

Cllr Chris Whitehouse
Lead Member for Children's Services
Report to Full Council on 15th March 2017

Received further briefings from officers on children's social care systems and processes to deepen my understanding of this area of activity.

Liaised with officers about the implications of the case of the former dinner lady sentenced to prison for sexual offences with an underage boy.

Sent supportive message to the Senior Leadership Team of Beaulieu House in relation to an Ofsted inspection.

Received and considered feedback from the Corporate Parenting Board on 8th March.

Took forward plans for an awards scheme to encourage best practice in education.

Liaised with diocesan representatives about a feasibility study on the proposal that all Church of England and Catholic Schools on the Island could come together as one Multi Academy Trust and welcomed the news that such a study would proceed imminently.

Was briefed by officers on allegations about a teacher at an Island school satisfying myself that the matter was being properly handled through the Local Authority Designated Officer.

Liaised extensively with senior officers to deliver a partial solution to the dangerous parking/traffic issues in and around Wellington Road, Newport, which affects children attending five local schools, and several nurseries etc.

Was represented on Monday 27th February, by the Island MP, Andrew Turner, at a presentation by Hampshire officers at the Riverside Centre to school leadership representatives on the new Schools Funding Formula currently the subject of Government consultation; liaising with officers and the MP to plan a formal consultation response and an associated programme of appropriate activity to ensure it has impact.

Continued to liaise with Teach First to ensure their full involvement in many aspects of Island education.

Received and studied the Annual Report 2015-16 of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education.

Supported officers in delivering the Island Futures Apprenticeship event on 6th March as part of National Apprenticeships Week.

Engaged with officers in relation to home educated children on the Island in response to Cllr Whitby-Smith's helpful question on this point at the previous Full Council meeting. Considering plans for a major event for such children and their carers.

Received, analysed and developed Media Statement on the secondary school preference on admissions figures.

Engaged with officers in relation to the new multi-million-pound project launched by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to increase participation in higher education across disadvantaged groups, including here on the Isle of Wight. Under the scheme, the Southern Universities Network will deliver collaborative outreach in areas identified as having low overall participation in higher education.

Continued to liaise with Mr Jonathan Platt about developments in the case at the Supreme Court.

Reviewed and presented paper to the Executive Committee on 9th March on educational outcomes.

Welcomed an announcement by Government of an investment of £500 million per year in a new approach to skills training for 16-19 year olds.

Received and considered briefing on the tendering of Health Visiting and School Nursing services.

Received, reviewed and welcomed a positive report about the success of Island Futures colleagues in reducing the numbers of our youngsters not in education, employment or training.

Began dialogue with officers into the future of Children's Services on the Island as part of the review of arrangements with Hampshire County Council.

Further considered key issues arising from the provisions of the Statutory Guidance to Lead Members for Children's Services.

Chris Whitehouse

13th March 2017