



Minutes

Name of meeting	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS
Date and time	THURSDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2019 COMMENCING AT 5:00 PM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs Vanessa Churchman (Chairman), Debbie Andre, George Cameron, John Howe, Karl Love, Gary Peace.
Co-opted members (voting)	Shaun Arnold (Parent Governor)
Cabinet members	Cllrs Paul Brading, Dave Stewart
Officers Present	Jennifer Armstrong, Steve Crocker, David Hardcastle, Duncan Mills, Brian Pope, Jean Thorpe.

7. [Minutes](#)

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 May 2019 be confirmed.

8. [Declarations of Interest](#)

Cllr Debbie Andre declared a personal interest as she had recently been appointed as governor for the Cornerstone Federation of schools.

Mr Arnold declared an interest as a governor for the Isle of Wight Education Federation (Carisbrooke/Medina Colleges)

Cllr John Howe declared an interest as a member of the Fostering Panel.

9. [Public Question Time](#)

A written question had been received from Mr David Botell, Co-Chair of Parents Voice. Mr Botell did not attend the meeting. Therefore, a written response would be provided (PQ45/19).

Mr Ieuan Jehu of Totland asked a question in relation to refurbishments to the Freshwater school site and population forecasts. The Cabinet member advised a written response would be provided (PQ46/19).

10. [Update on The Bay Church of England School](#)

The Chairman welcomed Duncan Mills, Headteacher of The Bay Church of England School. Members considered a presentation (attached to and forming part of these minutes) which provided the committee with an update on progress with a range of key activities since the school was established in September 2018.

The condition of the current building and site was highlighted as a significant challenge, particularly following recent inclement weather and resulting flooding. The committee were advised that £7m funding for capital investment had been secured. Other challenges included change management and budget pressures.

Discussions took place regarding the benefits of the through school and members noted these included the consistency of the curriculum model between key stages, secondary staff being involved in the moderation of the levels at which children from year six transitioned into year seven and that support for children with special educational needs could be progressed through the school.

Members were pleased to note the strong Key Stage 2 performance which was above the national average. Due to the journey the school had undertaken and resulting challenges, Key Stage 4 results, whilst improved, were expected to fall below national levels. In addition to improving overall results, work in Autumn 2019 would also focus on closing the gap between male and female students and pupils in receipt of free school meals.

The involvement of the Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Service in supporting the school was also outlined. This was greatly assisting with the delivery of the school's vision.

The committee felt that it would be of benefit if the lessons learnt on the journey of setting up the through school be collated for future reference.

RESOLVED :

THAT the committee congratulate all those involved in the success of the Bay Church of England School and a update report be submitted to a future meeting.

11. [The Impact of the Mathematics Project at Key Stage 2 in Isle of Wight Schools](#)

The County Education Manager, School Improvement, presented a report outlining the impact of the Isle of Wight Key Stage 2 Mathematics Project, which had been funded by the Department for Education (DfE) through its Strategic School Improvement Fund.

Early provisional data suggests that the number of pupils in the project reaching age related expectations in mathematics in the project schools increased by

15% leading to an overall improvement of 9% for the Isle of Wight in this measure, bringing results broadly in line with the national average.

The £155k funding for the project had allowed the local authority to work closely with approximately half the primary schools on the Isle of Wight to improve mathematics in those schools. The work focussed on improvement through understanding where the precise blocks that children had were and devising teaching strategies to address them.

The committee sought reassurance regarding how the project would be taken forward without further DfE funding and were advised this consideration had been part of the bid submitted for use of the school improvement fund. Future work included working with schools to embed changes, drawing on the skills of leaders and teachers from Isle of Wight schools where appropriate and working closely with the Solent Maths Hub.

RESOLVED:

THAT the impact of the Isle of Wight Key Stage 2 Mathematics Project be noted and a report be considered at a future meeting on progressing the project.

12. Higher Education

The committee received a presentation (attached to and forming part of these minutes) which provided an overview of the plan for the development of Higher Education on the Island.

The engagement around the project and options consulted on were outlined. A working group had been formed to explore options for the future development of higher education on the island. Representatives from secondary schools, the college and universities had been fully engaged, with the voice of employers represented by the Island Chamber of Commerce. EMSI, an external education and skills consultancy, had been commissioned to test four options:

- Maintain the status quo
- Organic growth
- A higher education Hub
- A full university.

Almost 900 individuals, including school and college students, responded. Their preferred option was the establishment of a new high education hub. The feasibility of this option would be explored in the next stage of the project.

The exercise had underlined the high aspirations of young people on the island to undertake higher education, with more than 60% stating they intended to go to university after their post 16 studies. Members commented on the value of the initiative and referred to the relatively low number of young people who moved into higher education programmes from the Island and noted that a higher education offer would also serve the skills needs of employers and, potentially, attract talent to the island.

For the first time, a combined higher education guide would be produced for the island. The guide would provide, in one place, the higher-level offer from all providers on the island, covering eight subject areas and almost 50 individual courses. Excerpts of the draft guide were shared with the committee and the final document would be distributed in October 2019 to coincide with the annual jobs and careers event held at the Isle of Wight college.

During discussion, the committee noted that post-16 home to school travel was not funded unless there was a specific need. A student travel scheme was offered by Southern Vectis.

The committee noted that although there was no statutory duty on the local authority to provide higher education, the council wished to actively support the development of a strong and sustainable on-island higher education offer. Funding for higher education was provided through a combination of fees and development funds from the Office for Students. Officers would seek a direct dialogue with universities to explore the prospect of future investment in the island.

RESOLVED:

- (i) THAT the creation of a new Higher Education Centre (potentially including accommodation), initially based within existing educational facilities that can be repurposed, be supported.
- (ii) THAT a report be submitted at a future meeting on progress with the second stage of the project.

13. **The Committee's Workplan**

Members gave consideration to the committee's workplan following Full Council's approval of the Corporate Plan. Reassurance was provided that officers contributions to the workplan, and suggestions regarding how the items should be approached, would continue to be welcomed.

Discussion took place in relation to education provision on the West Wight. The difficulties related to the situation were recognised and members were advised regular briefings would continue to be provided. A further update report was expected at the October 2019 Cabinet meeting.

The Director of Children's Service requested an item relating to fostering be included on the agenda for the November 2019 meeting.

RESOLVED:

THAT the workplan be noted and developed in conjunction with the cabinet member and officers.

CHAIRMAN