

**Hello everyone, here is the latest update on what is happening with Torridon Primary School.**

From the Highland Council (HC) closure consultation side, you can read the report which will be considered at Council's Education Committee on 7th September. All the comments and responses are included in this document. Sadly but not unexpectedly the report recommends closure of Torridon Primary School.

[https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/893/schools\\_-\\_general\\_information/24/school\\_consultations\\_and\\_closure\\_proposals](https://www.highland.gov.uk/info/893/schools_-_general_information/24/school_consultations_and_closure_proposals)

### **Repurposing the school buildings**

We are moving forward as we look to secure the buildings for the community. A formal expression of interest for a community asset transfer (CAT) has been sent to HC, advising them that, if the school closure is confirmed, then the community would like to enter into discussions to acquire the buildings and playpark. There is a full process to be followed for this to actually happen and of course we need to wait for the outcome of the closure consultation first but the dialogue with HC has started.

The team worked on drawing up a detailed brief which was sent to independent consultants inviting them to tender to undertake a feasibility study on the site and the ideas suggested for the site by the community. The tender process has now ended and quotes have been received. You can view the brief sent to the consultants on the TKCC website, where you will also find a location plan and a plan showing the layout of the buildings.

<https://www.tkcc.scot/communitydevelopmentplan>

The quotes which we have received from consultants form part of our application for Community Regeneration Funding (CRF) from HC, you can view our application form on the same page of the TKCC website. This application has been submitted to HC but we require further funds and will be applying to Scottish Land Fund (SLF) later in August. If we are not successful in applying for CRF then it is possible that SLF will fund all of the project. The money received from these two funds will pay for the consultant to undertake the feasibility study.

Further discussions have been had with the Community Housing Trust, Scottish Land Fund, Highlands & Islands Enterprise and Highland Council's Community Regeneration Team and we are supported by Laura from Scottish Community Development Centre. These organisations have helped by providing feedback and advice on the documents which we have been working on.

### **What next?**

We are now finalising our SLF application and waiting to hear from HC to find out if our CRF application has been successful. It is likely we will know by mid September. If successful we will engage one of the consultants who will split their work into two stages:

Stage one: Look at the options suggested and by engaging with the community recommend the best option to take forward

Stage two: Draw up detailed business plans for the chosen option

It is perhaps worth clarifying TDCA's involvement in the project: The Development Plan Steering Group is operating as a sub committee of TDCA, funding applications are being made in TDCA's name

and TDCA will receive grant funding and pay the consultant. This does not mean that TDCA will automatically take on the ownership of the school or the development project if the CAT is successful (although it might), these are all things which need to be worked out, and will be considered as part of the feasibility study.

And finally..... Hopefully the level of detail in the documents which we have shared show how much work and time have gone into getting us to this stage. If you think you have the relevant skills and would like to join the team please let us know. Otherwise please engage with the upcoming community consultations as much as possible.

Mat Webster

On Behalf of the Development Plan Steering Group