

**Cabinet – Thursday 11 July 2019**

**Written Question from Ieuan Jehu**

**Re: West Wight School Places – Outcome of Consultation**

Like the Preferred option; many of the responses to the consultation proposed complex solutions to the issue of reducing the number of surplus school places (a problem which no longer exists since All Saints' have reduced their PAN and Brighstone have applied to do similar) yet in the Committee Report all of the alternative proposals are simplified into single action solutions and no consideration is given to the proposal for All Saints to site share with a new SEND facility. Would the cabinet consider delaying any decision on this matter whilst reasonable consideration is given to all of these complex, viable alternatives?

## ***Response***

The planned reduction in places at All Saints' and potential reduction of places at Brighstone will not in itself resolve the difficult issues being faced by the West Wight schools. Throughout the consultation phase we have been clear about the need to deal with the recognised standards issues at All Saints' and, the need to reduce the overall number of schools in the area from five to four. By doing this we start to provide some stability in-terms of numbers and funding for the remaining schools. Failure to take the difficult decisions required now will almost certainly lead us in to a position in the future where more than one school could be at risk of closure because of financial difficulties. Seeking to provide future financial stability must also be an outcome we achieve.

SEND across the island remains a key priority for the council and a review of provision is on-going. The proposals contained in this report do not preclude the future development of SEND on the West Wight, in fact they provide opportunity that might otherwise not exist.

Delaying a decision further will in my opinion only add to the difficulties and anxiety that already exists.