

## Department of Education, Sport & Culture Education Council Meeting Minutes

<b>Date</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	<b>Time</b>	10.00am	<b>Location</b>	Conference Room, Hamilton House
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<b>Attendees</b>	
Dr Alex Allinson, MHK	Minister for Education, Sport and Culture
Mrs Ann Corlett, MHK	Department Member
Mrs Marlene Maska, MLC	Department Member
Mrs Claire Christian, MHK	Department Member
Mr Graham Kinrade	Interim Chief Executive Officer
Mr Robin Turton	Education Council Member
Mr Ray Smith	Education Council Member
Mr Steven Bevan	Education Council Member
Mr Alex Downie	Education Council Member
Mrs Margaret Mansfield	Education Council Member
Mrs Diane Brown	Education Council Member
Mrs Malgorzata Simpson	Education Council Member
Mrs Louise Strickett	Education Council Member
Mrs Barbara Brereton	Education Council Member
Mr Andrew Shipley	Legal and Administration Manager
<b>Apologies</b>	
Mr Steven Bevan	Education Council Member

### AGENDA ITEMS

<b>1</b>	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b> Mr Steven Bevan offered his apologies.</p> <p><b>Introductions</b> Minister Allinson introduced the newest DESC Department member Mrs Claire Christian MHK, &amp; Mr Graham Kinrade, Interim CEO to Education Council Members.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2020</b> Minutes of the meeting held on 24/06/20 were agreed &amp; signed by the Minister.</p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING – From minutes dated 24th June 2020</b></p> <p><b>Parent Pay</b> – The Interim CEO confirmed that the change to the Parent Pay policy was agreed by the Teaching Unions.</p> <p><b>The Education Bill</b> – The Minister shared his hopes that the Education Bill Committee report will be laid before the House of Keys next week. There was discussion around the impact the Beamans report may have on the progress of the Education Bill. The Education Bill Committee sought feedback from Beamans and the Minister and the Minister confirmed the key functions of the Bill remain valid and there may be changes to the regulations.</p>	



The length of Governor's appointments was discussed. The Minister confirmed that Governors will be expected to move schools ~~every 6-9 years~~, however there will be flexibility for Governors with specialist knowledge. *after 2-3 terms of office*

The Legal and Administration Manager explained that discussion is taking place about the proposed exclusion of MHK's and Commissioners as School Governors. Education Council Members felt that it would be beneficial to allow MHK's and Commissioners to remain eligible to apply for school governor roles as they could provide a useful link between school and community.

Some Education Council Members felt that MHK's and Commissioners are too busy for the role of School Governor. The Minister explained that the responsibilities of school governors posts will be made clearer and the DESC can provide training to Governors.

**Increasing training opportunities for young people** – The Minister confirmed that the Economic Recovery Group have provided funding to increase apprenticeship and internship opportunities. The Minister explained that training opportunities for young people had been discussed at the Council of Minister's meeting and work is being undertaken with the Chamber of Commerce to assess what skills are needed on Island in order to adapt educational opportunities.

The Legal and Administration Manager commented that the number of apprenticeship and VTAS applications being processed by the DESC has remained relatively constant.

A Department member shared that work is being undertaken by UCM to provide opportunities for upskilling and re-skilling, including increasing modules for current students and those in the workplace.

**School Building works** - The Minister confirmed that although the IOM economy has remained fairly constant the Island is not independent of the Covid-19 situation in the UK.

It was queried whether the Department's capital program projects could be impacted due to the Construction Industry's capacity to provide services during the island's construction boom.

The Minister is looking strategically at population growth when extending CRHS and any future works, to 'future proof' schools.

**Update on Teacher's Dispute** – The interim CEO advised that he has met with the Joint Unions and an offer has been made in recognition of the pay dispute. NAHT have accepted the offer & ASCL are currently balloting their members. The interim CEO is waiting to hear from NEU and NASUWT. The Minister expects to have the Union's responses by early January.

The interim CEO reported that link advisors are in schools to support and advise, and the interim CEO has faith that the relationship will be re-set, but this will take time.

There was discussion about teacher's taking off island trips over the Christmas period and Education Council Members were concerned for the potential implications of this. Education Council Members felt that due to the ongoing pay dispute some teachers are not covering for their colleague's absences and that this may impact upon the children, as well as teachers not involved in the pay dispute.

	<p>Some Education Council Member’s raised their concerns that the ongoing pay dispute has highlighted to teachers they are not required to do extra tasks, such as lunches, afterschool clubs and to hold revision sessions. Some Education Council members felt that the good will that has existed previously may be lost.</p> <p>The Minister commented that much of the work surrounding after school clubs etc will come from senior school leaders.</p> <p>The Legal and Administration Manager commented that teachers are still passionate and view teaching as a vocation. The interim CEO said that faith in the profession is strong and that many teachers want the dispute to be finalised and that many teachers are accepting the deal with the understanding that in future they will be heard in a professional manner with recognition and respect, and that money is only part of the dispute.</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Setting school budgets</b></p> <p>The Director of Finance provided Education Council Members with information on funding for Primary and Secondary School budgets, and the development of the funding process for Primary and Secondary Schools over a number of years.</p> <p>The Director of Finance reported that a significant number of schools are breaking even on school meals due to holding school events.</p> <p>The DESC has looked at the pupil premium model used in the UK and has acknowledged that free school meals may not be significant enough to support some pupils. To address the social issues schools are provided with additional staffing based on the number of children who receive free school meals and the number of children who have Special Educational Needs.</p> <p>An Education Council Member raised a school’s concerns that budgets are shared with them at a point in the year when they are unable to make changes or plan for September.</p> <p>The Director of Finance confirmed that the budgets were issued late this year due to Covid-19 and that schools usually have their budgets in February.</p>	
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Finance training for Head Teachers</b></p> <p>There was discussion about financial training for Head Teachers. The Director of Finance confirmed that the way in which financial training is currently delivered to Middle Leaders &amp; Head teachers is being reviewed, with the support of the Treasury.</p> <p>The Director of Finance confirmed that additional costs incurred by Hub schools during the lockdown have been reimbursed by the DESC.</p> <p>Education Council Members requested that school Administrators are also included in financial training. The Director of Finance confirmed financial training for school administrators had been provided previously.</p>	
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Update on the progress of the Education Bill</b></p>	

	<p>The Minister confirmed the Education Bill is on track as part of the Programme for Government and the Minister is awaiting a report from the House of Keys Committee.</p>	
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>What provisions does the Department intend to make for teachers returning home to the UK for the Christmas period and the current retention of teaching staff?</b></p> <p>The interim CEO has been working with the Office of Human Resources and Head Teachers to discuss options for teachers wishing to travel to the UK.</p> <p>There was a survey in October and many teachers have indicated they want to visit family in the UK. The interim CEO has provided guidance to Head Teachers on supporting NQTs who are unable to visit family over the Christmas period.</p> <p>The interim CEO said that schools will need to make autonomous, local decisions for their individual schools. The DESC will support each Head Teacher's decision but the decision cannot be made centrally.</p> <p>One school's potential suggestion was to re-deploy teachers of 6<sup>th</sup> form students to mainstream school, and for the 6<sup>th</sup> form students to learn remotely for a period of time.</p>	
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Maintenance of school buildings</b></p> <p>Education Council members shared that requested works at schools are not being completed in a timely manner and that some schools have been waiting an unacceptable amount of time. One Education Council member explained a school has been waiting two years for works to be completed with no updates from DOI as to when the works will be completed.</p> <p>The Legal &amp; Administration Manager asked Education Council Members to re-send requested works to the Department and that the Corporate Services Team will pass them onto DOI.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the DOI works team are responsible for working on all government jobs and that jobs are likely delayed due to the re-fit at Nobles in response to Covid -19 and the Oxygen plant.</p> <p>Education Council members felt the schools were better maintained when there was a dedicated works team for DESC buildings.</p>	
<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <p><b>Role of School Governors following the Beamans Report</b> – The Minister confirmed that the interim CEO will be presenting to COMIN about this. The interim CEO advised it is likely that the changes will be made through consultation and that it may take a year or more.</p> <p>The interim CEO confirmed the DESC will be making considered decisions following the Beamans report prior to acting on any recommendations from the report.</p>	



**Students returning to the Island for the Christmas holidays** – Some Education Council members felt students are being criminalised by the view that they will not follow isolation rules. Education Council members felt that students will follow the isolation rules.

**Support for schools after lockdown-** Concerns were raised by Education Council Members that some children were unable to access remote learning during lockdown. The Minister confirmed that the issue of access to remote learning had been identified by the Inclusion and Safeguarding Team. Student Welfare during lockdown was also highlighted.

The Minister confirmed there is a scheme to improve access to remote learning for Secondary school students that are in their GCSE/ A-level years. The scheme is funded by a charitable fund for the next two years, and if after the two year period there is a still a need for funding, the DESC will review.

**Pupil Premium** – Pupil premium was refused by Treasury in a previous business case. The interim CEO is looking at how we can resource support for those in need through other means.

**Vitamin Calendars-** An Education Council Member has been approached by a company looking to supply children with a vitamin advent calendar. The Legal and Administration Manager confirmed the DESC cannot be seen to be promoting one business over another.

**Free school meals provision during lockdown-** The DESC operated a voucher scheme during lockdown and the survey responses have indicated the main reasons families are struggling to buy food during the school holidays is childcare costs and the money required to purchase new school uniforms.

The Minister commented that in Scotland families are provided with a benefit at Christmas time to fund school uniforms. The Minister will be discussing the affordability of school uniforms, in particular the secondary school sports kits at COMIN.

**Signature**.....

**Dated**..... 26/5/2021 .....