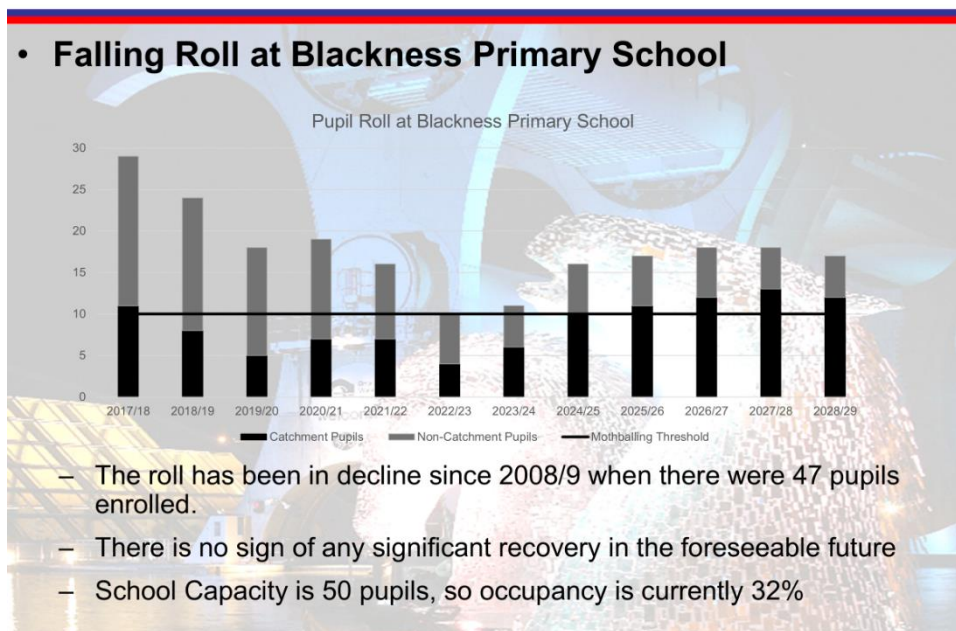


Appendix 7: Presentation Slides

AGENDA

6:30pm	Welcome and Introduction <i>Jon Reid (Director of Children's Services)</i>
6:35pm	Background to the Proposal <i>Jon Reid (Director of Children's Services)</i>
6:40pm	Educational Benefits Arising from Proposed Closure <i>Deborah Davidson (Head of Education)</i>
6:45pm	Financial and Property Considerations <i>Kenny McNeill (Resources Manager)</i>
6:50pm	Next Steps in Consultation Process <i>Richard Teed (Senior Forward Planning Officer)</i>
6:55pm	Questions and Answers
7:55pm	Closing Remarks <i>Jon Reid (Director of Children's Services)</i>

Background to the proposal



Background to the proposal

- **November/December 2022** - Stakeholders were consulted on a proposal to mothball Blackness PS after extended period of very low pupil numbers

There was community opposition to this proposal and the projected school roll was called into question by consultees

- **January 2023** - The Education, Children & Young People Executive agreed not to proceed with the mothballing, but review in 2024 following the enrolment process for Session 2024/25

- **September 2024** – The Executive Committee agreed to formally consult on a proposal to permanently close Blackness Primary School. This would be carried out in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act

Scottish Government guidance encourages a full statutory consultation on a closure proposal where there is significant opposition to mothballing

Alternatives to Closure

- **Catchment rezoning**

No viable options. It would disrupt communities in Bo'ness that are currently within walking distance to Grange Primary School

- **Open Nursery provision**

Not considered a reasonable option due to low projected uptake, cost of alterations to school and nearby available nursery provision

- **Use spare capacity for other purposes**

Not considered a reasonable option due to peripheral location of Blackness, the lack of available space in the school and the proximity to nearby community hub

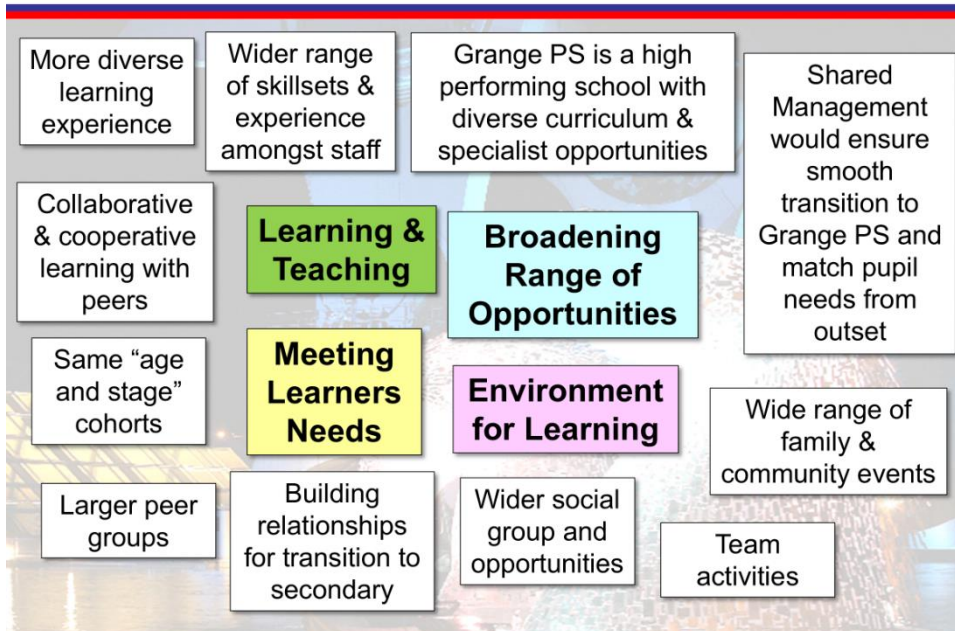
- **Mothball the school**

The previous proposal met with opposition and would only have been suitable for a temporary period. A statutory consultation on the closure proposal provides more opportunity for stakeholders to have their say

- **Keep the school open**

No other steps have been identified for increasing the catchment roll and maintaining status quo

Educational Benefits



Financial & Property Considerations

- 2023/24 annual operating costs were **£275,045** or **£25,004 per pupil**
- Falkirk average cost per pupil in 2023/24 was **£6,576**
- Net annual savings of circa **£203,460** (2023/24) from closure (to be redistributed within the education sector, including Grange Primary School)
- Further savings from reduced maintenance of school building (circa 100 years old) would also be available to invest in the wider school estate
- If the proposed closure goes ahead then the school will become an asset surplus to requirements and the Council will consider and consult with the Community on future use.

Next Steps in Consultation Process

- Consultation Closes on 8th November
- Education Scotland report back to Council on 2nd December
- Consultation Report Published on website (all respondents notified)
- Council Decision on Proposal (January 2025 at earliest)
- If proposed closure is agreed, then this will be notified to Scottish Ministers and publicised on website
- 8-week period during which decision can be “called-in” by Ministers and potentially referred to School Closure Review Panel for further consideration

