing:** All forms of disability recognised under the Disability Discrimination Act including sensory impairment, mental health, learning disabilities, mobility related conditions, conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and asthma. This also covers any impact on health and well being

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
Children with special educational needs.	Funding for children with special needs follows the child.	A change of routine or environment may be unsettling for some students.	Receiving provision will be provided with full details of children's additional needs.

#### Gender, Transgender and Marital Status

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
None identified			

**Ethnicity:** All ethnic groups including Asian, Black, East Asian and white minority ethnic groups, including Eastern Europeans and Gypsy and Travellers.

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	There are 86 languages spoken in Cumbria schools, not including English.	4.2% of children in schools in Cumbria are recorded as having an EAL (January 2023 School Census).	No action required.

**Sexual Orientation:** including heterosexual, gay, lesbian and bisexual people

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
None identified at this stage	None identified at this stage	None identified at this stage	None at this stage

**Age:** Where a person is at risk of unfair treatment because of their age group

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
None identified at this stage	None identified at this stage	None identified at this stage	No action required.

**Religion/belief:** all faiths including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and non religious beliefs such as Humanism

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
School religious belief	The closure would lessen parental choice to some degree but there would still be a choice between community schools or a Roman		None.

	Catholic school on the island.		
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**Community Cohesion:** This is where a decision or a change to services may risk creating tensions between community groups in a local area.

Issue	Positive Impact or benefits	Negative impact or risks	Action Required
Impact on other existing educational institutions locally	There are three other schools on Walney Island (Vickerstown, St Columba's and South Walney infant and junior), whose budgets could be boosted through additional pupil numbers.	There could be potential disruption should a large number of children transfer into a single alternative setting en masse.	Work with receiving settings once parental preferences are known.
Impact on the community	Movement to alternative schools in the area will help to increase the viability of those schools.	Reduction in parental choice on Walney Island.	

### Phase 3: Action Planning

Based on actions raised in the action required box above

Area for further action	Actions proposed	Lead officer	When	Resource implications	Outcome
Consultation process	Work to identify inequality issues  Make as fair and as accessible as possible	Sharyn Duffey	During planning stage	Possible expenditure for translation costs	Equality addressed within consultation process
Regular refresh of the EIA throughout the course of the consultation	EIA regularly updated	Lee Turner	Ongoing	None	EIA is accurate and up to date



Update EIA with new information and issues raised from consultation	Following consultation period this EIA will be refreshed to consider inequality issues raised.	Lee Turner	Ongoing	Identified from issues raised	WFC pays due regard to preventing discrimination, promotes equality of opportunity and fosters good relations.
Implementation					

### Documents appended to the Equality Impact Assessment

### Quality Assurance and EIA completion

<b>Date completed</b>	<b>September 2023</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>Sharyn Duffey</b>
<b>Have staff been involved in developing the EIA?</b>	
<b>Have community organisations been involved?</b>	
<b>Date of next refresh</b>	<b>This EIA will be refreshed throughout the course of the school change</b>

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