

Future of Knockbreck Primary School

Online Teams Meeting

Monday 2nd March 2026 6.30pm

Attendees	Apologies
Councillor Finlayson	Councillor Gillies
Councillor Millar	
Mhairi Macdonald (AQIM)	
Sara Matheson (ESO)	
Ramond Barnett (Waternish CC)	
Kathy Sillence (Waternish CC)	
Christine Maclean (Parent)	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MM welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to the meeting and asked everyone to introduce themselves.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MM noted apologies from Councillor Christine Gillies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MM outlined briefly why this meeting has been arranged – Knockbreck PS has been mothballed since April 2024 and when a school is mothballed it requires to be reviewed annually. MM explained that it was an informal meeting to gather parent and community views re what the next steps should be and it was not part of any formal consultation at this stage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MM then asked if Councillor Finlayson or Councillor Millar had anything to add at this point. Councillor Finlayson added we need to do what's best for the community, we need to look at what the projected roles are and added there is the good news that we are building a new school in Dunvegan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MM welcomes any emails from anyone not able to make the meeting and will be happy to discuss their views.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MM asked Christine Maclean what her thoughts were. Christine added her daughter is going into high school in August but it was the best thing for her, moving to a bigger school. She said it was a shame that no other parents were in attendance. MM confirmed that Christine was the only parent that responded.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christine added it was a shame that there was no school in the area but there are no children and no real prospect of any either. It is just a shame that the building is empty as it will deteriorate quicker and it is better if it is being used.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Finlayson added if there was a decision to close the school then there would be options for the community and others to consider what the building might be used for. He mentioned a similar situation in Struan where the community have taken over the use of the building.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raymond asked how many parents were contacted and MM confirmed another three sets of parents. Some of whose children now go to Dunvegan PS and Portree PS. Raymond asked what number you would need to keep school open. MM said there was no official number but you need to look at the educational benefit and social interaction. Councillor Finlayson added probably ten would be the minimum number. Christine confirmed that bigger numbers are better and offer more opportunities and the fact that other parents didn't attend the meeting maybe indicates that they are done and the children are happy where they are now.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Millar reiterated that an empty building will fall into disrepair and

<p>children need the social interaction and the fact that there is going to be a new school with modern facilities in Dunvegan will be very attractive if a family moves into the area.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MM confirmed that there are really three possible conclusions – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The school re-opening ○ The school continues to be mothballed ○ Start statutory consultation on a formal closure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MM confirmed that it would be Scottish Ministers who would have the final decision about a closure. There would be a full and prolonged public consultation which would include public meetings in the community. Staff, parents, pupils of the schools involved would be asked to submit their views. Education Scotland would send a representative along to any public meetings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MM advised that whatever the outcome is, she will be required to report back and Councillor Finlayson and Councillor Millar are both on the Education Committee and will have to submit a report before any formal consultation would begin.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Finlayson added that given everything that has been said at the meeting, he would be recommending that we move to a statutory consultation to close the school. Councillor Millar agreed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathy commented how impressed she was with the current school transport.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Finlayson said that the community could put in a request for use of the building. He mentioned Elgol Primary and how the community were using that building. He added that any community use would be required to pay for heating costs and other various things but the council are amenable to these kind of discussions as they don't want a building that they own to fall into disrepair. He also mentioned it could be used for social housing as there is a serious shortage of housing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raymond said that although it was sad, he was kind of in agreement with closing the school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christine asked if it was confidential - MM said that it is all just part of an informal review and the more people that know in the community the better.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MM concluded that the opinion from the meeting was to begin the public consultation but advised there would ample opportunity to hear from the whole community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathy asked about catchment area and MM said that it would probably be the recommendation of officers that Knockbrek would be in the catchment of Dunvegan PS.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MM confirmed to Ramond that at the next Waternish CC meeting that they could inform members.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MM closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and that she will be in touch as the statutory consultation moves forward but if anyone has any further questions to get in touch via email.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting ended just after 7pm.