


Minutes from Public Meetings held at Yarmouth CE Primary and All Saints' CE Primary.

	<h1>Minutes</h1>	
Name of Meeting	West Wight School Public Consultation Meeting	
Date and Time	Thursday 06 June 2019, 6.00pm – 8.00pm	
Venue	All Saints Primary School, School Green Road, Freshwater, Isle of Wight	
Panel	Natalie Smith Martin Goff Mark Saunders (Facilitator) Helen White (Minutes)	School Improvement Manager IOW, Hants CC Head of Service – Information Transport & Admissions, Hants CC Strategic Development Officer, Hants CC Admin Officer, Children’s Services, IWC
<u>Chairs Introduction for the Public Meeting – Catherine Powell, Chair of Governors</u>		
<p>Introduction read out by Carol Bray, Vice-Chair:</p> <p>I would like to extend a warm welcome to our visitors and stakeholders. I am so very sorry that I am unable to be with you tonight, due to a recent hospital stay, and I look forward to hearing about a successful and productive meeting. Our absolute priority is to ensure the best option for local children and families, as well as the wider community of Freshwater.</p> <p>On Tuesday this week, the Full Governing Body met to debate and discuss the new option put forward as part of the West Wight Schools Planning Consultation. We are currently drafting our response and are pleased to have had an opportunity to hear from stakeholders, including those within the school and wider Freshwater community. As an inclusive Church School, welcoming those of all abilities, we abide by the Church of England Diocese Vision for Education to be ‘deeply Christian, serving the common good’.</p> <p>As we noted in our response to part one of the consultation, governors accept the overarching reasons for the need for the removal of surplus primary school places within the West Wight. We see this time of change as an exciting opportunity to raise standards of educational provision and outcomes for local primary school-age children. We are delighted that this latest option recognises the importance of the site and the many benefits it offers, as well as the opportunity for a new school fit for the 21st Century.</p> <p>We are thus broadly supportive of the new option, albeit there are details yet to be worked through and agreed. These include ensuring as smooth a transition as possible for children, their families and staff from within All Saints.</p> <p>We would, however, reiterate our disappointment in the selective use of the School’s progress and achievement measures in the delegated decision report (and elsewhere). As a reminder, in 2018, All Saints CE Primary School was ranked second out of 5 West Wight Primary Schools for overall performance at Key Stage Two (KS2), with progress scores in line with the national average. If compared with progress scores across the Island, All Saints CE School was ranked ninth out of 44 schools.</p> <p>Whilst a 3-year average score for SATS will look less favourable, when compared to other schools, the 3-year</p>		

trend for those achieving age-related expectations is undeniably one of improvement, i.e. from 35% (2016), to 40% (2017) and 50% (2018). Results for KS2 at the end of the current school year look set to continue this improving picture.

But rather than leave you with an argument based on what might be perceived as 'lies, damn lies and statistics' (Disraeli/Mark Twain), this consultation is first and foremost about major changes that impact on the daily lived experiences of Freshwater's children and their families and of staff at All Saints who continue to strive to deliver education in very challenging circumstances.

I am immensely proud of our parents, children, staff and governors who have contributed to the consultation and meetings with dignity and compassion. Tonight, will be no different. Thank you.

Update from Natalie Smith, Hampshire County Council

There has been an update on Brighstone Primary School's Ofsted position since the last meeting. The results of the recent Ofsted monitoring visit were shared with parents today. The results are positive, and reports that the school is taking effective action.

Introduction - Mark Saunders, Hampshire County Council

Mark Saunders set-out how the evening would be managed, the Panel introduced themselves and a presentation from Martin Goff and Natalie Smith regarding the latest option of West Wight school places was given.

Option: The closure of All Saints CE Primary School on 31 December 2019, and the expansion of Yarmouth CE Primary School to 30 pupils per year group and future relocation to the All Saints site.

Representatives

1) Kizzy Cowley – representation of Yarmouth parents with children who have protected characteristics and SEND. I would like to address the needs of our parents who are within walking distance of Yarmouth School and address the hypocrisy that is stated in the arguments for keeping a Freshwater site at the expense of our own well-performing, well-subscribed and financially viable school. What about my address in Wellow and the families in Bouldnor? Are we so inconsequential? This is representative of over 20 young people. Not 7 as I have seen stated by some.

Of those young people, 6 have protected characteristics and significant SEND. This includes a range of profound needs that have required specific training and adaptation to learning environments. On an individual note, I have one child who I have had to fight tirelessly for as she was dragged through the national media because of a campaign to prevent her expressing her trans identity, which under The Equalities Act 2010, she has the freedom to do. Substantial multi-agency training and support has been given to Yarmouth to help meet her needs. All this training will be lost if this proposal takes place, as I am not prepared to put her through further disruption and uncertainty, potentially risking her mental health.

My youngest daughter also has mobility needs and a condition called Neurofibromatosis (NF). A great deal of training has also taken place to ensure staff support her adequately. I will effectively be starting from scratch when we move schools. Why are you not thinking about our children at the centre of all this? I cannot risk her mobility needs being compromised during temporary arrangements.

The uncertainty of Little Stars nursery and its lack of consideration in this proposal is appalling. Sadie Gooding works across the Island demonstrating good practice. Parents come to Yarmouth for the school and nursery. Three families have moved to Yarmouth in recent years just to access the nursery and school.

In relation to this, another family in Yarmouth are in the process of having their child's complex needs met through Little Stars. This family have experienced considerable turmoil already and are now faced with losing all that has been put in place for their child's transition if this proposal were to continue.

The Equalities Act 2010 'places a duty on public authorities, including schools, to consider equality, in everything they do, encouraging evidence-led decision-making'. Where is your evidence behind this decision? I would insist on seeing this evidence and how this proposal improves the quality of education for our most vulnerable children. Rather, I believe it disproportionately disadvantages our families who have fought so hard to get it right, through informed decision making, by choosing a good school in a location that meets their child's needs. This proposal is undermining that choice. Or are our most vulnerable children to be disadvantaged for what appears to be the benefit of a failing school. Appalling.

2) Ruth Dubyk – I would like to speak in representation of the needs of all children at both Yarmouth and All Saints. The strong and effective leadership and governing body of the Yarmouth and Shalfleet Federation have a duty of care to the children currently attending both these schools when considering the impact of this proposal. There is concern that due to SEND cuts and the financial strain that schools are under nationwide, in the context of proposed reorganisation, multiple transitions and staffing constraints, that the needs of both these cohorts would be compromised.

The statement from our governors has caused offence to parents seeking this proposal as a positive move forward. I would urge you to look beyond educational terminology. Instead consider how a school under the previously mentioned pressures can ensure they best meet need.

I am confident that the teaching staff have the skills and ability, for example, to provide government directed initiatives for Pupil Premium and LAC children, that they can adequately challenge children who should meet higher attainment in both schools, that they can deliver schemes for those with SEN, that they understand the importance of person-centred processes and the professional and parent liaisons these involve. However, I am not confident the space, resources, staffing and financial support will be available to ensure these necessary provisions are provided. All this against the backdrop of a challenging reorganisation. To underestimate this would disregard the needs of all our children. It is under this level of uncertainty and without any reassurances or past precedence, that this proposal is not in the interest of my child or any of our children. I know that these concerns are shared by all parents at both schools as is expressed through Carly's representation.

As a parent of a child with SEN, I am aware through Parent Voice that a review of SEND provision on the Island is coming to a close. A need has been identified to relieve pressure on our 2 special schools, which should be reserved as provision for children with complex needs. Gaps have been shown in provision for children with Moderate Learning Difficulties and SEMH. The Island has the highest number of Elective Home Educated children in the country and broader provision is needed to address this and bring these numbers back to our schools that are in financial deficit due to surplus places in the West Wight.

Has it been considered that the All Saints site could be maintained as a 'satellite' provision for SEND? This could potentially provide Island-wide provision, retain capital funds for the site with potential for bespoke resourcing and avoids some of the difficulties when 'making significant changes to maintained schools'. Could this provide a way to maintain a small rural school on that site through incorporating an Island-wide provision raising pupil numbers in the West Wight? Parents at both schools, I'm sure, would like to see all options fully explored to protect all our schools through innovative and evidence-based proposals.

3) Helen Jones – firstly, I would like to acknowledge on behalf of our parents the considerable anxiety and stress this process has placed on us as a parent body. No parent wants to be in this position including the All Saints parents. A number of parents have explored alternative provision, including home schooling during the last 3 weeks. We believe that this trend would continue under the levels of uncertainty that this current proposal is causing.

I would also like to acknowledge that when presented with this proposal, our governors understood a decision of this magnitude needed to go to stakeholders. Somewhere in this process through informal conversation amongst the wider community, it has been presumed this proposal was a certainty – as reflected in the minutes of the Freshwater Parish Council on 21 May. We strongly object to this presumption and wish to express our views clearly through a transparent and accountable process. We also feel that discussion of future arrangements, such as uniform and competitions for a school name, are inappropriate at this stage given the potential impact of this proposal on all our children's education.

Firstly, it has been shown that the current proposal will not reduce surplus school places – the original stated objective of the consultation. On this basis alone, this proposal should be rejected.

Yarmouth School is an Ofsted 'good', well-performing, well-subscribed and financially viable school which forms part of a strong Federation with Shalfleet Primary. Any suggestion which threatens to destabilise this should require significant examination and evidence-based justification.

This proposal is ill thought out and also threatens to destabilise the only other 2 'good' Ofsted rated schools in the West Wight. This is clearly evidenced in our Governors' letter, our Federation parental survey, and in the St Saviour's letter from the governors to their parent body.

'LAs are under a statutory duty to ensure that they promote high educational standards' - were they to adopt this new proposal, we believe the Council would be failing in this duty.

With the new 'preferred option', significant and needless disruption would occur across 2 cohorts of children. There is a clear evidence-base to show the negative impact of transitions on children's learning and emotional stability. The new option would require at least one transition for Yarmouth children or 2 for those who joined us when Weston Primary closed, and 2 for All Saints children. This is unacceptable. The proposal requires the use of temporary classrooms, with an unknown end date. The PSBP Fund Phase 2 is for block rebuild or refurbishment – not new schools, and in context to its Government amber/red rating, this could take us into 2022. This is unacceptable. This successful Federation, which forms 2 of the 3 only Ofsted good schools in the West Wight, would be under huge financial and logistical strain.

Regarding the retention of a provision in Freshwater, we as parents question the significant emphasis of this when parental choice has played a key role in the decline of pupil numbers at All Saints. The importance of success in primary education and children's outcomes has far greater significance than the postcodes in which they live. A local option is still maintained with St Saviour's Primary School at 1 mile and Yarmouth within 2 miles. This is not unusual for rural schools. The national travel survey (2013) stated the national average distance to school is 2.7 miles. There are primary schools nationwide and Island-based that service large communities from peripheral rural locations. The central 'High Street' location is not a determinant for school provision and should certainly not come at the cost of an established successful school that has always served the West Wight community extremely well in the location where it is valued and supported.

4) Jaimie Jehu – firstly I would like to thank Mark Saunders for ensuring that my comments made during my representation at the last public meeting will be added to those minutes. I also understand that due to limited time, you were unable to allow me to show the presentation that I had prepared for the last public meeting. However, it will be submitted as part of the minutes for today. (This presentation can be found on the consultation webpage: <https://www.iow.gov.uk/Residents/Schools-and-Learning/Schools/School-Consultation>)

For the record, the presentation attempts to show how well Little Stars Pre-School smoothly transitions our children into main school, how the school thrives in the community and its current location. It also looks at the impact of surplus places over a number of scenarios and the legislative considerations that must be addressed for each proposal. However, I note that circumstances have changed a little since the presentation was prepared.

The Council states that it is fully committed to achieving an outcome that ensures the best possible local educational opportunities for all children and removes a meaningful proportion of the identified surplus capacity in the area.

At the public meeting held on 22 May, we were advised that All Saints have successfully reduced their PAN from 30 to 15 from 2020. This has reduced the surplus places from 248 to 143.

Subsequently the impact of transferring Yarmouth School to the All Saints site, which now combines 2 schools with 105 places into a 210-capacity school, actually removes none of the identified surplus places and just disrupts the education of the children of both schools significantly.

This also means that the original proposal of expansion to St Saviour's and closure of All Saints would only reduce surplus places by 35. The effectiveness of this and the impact on education of all the children involved must also be seriously considered.

I would like to take this opportunity to again highlight that if Brighstone School apply to reduce their PAN from 30 to 20, it could achieve a reduction of 70 identified surplus places. Therefore, the location of Yarmouth School does not in any way address the stated aim of the Council's objective and should be rejected.

5) Jill Cowley – I support the IW Council's original first preferred option to close All Saints and expand St Saviours School to give the least disruption to pupils and the most cost-effective way of reducing surplus school places. I reject the proposal to move All Saints children to the Yarmouth School site, then move both schools back to Freshwater, as disruptive and damaging to children and staff, and offering no economic benefit.

Let's start with the children. At the last meeting no mention of concern for children from Hampshire Officers. I assume everyone here is concerned with ensuring that our children have a safe environment in which to learn, in order to progress through life with positive self-esteem, with good health, physical and emotional health, to become well rounded adults contributing to society.

We need to provide them with good quality teaching and assessment, in an atmosphere which encourages personal development and enrichment. The needs of the children in Yarmouth School are being met and they are being prepared effectively for the next stage of their education. Ofsted confirms this because Yarmouth is a good school with good teaching, with effective leadership and good management, and good outcomes. Enrichment is delivered through its community involvement – D Day at CHOYD, Clean Seas with Harbour, Pier: history and engineering, Mill Copse and river, environment and federation with Shalfleet.

Sadly, children at All Saints are not receiving an adequate schooling. Ofsted confirms this has not happened for some years despite Hampshire's efforts and financial input.

As members of the West Wight community, we are concerned that the education of children of All Saints improves, but not at the expense of children of Yarmouth School and its leadership team.

The cohort of children due to be sitting stressful SATs tests next year is the group of children, some of whom had to move from Weston when it closed, and some of whom had to adjust to a very changed peer group. The staff and leadership team and the children flexed brilliantly in spite of a lack of extra SEN support. The learning outcomes were still good.

Hampshire's proposal is that these children are to endure a near doubling of size of their school, with no guarantee of good provision of extra services such as toilets, kitchen, SEN support. They will have restricted room to run around, no certainty of continuity of teaching or SEN support, then within the next term, just before SATs tests, another move to a school site for which there is no certainty of sufficient funds for rebuilding.

This proposal is not educationally sound. It will damage our children and their future. Yarmouth School provides successfully for the needs of its pupils starting with a community-provided Bumps and Babies in the Community Hall opposite, through an integrated pre-school which is second to none on the Island, until the end of primary years, (CHOYD opposite can offer a kitchen suitable for teaching), with community support and involvement throughout.

Yarmouth School is supported by volunteers and the children's lives are enriched by involvement in the life of the town and contact with activities in the town. Money is raised regularly for the school, because it is at the heart of the town. Its site is safe – served by a large carpark a short walk away, with no roads to cross. It is viable and occupies a proud position in our town and our lives.

I reject the IW Council's new proposal to move All Saints children to Yarmouth School site (overcrowding the site and over-stretching educational provisions and disrupting a good school), then moving all the children back to the All Saints site. This would damage the children and is not economically sound.

I wish to support the IW Council's original first proposed option of closing All Saints School and expanding St Saviour's (which is within walking distance) as being the least disruptive to pupils and the most cost-effective way to reduce surplus school places.

6) Sylvia Mence – former Education Officer. Supports Yarmouth School, but support should apply across the board. The Local Authority's job is to 'crunch numbers'. There is a need to think about the children and not units. When I worked in West Sussex, there were a lot of rural schools and this experience has taught me a lot about children and the environment. When the Council Officers write their report, firstly do not treat children in their informative years as units. Secondly, the disruption of moving the children will have a big impact. Think of the environment when you write your report to Cllr Brading. You plan to up-route children from an established community and this is not acceptable after the hard work gone into years and years of building something up.

7) Steve Cowley – the statement I make has been circulated to and supported by:

Yarmouth Town Council; Shalfleet Parish Council; The Trustees of the Community of Yarmouth & District (CHOYD); The Trustees of Yarmouth Town Trust; The Delphie Lakeman Memorial Trust.

My main concern is that all children in the West Wight have a 'good' education. Yarmouth, Shalfleet and St Saviour's are providing this. They are smaller primaries; the 2 larger schools Brighstone and All Saints have been judged as 'requires improvement'. (All Saints over a prolonged period in spite of considerable expensive support).

In the West Wight, the 3 smaller schools provide better value both educationally and financially. The Federation of Yarmouth and Shalfleet Schools offer extra educational support and enrichment to their children.

A good education is of particular importance at primary schools because it equips children for life and provides a foundation to move successfully on to secondary education and higher education. Yarmouth Primary School is a 'good' school providing that foundation on a safe site with physical and financial support from the community of Yarmouth. Although Yarmouth is a smaller community than Freshwater, it has a much larger community spirit. This can be demonstrated by the support given by the wide variety of organisations and volunteers who have spoken in support of keeping Yarmouth School in Yarmouth and contribute financially to the school and have done so for many years.

Many parents of Freshwater children have chosen to send their children to Yarmouth School because of the good education and caring ethos and have expressed their support for keeping Yarmouth School in Yarmouth. This can be seen in the letter from the Federation of Shalfleet and Yarmouth Governors to Paul Brading.

On a lesser point, the Environment Agency flood maps classes both All Saints site and Yarmouth in the same flood risk zone. The more recent study, adopted by the IW Council, indicates that there is little risk of extra flooding in the next 100 years so there is no extra risk to Yarmouth.

Parents have a choice over which school they send their children to and they choose 'good' schools rather than those rated 'requires improvements'. In today's world, most parents work, and most drive to work, so include dropping off and picking up children as part of their daily routine. Yarmouth is ideal for this as it adjoins a large carpark so there is no need to cross the main road. It is a safe site!

The current preferred option to close All Saints, move the children temporarily to Yarmouth before moving them back to All Saints will twice cause a great deal of unnecessary disruption to pupils' education. This will endanger their learning, their personal development, their behaviour and welfare. It will put an unnecessary and unreasonable burden on the staff and management of Yarmouth.

If a new large school is provided in Freshwater, this will also have a negative impact on the other 'good' schools of Shalfleet and St Saviour's. The financing of this is unquantified. This proposal is educationally unsound.

A great deal of money will be required to expand Yarmouth to cope with the extra pupils. It is not just a case of extra classrooms; more money will be required to increase the facilities for staff, services such as water, electricity, sewage, toilet provision and the kitchens. This proposal is financially unsound.

We support a modification of the original preferred option put forward by Paul Brading and the Educational Officers: that All Saints should close, but that parents should have a choice of options of other schools. Because most parents work, some may choose schools that are not in the West Wight, but nearer to where they work.

I must assume that the outcome of this option has been thoroughly researched to meet the educational and financial criteria required or it could not have been proposed and put as the original first preferred option. This proposal must be educationally and financially sound, best for the children.

8) Carly Wrye-Nook – parent of 2 All Saints children. It has been a long 4 months and we have been working tirelessly to try and save All Saints School. It was interesting that it was put together that children on Free School Meals need extra support educationally. I am a single mum receiving Free School Meals and both my children are thriving and doing well at this school.

All Saints has not been saved, as Hampshire came back with another proposal that still closes this school. It is concerning that it is being advocated that both All Saints and Yarmouth children are to get the best of a bad deal. It is not ok for Yarmouth children to be kept on their site and for All Saints children to be deposited. We should be working together. We have fought to keep the All Saints site open and will take onboard leadership from Yarmouth to come and make this work on the best site. Hampshire please can this come to an end soon, as I am tired of fighting? I am also tired of people making unfair comments. Our school and our children matter just as much as Yarmouth.

9) Vix Lowthion – parent of children at Brighstone School, teacher & Parish Councillor, lives in Yarmouth. Feels that staff and teachers are getting a damning representation. Just because a school has an Ofsted rating, does not mean that that school is a failure.

The West Wight Schools consultation would mean that Brighstone School would take additional students whatever happens. It needs to be clear that the decision to close a school in West Wight does not come from the parents or West Wight Councillors. Some schools on the mainland are bursting at the seams and we are lucky in West Wight not to have to deal with this.

I have researched, had meetings with Councillors and looked at stats. What part of this is best for our area?

The decision will stick with us for 30-40 years, so you have got to get this right. A good site will be lost for ever if a closure happens.

There is no impact assessment as to how this is going to affect Freshwater and Yarmouth. The villages do not trust IW Council to manage this effectively. The whole of the Isle of Wight needs looking at and not just West Wight. This is turning into a 'battle of the towns'. There are so many facilities in the area and what is needed is a school fit for the 21st century. No one wants to see the closure of the school site, but this is the best of the bad options. Keeping all our rural village schools for our children is the one thing we are all agreed on.

10) Paul Mocroft – Yarmouth and Shalfleet Schools have thrived from the excellent leadership of Lizzie Grainger and her team. What concerns me as a parent is that we are being fed the line that this new proposal isn't 'closing' our school but simply 'moving' it with the leadership and staff intact. I and many other parents do not recognise this as a move, but the closure of a good school. Why, if it's simply a move, are supporters of this proposal suggesting that cost savings should mean an extra full-time Head could be funded for each school site? That is not a move, it's a new school on the All Saints site with a new Headteacher who would hopefully drive up standards. What concerns me that we are only being given part of the picture.

Yarmouth School is a big part of Yarmouth and the wider West Wight community. It is the heart of the community of Yarmouth. By closing it, not only will the children suffer, but Yarmouth town will never be the same again. As a PTFA member, I see the amount of outreach and in-reach that happens at Yarmouth School, which is testament to how well respected it is in the community, and how the community and the school mutually support each other. Yarmouth School is the centre of the Yarmouth community: the town lacks the other community buildings such as a theatre, sports facilities and a library. Closing Yarmouth School will have a far greater negative impact on the smaller town of Yarmouth, with a number of small businesses and community groups suffering than would be affected by closing the All Saints site.

We seriously have to think about the future for not just our schools in isolation, but what these changes could do to our area of the Island. All things are interlinked; by reducing the number of schools, communities are affected, the attractiveness of an area for people to move into is affected and we already have a tough job attracting those in professional occupations to the Island. We already struggle to recruit healthcare professionals on the Island and by reducing schools in the area, you are also reducing the attractiveness for families with children to the area. This is not looking at the situation holistically. With a school gone in Yarmouth, local footfall to the town would decrease, therefore, impacting on all local businesses who are hugely supportive and involved with the school throughout the academic year.

We have an ageing population here in West Wight. Removing Yarmouth School is not likely to redress that balance and where are the younger generation going to come from to care for our ageing demographic? Likewise, the school regularly interact with the Community Hall of Yarmouth and District and the local Abbeyfield Care Home, which is hugely beneficial to both the older generation and the young children at the school. Closing the school would make it extremely unlikely these links would remain tenable.

Yarmouth Primary greatly benefits from financial support from the local business community (and the tourist industry including the yearly Randonee that this year brought in over £4000 for the school). This too would be severely impacted in any move. Local businesses give thousands of pounds to the school every year through donations to the school, offering financial support to the PTFA, providing gifts and prizes for school events. This would not continue if the school left the town.

This revised proposal has not come through listening to the Yarmouth community, but a knee-jerk reaction to people wanting to keep a school in Freshwater at any cost. Sacrificing a well performing school to save another that requires improvement is not a sensible choice. Yarmouth parents did respond to the original consultation, but as our school was under threat from closure, we did not suggest this new option. I personally commented in support of keeping all schools open.

This issue has been so divisive locally. There are distinct communities in our area, but we all belong to the

West Wight community irrespective of where we live or send our children to school. We should be coming together and not attacking each other.

11) Kevin Shaw – former Chair of Governors for Yarmouth School and continues to work in education. In 2008/09 we fought for 16 months to keep Yarmouth school open. It was proven then we were right, and Yarmouth School is doing well. I do not want to see All Saints closed. The threat of the closure of Yarmouth School is awful and there are things to be contemplated by residents of Yarmouth, but there is sympathy on both sides of the fence. There is a need to rethink it. The federation between Yarmouth & Shalfleet in 2010 has flourished ever since. You cannot take a successful half of that and just move it. There is concern educationally how this would work. It would need the complete support of the governing body of Yarmouth & Shalfleet and the Headteacher to make it work. The governing body have been listening carefully so they can think it through, which is why they have not said anything yet.

How are children in their critical years going to be affected? This is a flawed solution. Go back and think again and come up with a more enduring solution to this. Take a longer look at the plan and not one that has been done on numbers only. The decision should be collectively and not decisively. I do not see that you would get the expertise that you are hoping for with this option. Educationally it will lose good governors and teachers. Some are likely to go off with stress with what they would be expected to do.

Questions and Answers

Question: Carly Wyre-Nock - regarding the consultation document that came out, what happens if support is withdrawn due to community pressure?

Answer: The consultation must start somewhere even if universally not supported. Community responses are obtained during the consultation process and a written report will go to Councillor Brading for a decision.

Question: Racheal Montagueu - regarding the other options in the consultation, there are enough spaces at other West Wight schools for children to transfer to - one of them Brighstone. Logistically how will that happen?

Answer: Referring to this idea and the geography of West Wight, essentially if there is not a school in Freshwater, home to school transport is going to be a burden for the Local Authority. Children will still be offered a place at their nearest school, but the majority of the population is in Freshwater. Some of those children will likely be in home to school transport paid for by the Local Authority.

Question: Penny Tilt - further question on transport, if the proposal is to go ahead, would it be fully funded?

Answer: The Local Authority has a duty to provide transport if the school offered is more than 2 miles distance from home.

Question: If the proposal goes ahead, the preference of All Saints parents would be to have the mobile classrooms on the All Saints site. This would alleviate a lot of concerns for all parents.

Answer: It is possible to look at this as a specific proposal. When referring to surplus places, retaining 5 schools is more expensive than 4 schools.

Question: Daniel James - given what the plans are and the uncertainty, would it not make more sense to leave children where they are until funding for the programme has been secured and is a certainty?

Answer: The Priority Schools Building Programme has already delivered for some of the IOW schools. The funding commitment from the Department for Education in this area is specifically for the All Saints site. Considerations taken into account when funding is allocated are sustainable size and parental preference.

Question: Stefan Powell - concerned that not enough time has been given to the proposal to make the right decision. Rather than a quick implementation, could the date be held back to make sure implementation is viable?

Answer: The unsettling impact in the community and on the schools will sway some parents to choose to withdraw their children. Delaying something like this will have an impact for the children. Implementation timeframes have been looked at and considered.

Question: Becky Powell - Yarmouth is very capable as a community and the Headteacher is great. There are some concerns from the school that they would struggle with the proposal. What additional support is going to be in place for staff and children?

Answer: Natalie Smith stated there is a team of people that will mobilise to best support the community and staff when the decision has been made.

Question: Considering SEN needs in both schools, are there going to be people to advise support to deal with this?

Answer: The expertise and experience used for transitions in children's lives under regular circumstances, i.e. Reception starters and transfer to secondary schools, will be called upon for this.

Question: Is additional funding available for this?

Answer: - The needs of children and staff will be considered at the time, and appropriate funding provided.

Question: Lucy Temple - will there be any additional funding for the transition?

Answer: Natalie Smith stated that this is difficult to answer now. There is awareness of the difficulties and damage the transition may cause, and we are responsive to these particular circumstances.

Question: Ric Temple - if the proposal goes head, could all classes be kept at All Saints to ease the distance to the Yarmouth site?

Answer: Possibility. Remaining at schools across 2 or 3 sites is a challenge for the leadership team. There is a need to consider what areas of support there is available on site. The dynamics are challenging. The feeling is that the whole school experience should be in one place, but this idea is still a consideration. The more schools there are remaining open in the West Wight area, the more expensive it is. On one site with 30 children per class, this will be more cost effective, a better learning experience and outcomes will be achieved.

Statement: The school is well established at Yarmouth and is doing well.

Answer: With fewer children, it is not an option to just do nothing. Numbers are projected to drop in future years.

Question: Rodney Wood - former Chair of Governors at Watergate School. Why not federate with Brighstone and All Saints? If federated with Brighstone, all the resources are there and funding for SEN places. No children have to move, and most parents will be accepting of this.

Answer: The federation option was used several years ago for Yarmouth and Shalfleet, and this was successful. A federation would be difficult to progress in this case when the 2 schools are Ofsted rated as 'requiring improvements'.

Question: Helen Jones - was present at the Yarmouth meeting on 22 May and tonight. From the 20-30 minute presentation at the start of both meetings, this option does not reduce the number of surplus places. Why would you risk an Ofsted good school by pursuing this option?

Answer: This was put forward as a suggestion during the first consultation. Martin Goff agreed with Helen regarding her point on surplus places. There will however be 4 schools rather than 5, but this does not address the surplus places.

Question: Whose idea was it to shut a good school down?

Answer: The proposal was put forward having been part of the consultation. It was appropriate for IW Council to consider this proposal and from it they will take it to the next stage into consultation.

Question: Mary Dunjay - for those children who are elected home educated, how will the surplus places be affected if parents were encouraged to bring them back to school?

Answer: Natalie Smith replied that she is uncertain of the exact numbers of elected home educated children in West Wight. Numbers overall are fractional compared with the numbers of surplus places. Martin Goff stated that parents do not necessarily need to divulge that their children are home educated, so numbers held on record are not accurate. It would still help a little bit to get them back to school but would not change the argument.

Question: Alan Clements - concerns regarding the upheaval of the children affected.

Answer: Natalie replied that she could not deny the upheaval, but it will be thought through carefully to minimise this. The Headteacher has a track record of successfully turning Yarmouth School around and managed to move the school forward.

Question: Kizzy Cowley - addressed the audience by stating that she knows a lot of people in the room, and they need to stop having a go at each other. We are one community. We all want what is best for our children. Do not look at the rubbish on Facebook. Governors, that are volunteers, have been getting stick by certain people. What is going to happen to the pre-school? Requested a straight answer and not a 'perhaps'. Where is the information to back this up?

Answer: No 'perhaps'. We anticipated this question. Both Yarmouth and Freshwater pre-schools are thriving and there is a provision for this in both areas. Both pre-schools will carry on. There is nothing to say that the pre-school in Yarmouth has to move sites - both pre-schools still exist. Going forward we would have to talk to the community about any move.

Question: Ben Curtis - is not clear who the decision will be made by. Is it by the Councillor or the Cabinet?

Answer: The decision can be made by Councillor Brading, but he also has the option of referring it to the full Cabinet. At the current time, he has not formally done this.

Question: Lorna Curtis - are there any further other options to be considered? Need to be clear on exactly what is going to happen with the new leadership team and governing body.

Answer: There will be no new leadership team or governing body. Yarmouth's staff, leadership team and governing body in its current makeup will carry on in the new provision going forward. On the closure of All Saints, there will no longer be staff, a leadership team or governing body for All Saints School.

Question: Jade Kennett read out a representation on behalf of a parent of an All Saints child - will early years breakfast provision still be provided at Yarmouth School when All Saints children transfer there?

Answer: It is possible. This is something that is happening in individual schools. The organisation will have to decide on this going forward.

Question: If everyone cannot agree with an option, bring it back to the table and close all 5 schools in West Wight. Then build one big school for all.

Answer: The amount of capital investment required along with the list of complexities for this proposal would not make it an option.

Statement: John Medland - this is the only sensible option that we have, and I support this option. It will also minimise the disruption as much as possible. There is £3-6 million to invest in this new school.

Question: Vix Lowthion - concerned regarding statutory timescales. The 4 weeks fall within the summer holidays when people will be away, and the schools closed. How can there be a consultation? It looks like the Local Authority are trying to hide something. It would be more appropriate to move it back to September.

Answer: The Local Authority are not trying to hide anything, and timescales can be looked at.

Question: If the All Saints children are moved to Yarmouth, do they get to keep any of their teachers from All Saints? These teachers will be familiar to the children and the stress of the move will be reduced.

Answer: If All Saints closed, then the employment of the staff there would end. HR details around staffing will need to be decided.

Question: The guidelines around small schools and legislation on federation has been ignored up to this point.

Answer: Legislation and procedures have been followed properly.

Question: Out of the 5 options we have looked at, why has a federation not been considered? A federation is the perfect option.

Answer: Brighstone School is in a particular situation of requiring improvement and so is All Saints. Two schools that require improvement would make it too difficult to federate.



Minutes

Name of Meeting	West Wight School Public Consultation Meeting	
Date and Time	Wednesday 22 May 2019, 6.00pm – 8.00pm	
Venue	Yarmouth CE Primary School, Mill Road, Yarmouth, Isle of Wight	
Panel	Richard Vaughan Natalie Smith Martin Goff Mark Saunders (Facilitator) Helen White (Minutes)	Deputy Head of Strategic Development, Hants CC School Improvement Manager IOW, Hants CC Head of Service – Information Transport & Admissions, Hants CC Strategic Development Officer, Hants CC Admin Officer, Children’s Services, IWC

Introduction

Mark Saunders set-out how the evening would be managed, the Panel introduced themselves and a presentation from Richard Vaughan, Martin Goff and Natalie Smith regarding the latest option of West Wight school places was given.

Option: The closure of All Saints CE Primary School on 31 December 2019, and the expansion of Yarmouth CE Primary School to 30 pupils per year group and future relocation to the All Saints site.

Representatives

1) Helen Jones – parent of a child at Yarmouth School and several children that have previously been through the school. 10 years ago the school was threatened with closure, but was saved by the federation with Shalfleet. What makes this small school so special is its close community links. There are so many resources nearby such as SSI (Site of Scientific Interest), life boats, crabbing etc. These cannot be replaced anywhere else. The community does not want to lose their education from Yarmouth. The first step of the proposal will involve children from All Saints School temporarily coming to Yarmouth School, where children will be accommodated in mobile classrooms. This will be the temporary arrangement for approximately 18 months to 2 years and then all children will be transferred to the Freshwater site. This will put the children under stress particularly those having to transfer twice. The proposal will drive down standards and not drive them up. Trying to poach a school rated as good and moving it will ‘kill the goose that laid the golden egg’. It will affect the staff and governing bodies. The first option proposed (closure of All Saints School and transfer to St Saviours School) would result in a net reduction of 140 surplus places. All Saints children would also move to a large school that has the room to accommodate them. Although we do not want any children to have to transfer, the first option is the least disruptive to the children. It is no ok to take our school just because Freshwater is bigger and larger.

2) Jill Cowley – Former teacher - teacher during the IOW education reorganisation from a 2 tier system to a 3 tier system. West Wight children have already had their education disturbed during the closure of Weston Primary School. A cohort of children at Yarmouth makes up the change at Weston Primary and were able to be integrated with support. Moving these children again before their SATS is not putting the children first. A lot of children did not make it in the last integration as they could not settle and were distressed. Presently any family whose child does not turn up for school, they are not given support but receive a fine by the Local Authority. Yarmouth School is support by dozens of volunteers who give up their time. This cannot continue in Freshwater. It will not be Yarmouth School in Freshwater.

3) Carly Wyre Nock – talking on behalf of All Saints parents.

Firstly, on behalf of All Saints' parents, can we express how sad we feel at losing our school, because as a body of parents, we are proud of our school – every part of it, and wish our campaign could have been successful in saving all of it not just the site.

However, that being said, we understand that there are too many schools in West Wight and acknowledge your previous information that one, possibly two, may have to close in the near future. By accepting the facts and realising that All Saints cannot stay as it is, then we feel the new proposal is a sound idea, as it keeps the fantastic features of the All Saints location and provides, not just us, but future children of West Wight opportunity to be educated in a state of the art, modern primary school with facilities which will better prepare our children for secondary education and beyond.

The current consultation document clearly lays out all of the logical, practical and financial reasons for the change, however, it does not give parents from either of the affected schools enough information on how you plan to implement the proposal, should Cllr Brading decide to proceed with the IOW Council's preferred option. There are many concerns from both communities, some similar, however on behalf of All Saints' parents, I wish to log our concerns as follows:

- a) Being located on the much smaller Yarmouth site whilst work is carried out. We feel it would be less disruptive for children, families and staff if the modular buildings were located on the All Saints' site. It is our understanding that the original development plans drawn up for the use of the Department of Education grant do keep the children on site whilst work continued. If the suggested temporary move is for financial reasons, then we feel that money is already being saved with the loss of our Head and some staff, and it would mean that the Local Authority would not have to provide transport. We feel that due to the closeness of the 3 sites within the federation, it is entirely possible for this to be managed if Yarmouth do not wish to move yet. There are concerns about how children will get to Yarmouth every day and about how an additional 70 children would be able to be safely and comfortably accommodated on the current Yarmouth site. We understand that the outstanding Early Years Centre will remain open and steps will be taken to ensure their safety whilst work is carried out, so therefore, we ask that All Saints children are also accommodated on the site with their current teaching staff.
- b) A further concern is the teaching of the curriculum from September. Both schools currently have mixed year groups and under the new proposal, Yarmouth will go to a one form entry and therefore have single year groups. The decision date is late on the academic year and we have concerns about the teaching not being synchronised so when all the children are being taught together, some may end up repeating what they have already learnt and missing out on other topics. We would like to know how the Local Authority plan to ensure this does not happen.
- c) There are concerns about the financial implications of the proposal, some to do with transport as previously mentioned, but many about school uniform. Already parents are in a predicament as the two uniforms are entirely different colours, so anything brought new now for All Saints will be no good as of January. Also if the name of the school changes then everyone from both schools would need new uniforms to match with a new logo. Does the Local Authority have the means to financially assist parents?
- d) We feel very strongly about our teaching staff and wish for it be noted that we have excellent staff who help our children learn, thrive and achieve daily. We are an improving school and there have been significant changes over the past two years. We feel for the benefit of continuity for the All Saints' children that any vacancies within Yarmouth School from January 2020, should be filled by All Saints' teachers.

Finally, I would like to close our representation by listing some benefits of the new proposal:

- a) That a primary school is retained in the largest, most populated village in the Isle of Wight where the majority of school age children live.
- b) The significant investment being given by the Department for Education for the school means we will get an outstanding primary school building on a perfectly located site, close to amenities, which offers geographical longevity.
- c) The two schools in the new proposal are both CofE.
- d) Sustainable travel will be able to continue, therefore, positive benefits to our children's health, fitness and of course the carbon footprint reduction.
- e) The opportunity for two communities to work together and embrace each other's celebrations, for example, being able to all participate in the annual duck and pancake races held in Yarmouth Town.
- f) Year groups being taught individually as opposed to mixed. This also benefits staff.
- g) Keeping the excellent outdoor facilities that are already at the All Saints' site: The Secret Garden, The Forest School area and the large playing field which is perfect for sports day and other events.
- h) Keeping a school site in Freshwater means that children continue to benefit from being within close and safe walking distance of the library, sports centre, churches and nature trails, as well as the newly refurbished park and outdoor gym, and the skate park.
- i) Financial benefits, firstly to the Local Authority by reducing overhead costs of having excess school buildings and staff, but also in funds available to the school as schools are paid per pupil. Therefore, having a more lucrative school means there is a bigger budget available to ensure extra-curricular activities can happen and that our children benefit from the latest resources.

In conclusion, we are excited about the new educational opportunity for our children and look forward to working with the Local Authority, Education Department and our Yarmouth peers to establish an outstanding primary school in a prime location, which future proofs the children of West Wight's education. In order to minimise the disruption to all children across both sites, we are hopeful that Cllr Brading and the Education Authority will continue to listen to parents and members of the community who genuinely want a better future, and that the points of concern that I have raised this evening will be addressed.

4) Kevin Shaw – local resident and former Chair of Governors when Yarmouth School was threatened with closure previously and then federated. Finds it extraordinary that a successful school could be taken away and moved to another school site – to a site where a school has not been functioning as it should be. This requires careful thought. There is a concern that staff cannot sustain the same levels with an integrated school and what is to follow in the future. If the proposal goes through, Kevin does not see how governors are going to manage it. How are staff going to be able to cope? It will not bring the rise in standards that is not occurring at All Saints. It would be a tragedy moving to a new site. It would lose teachers and governors and urges those making the decision to think again. It is nonsensical and unbelievable.

Questions and Answers

Question: Yarmouth School Parent – Where is the money coming from if there is potential to expand? If the 'keep Yarmouth School open' petition reaches 2000 signatures, does this mean Cllr Brading will have to pass it to the cabinet for a decision?

Answer: It will be Cllr Brading's decision, but he can choose to take it to the cabinet for a decision.

Question: Forecast for the future – some of the information given this evening does not correlate with the information received in the post today. There is a huge influx of people coming into the community – has this been taken into consideration? There are 2 schools that are failing in the West Wight area – has reducing the PAN or a federation been considered for these schools? It was mentioned earlier in the meeting that Brighstone Primary have had a recent Ofsted monitoring visit and the results will be published shortly. It would have been more appropriate if the Local Authority had all the information collated together before disrupting communities, i.e. what is going to happen with Brighstone School after the Ofsted report?

Answer: Funding for the site comes from the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP). The All Saints site falls within the programme. The site is to receive the funding regardless of the name of the school. PSBP projects are going on throughout the Isle of Wight in schools.

Brighstone School is a voluntary aided school whilst maintained by the Local Authority. It would require the governing body to consult on the point of PAN reduction. Brighstone cannot be sustained with their current admission numbers. All Saints engaged very actively with their admission numbers and accordingly it is being reduced from 2020 to 15 going forward. A failing school does take time to turn around.

It is possible to get 4 forms of intake reduced to 3 in the West Wight area, but it does not reduce the number of schools. Five schools are more expensive than 4 schools – 5 schools with reduced admission numbers does not have the same effect as 4 schools. To answer the point on timing of the consultation, there will never be a good time to do this consultation. A different time could have been chosen, but not necessarily a better time.

Question: This question was directed at Natalie Smith, School Improvements Officer. All Saints have had 3 Ofsted Requires Improvement notices. What is your accountability? What support are you going to be giving schools when you have not been giving All Saints the support in the last 9-10 years?

Answer: My team and I have put a lot of hard work in supporting the school. We go along as a team and give support to the school. Ofsted have published comments that the School Improvements Team had put in effective support – this can be viewed online. In some cases, the support does not always work to give the required outcomes despite all the things suggested. Sometimes it does not happen because of logistical reasons, i.e. staff sickness. The support to school has been good, but it has not had the desired effect. The School Improvements Team are continuing to give their absolute support to the school and will continue to do so. The SATS exams results when they are known will be another measure that can be looked at.

Question: Former parent governor of a non-IOW school – How are you going to do the transfer to the new site? Is it true you are expecting staff of Yarmouth School to move to the new site?

Answer: The Local Authority has faith in the governors and leadership of Yarmouth School. Yarmouth School is not closing but moving. The audience disagreed with this statement.

Question: With the expectation that the Head at Yarmouth is to become the Head at the All Saints' site, this is putting an awful lot on her. She is also the Head at Shalfleet Primary School too. The number of children in the new establishment will be double. This will not work. The Head will want to know what the facilities are and what staff she will be getting. With having the post as Head at Shalfleet, she will have less time for the new school. The move to a new site will be a disaster with the added problems of settling everyone in.

Question: Hannah Byers – parent of children at Yarmouth School, resident at Freshwater and specialist teaching advisor. If there is a question of surplus places, is it an issue of removing surplus places and reducing schools? Transitions are very disruptive for children – there needs to be an improved outcome.

Answer: The achievement would be to remove surplus places and reduce the number of schools.

Question: Mary Henderson – Grandmother. Has concerns regarding the affect this will have on the children by up-routing them, transferring them to another site and then transferring them back to the first site. What about younger siblings of children that have already moved – will they have to go to Shalfleet or will they go elsewhere?

Answer: Admissions will continue to be allocated under the School Admissions policy and parental preference. The policy gives a higher preference to siblings of children already at a school. Shalfleet Primary did not fill their admissions quota this year so everyone who asked for Shalfleet as a first preference would have been offered it.

The proposal is one from the Local Authority for best outcomes for children now and those in the future. It is looking for a strategy that provides a configuration of schools that gives the best outcome. Yarmouth and Shalfleet's leadership are a strength in this school system. It is being suggested that they will have that level of success if they are relocated to the Freshwater site.

Question: Five years ago All Saints was a failing school. Natalie stated that her team went in and have put in a lot of work. The Head did not implement what the recommendations were. Get rid of the Head at All Saints and look at the governors also.

Answer: Natalie responded that there is not a teacher or Head in the West Wight area that does not work hard for their children. She made it clear that she did not link staff as the reason that All Saints has not worked. When the School Implementations Team have finished working with schools and it has not been successful, then they will discuss with the governors and governing bodies.

Question: Teachers are exceptional at Yarmouth School. Governors – will they move from Yarmouth to Freshwater?

Answer: Yarmouth School is a 2-11 primary school and if All Saints closes, Yarmouth School will take on the role from 1 January 2020 and will also be a 2-11 school. The same Yarmouth School governing body will be running the school on the Freshwater site.

Question: Parent of child at All Saints – the geography of the West Wight area does not seem to be coming into any of this. The school villages are not situated on top of each other in the area. There is an issue of transport to get from one school to another. The Council cannot expect to solve their financial pressures by picking on schools in this area. Why has money to renovate All Saints School been sat on? Why has this not been used? What is the proposal and how much money is there? Why has the geography not been investigated more? Why have other outcomes not been looked into?

Answer: The school's money has been given by the DfE. The Council has a part to play. Money is allocated to the schools individually and if the schools are largely full, you can generally get everything working perfectly. Geography has tried to be considered but it is not possible to consider all of it. Geography cannot be changed.

Question: Helen Jones – child at Yarmouth School. St Saviours' governors wrote a letter to their parents. They are of the opinion the proposed integration of Yarmouth School will endanger their school. The Yarmouth School proposal will give a reduction of 105 of surplus places, but the previous St Saviours proposal will reduce 140 surplus places.

Answer: The St Saviours proposal is still an option.

Question: Parent of children at Yarmouth School – has concerns for their education. There is superb management at this school. This is a numbers game and a better suggestion would work better. Removing the school would tear the heart out of the community and so many children from Freshwater attend Yarmouth School. More effort has gone into All Saints School than any other school on the Island, and it is

still not working for children and parents. Please keep Yarmouth School in Yarmouth.

Question: What will happen to Yarmouth Preschool, Littlestairs? This was not in the consultation and has not been thought about.

Answer: No one has suggested the closure of the preschool.

Question: Parent of daughter at Yarmouth School – have children who are going through their SATS been considered? The Council do not give a damn about the children. All they think about is money. All children have been successful at Yarmouth School and they are happy there. What happens to all the All Saints' teachers – are they all fired? Why move 2 schools and bundle them together? It is not going to work.

Question: Kevin Shaw – Concerned that this current option has not been thought through. There is a concern around the pre-school and what will happen to it. With regards to the Yarmouth site, there must have been some thought as to what to do with it.

Answer: The Local Authority will work with the community to get the best result.

Comment: It was felt that there were too many things that have not been answered.

Question: Yarmouth Resident – The current proposal is to be funded by a 'pot of gold'. It is not clear why they have got this funding when no other school has.

Answer: The money will be lost if it is not spent on the All Saints site. It is part of the government programme and it specifies what is the best solution for that particular school.

Date of Next Meeting

- Thursday 6 June 2019, 6pm-8pm – All Saints CE Primary School