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Document Title	East Lothian Council - Guidelines for School Closure Statutory Consultation

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Designation	Head of Education
Date	19/05/25

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REPORT TO: Members' Library

DATE: May 2025

BY: Executive Director of Education and Children's Services

SUBJECT: Guidelines for Statutory Consultation on School Closure

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To note East Lothian Council's Guidelines for School Closure Statutory Consultation, which outlines the process that the Education service will follow when undertaking a consultation on a school closure in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that members note the contents of this guidance document, as detailed in Appendix 1 to this report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 places a legislative duty on the Council to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across its area. This duty applies in respect of both the current school population and anticipated pattern of demand.
- 3.2 Section 3D of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 (as inserted by section 2 of the 2016 Act) introduces a requirement on education authorities to carry out their duty to ensure the delivery of improvement in the quality of school education, which is provided in the schools they manage, with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework. It is, therefore, the duty of the education authority to ensure that the education it provides is directed to the development of the personality, talents, and the mental and physical abilities of the children to their fullest potential.
- 3.3 In addition, councils have a statutory duty to secure best value in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 by continuous improvement in performance of the local authority's functions, while maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost and having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities, and the achievement of sustainable development.

- 3.4 As part of its statutory duties under the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, the Council must consult on certain changes in arrangements for educating children in its area before it can commit to delivering them. This includes when proposing a permanent change to any of their schools, including nursery schools, such as closure, relocation or change of catchment area. The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 principal purpose is:

“... to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other 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” (“Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010: guidance”)

- 3.5 This document has been developed in order to provide officers with guidance concerning School Closure Statutory Consultation and sets out the process East Lothian Council would follow when undertaking a consultation on a school closure in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, having regard to the statutory guidance published by the Scottish Government on 14th May 2015.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 Appropriate impact assessments will be completed for any proposed school closure.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial - None
6.2 Personnel - None
6.3 Other - None

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010: guidance](#)
7.2 [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#)

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EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

GUIDANCE FOR UNDERTAKING STATUTORY CONSULTATION FOR A PROPOSED SCHOOL CLOSURE

INTRODUCTION & LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 places a legislative duty on the Council to make adequate and efficient provision of school education across its area. This duty applies in respect of both the current school population and anticipated pattern of demand.

Section 3D of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 (as inserted by section 2 of the 2016 Act) introduces a requirement on education authorities to carry out their duty to ensure the delivery of improvement in the quality of school education, which is provided in the schools they manage, with a view to achieving the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework. It is, therefore, the duty of the education authority to ensure that the education it provides is directed to the development of the personality, talents, and the mental and physical abilities of the children to their fullest potential.

In addition, Councils have a statutory duty to secure best value in terms of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 by continuous improvement in performance of the local authority's functions, while maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost and having regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, equal opportunities, and the achievement of sustainable development.

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

As part of its statutory duties under the *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010*, the Council must consult on certain changes in arrangements for educating children in its area before it can commit to delivering them. This includes when proposing a permanent change to any of their schools, including nursery schools, such as closure, relocation or change of catchment area. The *Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010* principal purpose is:

“... to provide strong, accountable statutory consultation practices and procedures that local authorities must apply to their handling of all proposals for school closures and other 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” (“Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010: guidance”)

This document sets out the process East Lothian Council would follow when undertaking a consultation on a school closure in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, having regard to the statutory guidance published by the Scottish Government on 14th May 2015. Both documents are available for reference at the following websites:

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

Statutory Guidance (14th May 2015): [Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010: guidance - gov.scot](#)

Guidance for parents and carers whose child's school is proposed for closure can also be accessed here: [Supporting documents - Proposed changes to your child's school: guide to the Schools \(Consultation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2010 as amended - gov.scot](#)

[A timeline of the process is provided in Appendix 1](#)

[A checklist of tasks to be undertaken during each stage of the process is provided in Appendix 2](#)

PHASE 1 – COMMUNITY OPTIONS APPRAISAL

A desktop appraisal should be carried out first to identify and consider a number of viable options for the affected school(s) where an issue has been identified related to the learning estate. This should include a Child Rights Impact Assessment to inform how these options may affect the children’s human rights in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Where the desktop options appraisal indicates permanent closure of a school is a possible outcome, approval should be sought from East Lothian Council to undertake a public options appraisal on the future of the school.

Communication with Elected Members should be maintained through the process and the appropriate Community Council should also be kept informed of upcoming events and next steps.

If approval is given for the public options appraisal, a series of informal public engagement events should be organised. Elected Members, associated council officers, school staff and parent/carers, pupils and

residents within the catchment should be invited to discuss the future of the school, what their aspirations are for the school and to identify options. A minimum of two meetings should take place. There should be frequent communication, and a letter drop to every resident within the catchment should also be considered.

Rural Schools – Pre-Consultation

The Council must check if any rural school will be closed as part of the proposal, by referring to the Rural Schools List maintained by Scottish Ministers. The list is published in the School Building section of the Scottish Government website: [School buildings - Schools - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/topics/school-buildings).

If the proposal does involve a rural school closure, the special provisions in sections 11A to 13 of the 2010 Act apply. The Council must set out the reasons why it considers the school to no longer be viable and identify any reasonable alternatives to the proposal which might also address the reasons for the proposal in line with Section 12A of the 2010 Act.

The Council will carry out an informal consultation with the school community on these reasonable alternatives as well as invite suggestions for other reasonable alternatives to closure. A deadline should be set for these to be submitted.

The Council must assess for both the proposal, and all identified reasonable alternatives:

- the likely educational benefits
- the likely effect on the local community in consequence of the proposal (if implemented), with reference in particular to (a) the sustainability of the community, (b) the availability of the school's premises and its other facilities for use by the community
- the likely effect caused by any different travelling arrangements that may be required in consequence of the proposal (if implemented) with reference in particular to
- the effect caused by such travelling arrangements including (in particular), (i) that on the school's pupils and staff and any other users of the school's facilities, (ii) any environmental impact

[See Appendix 3 for an example of a Community Options Appraisal Timeline.](#)

Once the deadline has passed and any additional suggestions have been assessed, if there is no viable option for the school to remain operational the following closure consultation process should be followed.

PHASE 2 - PREPARATION FOR CONSULTATION

Timescales for Proposal

When a decision has been made to undertake a school closure consultation, a timetable should be completed identifying the key deadlines for completing each stage of the process. The consultation period itself must last for at least 6 weeks, including a minimum of 30 days during term time. Dates for the public meeting and any other public drop-in sessions should also be considered at this stage.

Education Scotland should be advised of the consultation and the timetable at the earliest opportunity to ensure an HM Inspector can be allocated to the proposal and complete their report within the relevant timescales.

Proposal Document

A proposal document must be prepared in line with Section 4 of the 2010 Act which sets out the details of the proposal, the proposed date for implementation of the proposal, the Education Benefits Statement, a summary of the consultation process and information about the financial implications of the proposal. The proposal document should also include any relevant evidence or other information in support of the proposal that the education authority considers appropriate, for example maps of school catchment areas and any proposed revisions, feedback from community option appraisal sessions, impact on school transport, early learning & childcare, community and community facilities, as well as plans for the future use of any school building and associated facilities that will be released by the proposal.

An Equalities Impact Assessment should be carried out and published as part of the consultation process.

Rural Schools - Where a rural school closure is being proposed the proposal document must also include the steps taken to address these reasons before formulating the proposal during the pre-consultation stage.

Notice to Consultees

In line with Section 6 of the 2010 Act, the relevant statutory consultees must be notified before the consultation period starts. The core set of statutory consultees include:

- the Parent Council
- Parents and carers of pupils attending an affected school

- pupils at an affected school
- Parents and carers of pupils likely to attend an affected school within 2 years of date of publication
- staff at an affected school
- any trade union which appears to the education authority to be representative of those staff
- the Community Council
- school building users
- where a closure is being proposed which affects a denominational school, the relevant church or denominational body must also be consulted
- any other users whom the authority considers relevant.

An information leaflet setting out details about the proposal, public meeting and any other relevant consultation meetings will be issued to the consultees. Advice on where the Proposal Document can be obtained will also be included.

An advertisement will be placed in the local newspaper on two separate dates prior to the consultation starting. A pre-announcement will also be made on the Council's website and social media posts. In addition, there should be announcements related to the Proposal process on East Lothian Council's website and social media feeds.

[See Appendix 4 –Communication \(School Closure Consultation\)](#)

PHASE 3 – STATUTORY CONSULTATION STAGE

Proposal Document published on East Lothian Council's website

The Proposal Document and any other relevant documentation related to the consultation will be published on East Lothian Council's Consultation Hub.

A copy of the Proposal Document will be sent to Education Scotland.

Copies of the proposal document will also be made available in alternative formats or translated for readers whose first language is not English on request.

A "Frequently Asked Questions" document will be prepared which will also be published on East Lothian Council's Consultation Hub.

A folder should be set up to capture all the relevant documentation that needs to be shared with Education Scotland at the end of the statutory consultation period.

Representations will be sought from statutory consultees and the wider public in the following ways:

- An online questionnaire on East Lothian Council's Consultation Hub. The Consultation Hub will also hold all relevant consultation documentation for public viewing.
- Widely distributed paper copies of the same questionnaire, at Council buildings in the school catchment area. Sealed boxes will also be located in the relevant school(s) for their return.
- Paper and digital leaflets, in addition to the press adverts and Council web and social media announcements linked to the Consultation Hub. These leaflets will also detail a specific Education Consultations email inbox, to which any queries can be submitted during the consultation period.
- Leaflet distribution to pupils at relevant schools and local authority managed nursery classes and partner providers within the affected cluster area. The Head Teacher of the affected school(s) will also use established methods of communication to engage/remind parents about the consultation and the Education Scotland independent evaluation visit.
- In addition to the public meeting and public drop-in sessions, informal meetings will be held with staff at the directly affected schools to discuss any queries or concerns they may have on the proposal based around their availability and at their discretion.
- A representative group of pupils from directly affected schools will be invited to attend separate workshops where they were able to express their views on the proposal.
- Meetings will be held with the Parent Council of the directly affected schools.

Public Meeting

In line with section 7 of the 2010 Act, a formal public meeting will be held to discuss the proposal and anyone wishing to attend is invited to do so. The public meeting, which will be convened by East Lothian Council will be addressed by the Head of Education, and other senior officers of the Council, and chaired by an independent person. This will be an opportunity for members of the public meeting to:

- hear more about the proposal
- ask questions about the proposal

- have their views minuted so that they can be considered as part of the consultation process

A minute will be taken at the public meeting of comments, questions, and officer responses. A summary of the points raised will be published on the Council website, and a copy will be made available on request.

Questions, inaccuracies, and omissions

If any inaccuracy or omission is discovered in the Proposal Document either by the Council or any person, the Council will determine if relevant information has been omitted or, there has been an inaccuracy. It may then take appropriate action which may include the issue of a correction or the reissuing of the Proposal paper or the revision of the timescale for the consultation period if appropriate. In that event, relevant consultees and Education Scotland will be advised. The person, or persons, who have raised concerns, will receive an individual response to their submission.

PHASE 4 - EDUCATION SCOTLAND ENGAGEMENT

After the consultation period has ended, the Council will send Education Scotland a copy of any relevant written representations that are received from any person during the consultation period or, if Education Scotland agree, a summary of them. They will also receive a summary of any oral representations made to the Council at the public meetings and at any drop-in sessions that will be held and, as available, a copy of any other relevant documentation.

Education Scotland will then have three weeks within which to prepare a report on the educational aspects of the proposal after the Council has sent them all representations and documents mentioned above.

In preparing their report, Education Scotland may visit the affected schools and make such reasonable enquiries of such people there as they consider appropriate.

PHASE 5 - CONSULTATION REPORT

The Council will review the proposal having regard to the Education Scotland report, written representations that it has received, and oral representations made to it by any person at the public meeting and drop-in sessions.

A final Consultation Report will be prepared which will be published in electronic and printed formats and will be advertised in the local newspapers. It will be available on the Council website and from Council Headquarters (John Muir House), public libraries in the vicinity of the affected schools, and the affected schools.

The Council will also inform anyone who made written representations during the consultation period about the report.

Note: Education Scotland require the report to be placed on the Council website the same date they publish on the Education Scotland page.

The Consultation Report will include a record of the total number of written representations made during the consultation period, a summary of the written representations, a summary of the oral representations made at the public meetings and drop in sessions, the Council's response to the Education Scotland Report as well as any written or oral representations it has received, together with a copy of the Education Scotland Report and any other relevant information. The report will also set out the actions the Council has taken to address any alleged inaccuracies and omissions notified to it.

The Consultation Report will contain a statement explaining how it complied with the requirement to review the proposal considering the Education Scotland Report and representations (both written and oral) that it had received.

Where the consultation report relates to a rural school closure proposal, the Council must conduct a further assessment for the proposal and each of the reasonable alternatives that were set out in the proposal paper related to section 13 of the 2010 Act. This includes a further assessment of the likely educational benefits, the likely effect on the community and the likely effect of different travelling arrangements to consider any further information that may have been raised during the consultation period. This also includes any new reasonable alternative to the proposal that may be suggested through the written representations.

In line with Section 11 of the 2010 Act, the Consultation Report will be published on the Council website and Consultation Hub, with hard copies available from the school, other schools within the vicinity, public library or other suitable place near the school and John Muir House for a period of 3 weeks. The publication of the report will be publicised through an advert in the East Lothian Courier, press release and social media.

PHASE 6 - COUNCIL DECISION

The Consultation Report together with any other relevant documentation will be considered after the end of the 3-week period, by full Council who will come to a final decision. Please see [Appendix 5](#) for a template committee report.

The Council will confirm the date that decision is effective from in the notice it publishes under section 15(2A). The notice will be published on the Council's website and on East Lothian Council's Consultation Hub within six working days, beginning on the day that the final decision is taken.

Rural Schools - As set out in section 11A of the 2010 Act, where a decision is taken to implement a rural school closure proposal or not, the Council will publish a notice on its website of that decision. Where the decision is to implement the proposal, the notice must also give the reasons why the Council is satisfied that this is the most appropriate response. The notice must be published within six working days, beginning on the day that the final decision is taken.

PHASE 7 – POST DECISION & SCOTTISH MINISTERS CALL-IN

At the end of the consultation process, Section 15 of the *Schools (Consultation)(Scotland) Act 2010* enables ministers to call-in a decision to implement the proposed closure.

Beginning on the day that the final decision is taken, the Council has a period of six working days to notify Scottish Ministers of the decision. Scottish Ministers will then have a period of eight weeks from and including the date of decision to decide if they will call-in the proposal. The Council must publish in their Decision notice that the Scottish Ministers have been notified and that representations can be made to the Scottish Ministers within the first three weeks of the eight-week period. The Scottish Ministers will consider any relevant representations that were made to them by any person within the first three weeks. The Council may not proceed with the implementation of the proposal until this eight-week period has passed.

If the Scottish Ministers decide to call in a closure proposal, it is then referred to the Convener of the School Closure Review Panels who has a period of seven days after a call-in notice is issued to constitute a School Closure Review Panel. The Panel may decide to refuse consent to the proposal, refuse consent and remit it to the education authority for a fresh decision or grant consent to the proposal, either subject to conditions, or unconditionally. The Panel must notify the education authority of its

decision within eight weeks from when the Panel was constituted or within 16 weeks if the Panel has issued a notice to the education authority that a decision has been delayed. The Council may not proceed with the implementation of the proposal until the outcome of the call-in has been notified to the Council.

PHASE 8A - POST APPROVAL IMPLEMENTATION

Once notification is received from the Scottish Government or School Closure Review Panel that the proposal can be implemented, officers must inform all relevant parties of the decision and the intended implementation date. The council website and East Lothian Consultation Hub must also be updated with the decision. Relevant parties include Head of Education and Executive Director of Education and Children's Services, Chief Executive, Elected Members, Education Leadership Team, Head Teachers, parents/ carers, staff and pupils of the school, Parent Council and Community Council.

Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate must be informed of the closure implementation date.

Council teams and colleagues from all service areas involved in the closure of the school will be notified, and discussions should take place regarding, but not limited to:

- transportation for pupils
- distribution of remaining resources and furniture
- removal of any temporary accommodation on site
- securing the building
- school funds
- offboarding of school MIS (Seemis/Groupcall/iPay)
- SEED code removal

The GIS mapping system will be updated with agreed alternative catchments, and schools made aware that updates are available on the online Catchment Map Tool. Schools should be advised to update all relevant documents they hold, referencing the school and previous catchments.

The relevant sections on the Council website that mention the school, should be updated and the school's own website decommissioned. The school email address and telephone number should also be decommissioned.

Parents/carers, families and the community should be supported to enrol in the new school and ensure smooth transition. If the closed school was not mothballed prior to closure, a transition plan should be drafted with support from Quality Improvement Officers and relevant officers in the Strategy and Operations team.

The Head of Infrastructure should be notified that the school has been permanently closed. East Lothian Council will then consider the future use of the building. Responsibility for the school and associated costs will remain with Education until the future use of the building is determined by the Council.

PHASE 8B - CONSENT REFUSED OR DECISION TO NOT IMPLEMENT PROPOSAL

If the School Closure Review Panel refuses consent to the closure proposal, or, following publication of its consultation report, the Council decides not to implement the closure proposal, the authority cannot publish a further closure proposal in relation to the school for 5 years, unless there is a significant change in the school's circumstances. This period starts on the day on which the decision was made.

Appendix 1 – Call in Timeline

School Closure Consultation and Scottish Ministers Call-In Process Timeline

Consultation Phase	Duration
Phase 1 – Community Option Appraisal	Start 36 weeks before phase 2 (9 months)
Phase 2 – Preparation for Consultation	8 weeks (minimum) considering officer workload and holiday periods
Phase 3 - Statutory Consultation Period	6 weeks (minimum) including 30 school days
Phase 4 - Education Scotland Engagement Period	Documentation to be sent to Education Scotland within 5 working days of end of statutory consultation period Engagement Period - 3 weeks (maximum) after statutory consultation period has ended
Phase 5 – Preparation and Publication of Consultation Report	Report must be published for 3 weeks (minimum)
Phase 6 - Consideration of Consultation Report by East Lothian Council	Committee / Council Meeting (after 3-week publication period has completed)
Notification of Council Decision to Scottish Ministers	Within 6 working days where the authority makes a closure decision otherwise within 3 weeks (minimum)
Phase 7 - If proposal approved - Scottish Ministers Consideration of Council Decision	8 weeks (maximum)
Phase 8a If proposal not called in by Scottish Ministers - Council Implementation of Proposal	From start of next academic session or most appropriate in-year transition point

Consultation Phase	Duration
If proposal called in - Scottish Ministers refer to School Closure Review Panel for review	17 weeks (maximum)
Phase 8a - If proposal called in by Scottish Ministers and the School Closure Review Panel consents to the proposal - Council Implementation of Proposal	From start of next academic session or most appropriate in-year transition point
Phase 8b - Restriction on school closure consultation for five years	If the School Closure Review Panel refuses consent to the closure proposal, or, following publication of its consultation report, the authority decides not to implement the closure proposal, the authority cannot publish a further closure proposal in relation to the school for 5 years, unless there is a significant change in the school's circumstances. This period starts on the day on which the decision was made.

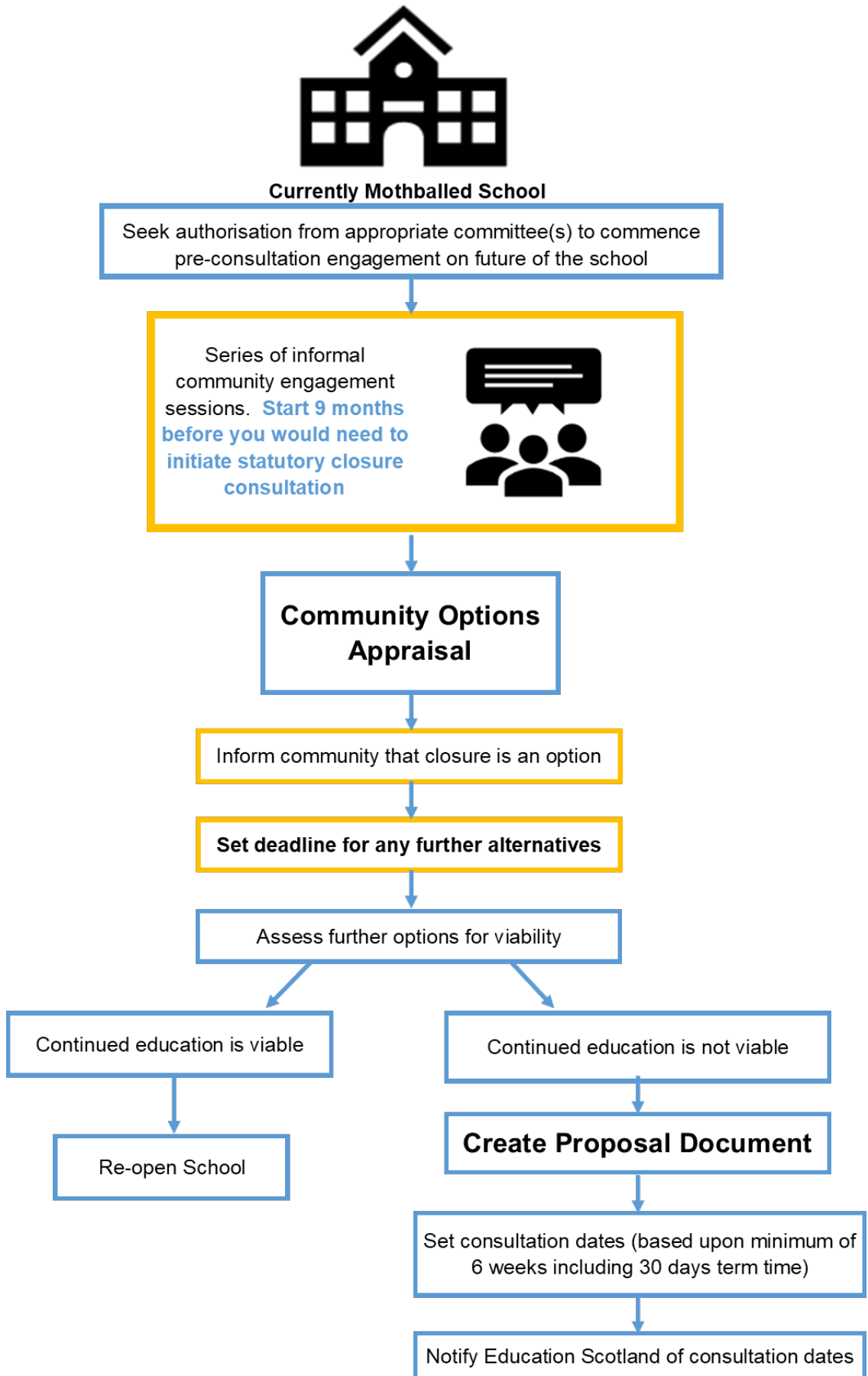
Appendix 2 – Statutory Consultation Checklist

<p>PHASE 3 - STATUTORY CONSULTATION PERIOD (minimum 6 weeks including 30 school days)</p>	Publish Consultation Document and Support Material on Council website
	Activate online survey on Consultation Hub
	Announce Consultation Proposal, timescale, availability of Consultation Packs and methods for feedback from public
	Meet with Head Teachers of affected schools to discuss staff engagement and distribution of pupil engagement questions
	Agree pupil engagement questions
	Draft FAQ document and continue to update
	Address any inaccuracy or omission discovered in the Proposal Document (if required)
	Set up folder to collate relevant documentation to share with Education Scotland at end of consultation period
	Produce signs and collate relevant documents for drop in sessions
	Drop in sessions
	Meetings with staff
	Meetings with pupils
	Parent Council meeting
	Organise minute-taker for Public Meeting - take audio recording if possible
	Prepare public meeting documents, e.g. powerpoint, copies of maps, comment cards
	Public Meeting
	Transcribe meeting
	<p>PHASE 4 - EDUCATION SCOTLAND ENGAGEMENT</p>
Theme questionnaire responses	
Summarise written and oral representations	
Produce final summary stats of responses - themes, break down etc	
Submit consultation documentation and representation summaries to Education Scotland (within 5 working days of end of consultation)	
Education Scotland Consultation Period Starts - (Max 3 weeks)	
<p>PHASE 5 - CONSULTATION REPORT (Published for Minimum of 3 weeks before Council Committee Meeting)</p>	Support Education Scotland as required in setting up meetings with pupils, staff and parents post-consultation
	Analyse consultation responses/respond to themes
	Anonymise comments section from appendices
	Consider and agree amendments based on Consultation and Education Scotland Feedback
	Write Final Consultation Report:
	<i>** Consultation Report: Background</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Consultation Process</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Summary of Written representations</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Response to Key Themes</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Response to comments made in Education Scotland report</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Transition Arrangements</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: For Rural School Closures - further assessment for the proposal and each of the reasonable alternatives that were set out in the proposal paper related to section 13 of the 2010 Act</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Comment on Compliance with the Act</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Actions taken to address any alleged inaccuracies and omissions notified to it</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Scottish Ministers Call-In Closure procedure</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Personnel and Environmental Issues</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Conclusion and Officer Recommendations</i>
	<i>** Consultation Report: Appendices - Comments from Questionnaire Responses, Public Meeting Minute, Notes from other engagement sessions, Education Scotland report</i>
Write Integrated Impact Assessment	
Notify Education Scotland re publication of Final Consultation Report (5 days before)	
Sign off Final Consultation Report	
Publish Final Consultation Report on Council Website/Consultation Hub and announce to Public and Statutory Consultees	
<p>PHASE 6 - COUNCIL DECISION</p>	Submit title of Committee Report to Clerk (Full Council)
	Write Committee Report
	Submit Committee report to Clerk (Full Council) 9AM SUBMISSION
	Attend Committee Meeting for decision
	Publish decision on website/consultation hub and notify consultees within 6 working days , beginning on the day that the final decision is taken
	Notify Scottish Government ministers within 6 working days of closure decision with copies of consultation proposal and report and all supporting information relating to the proposal

PHASE 7 – POST DECISION & SCOTTISH MINISTERS CALL-IN	Ensure consultees are aware of their right to make representations to Ministers and how to do this, this must be evidenced
	3 week period from date of decision for members of the public to make representations to the Ministers requesting a call in
	8 week period from date of decision for Ministers to call in Authority's decision (3 weeks for call in and a further 5 weeks)
	Education Authority must wait until they have heard back from Scottish ministers before proceeding to next stage
	If call in period is completed and approved then continue to Phase 8a
	If proposal is rejected then notify all relevant parties and consider alternative approaches
PHASE 8a – POST APPROVAL	Notify all relevant parties within the authority about decision and implementation date:
	*Notify Head of Service and Executive Director of Education
	*Notify Head Teacher(s) and QIO/EMT
	*Briefing to Elected Members
	*Notify Parent Council(s)
	*Notify Parents/Staff/Pupils
	*Notify Community Council
	Update website and East Lothian Consultation Hub with the decision
	Work with parents & community to enrol in new school & ensure smooth transition
	Notify Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate of closure implementation date
	Update ScotXed Establishments Return with closure implementation date
	Discussions with Transport Service to implement School Transport changes
	Discussions with Property re securing building and removal of any temporary accommodation (as required)
	Discussions with Finance
	Redistribute teaching resources and furniture
	Update GIS Mapping System with any catchment revisions
	Send affected schools copies of new catchment areas, new postcodes/addresses and reminder to update their school handbook and website
Decommission School Website	
Contact IT to: archive school email, phone number and removal of school name on any lists on Council website	
Contact Third Party Suppliers to offboard any relevant Education MIS sites (SEEMIS/Groupcall/iPay)	

Please note - there is an Excel version of this template checklist, including space to assign task ownership, deadline and completion dates - [Appendix 2 – ELC Closure Consultation Checklist.xlsx](#)

Appendix 3 – Pre-Consultation Flowchart



Appendix 4 – Communication (School Closure Consultation)

1. Decision to proceed with consultation.
2. A paper to council / committee seeking authorisation to hold a consultation. Promotion carried out around that in line with usual protocols:
 - a. Press release created and issued **one week before meeting** when papers go live online. Issued to media, posted online and promoted through social media.
 - b. Press release created and issued on **day of council meeting** following decision. Issued to media, posted online and promoted through social media.
3. Confirmation that consultation is to proceed. Consultation hub page set up with all relevant documentation including proposal document, digital leaflets, catchment maps and other contextual/background information, online questionnaire, information on where to obtain a paper copy and how to request the report in another format to suit individual needs.
4. An advert is placed in the East Lothian Courier and press release is issued, advising of the consultation. Pre-announcement is also made on the Council's website and social media posts.
5. Notification of the consultation is given to all statutory consultees (*see Phase 2 – Notice to Consultees*) prior to the commencement of the consultation.
6. The consultation opens. Information leaflet setting out details about the proposal and consultation meetings issued to all statutory consultees. Advice on where the complete Proposal Document can be obtained in paper copy will be included in the leaflet as well as the link to the East Lothian Council's Consultation Hub. Paper copies of the information leaflet and consultation proposal document are made available at each school/ELCC setting (as relevant) within the cluster of the school(s) affected by the proposal. Copies are also made available within other Council buildings in the cluster, e.g. local community centre, library, as well as any GP surgeries and at John Muir House, Haddington. Events arranged.
7. Ongoing social media promotion during consultation, including any events. Head Teachers of affected schools use established methods of communication to engage/remind pupils, parents and staff about the consultation and the Education Scotland independent evaluation visit.
 - a. Follow up press release ahead of closure of consultation period.
8. Consultation closes. Consultation hub updated to reflect closure and next steps.
9. Consultation report is published online (minimum 3 weeks before being considered at Council). Paper copies of consultation report distributed as required. Statutory consultees are alerted directly.
10. An advert is placed in the East Lothian Courier and press release is issued, advising of the report's publication and where it can be accessed.

11. Social media is issued advising of the report's publication.
12. Report is considered by Council. Promotion carried out around that in line with usual protocols:
 - a. Press release created and issued **one week before meeting** when papers go live. Issued to media, posted online and promoted through social media.
 - b. Press release created and issued on **day of council meeting** following decision. Issued to media, posted online and promoted through social media.
13. Council decision published on council website and consultation hub. Write to consultees within 6 working days of decision. Must explain that consultees have a right to make representations to Ministers with instructions on how to do this. Scottish Government notified within the same 6 working days.
14. Following call in period, notify all relevant parties of outcome.

Appendix 5 – Template Committee Report



REPORT TO:

MEETING DATE:

BY:

SUBJECT:

PURPOSE

7.3

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.4

BACKGROUND

7.5

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1

INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 ***Enter only one of the following statements – selecting the one that is appropriate to your report***

The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and no negative impacts have been identified.
[Authors are requested to add the web link.]

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.6 Financial -
- 7.7 Personnel -
- 7.8 Other -

BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.9

AUTHOR'S NAME	
DESIGNATION	
CONTACT INFO	
DATE	