

Department of Education, Sport & Culture Education Council Meeting Minutes

Date	26 th May 2021	Time	10.00am	Location	Conference Room, Hamilton House
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Attendees	
Dr Alex Allinson, MHK	Minister for Education, Sport and Culture
Mrs Marlene Maska, MLC	Department Member
Mrs Claire Christian, MHK	Department Member
Mr Graham Kinrade	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	Head of Legislation and Policy Development
Apologies	
Mr Steven Bevan	Education Council Member
Mrs Ann Corlett, MHK	Department Member

AGENDA ITEMS

1	Apologies for Absence Mrs Ann Corlett, MHK & Mr Steven Bevan offered their apologies.	
2	Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting held on 25th November 2020 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 th November were agreed with a minor alteration & signed by the Minister.	
3	MATTERS ARISING – From minutes dated 25th November 2020 The Education Bill - With reference to the length of Governor’s appointment it was agreed to change this to two to three terms. The Head of Legislation and Policy Development clarified that the current Articles of Government state Co-opted Governor’s appointments are for six years. Increasing training opportunities for young people – An Education Council member raised their concerns that there are a lack of apprenticeship opportunities for young people. Education Council Members felt that the Government should be setting the standard for the private sector and offer a range of apprenticeships every year. Education Council members felt this was particularly relevant due to the current skills shortage. The Minister reassured members that the number of vacancies available is increasing	

and for the young people not going into further Education the vast majority were going into employment. The CEO confirmed 248 new apprenticeship opportunities have also been created at UCM.

It was confirmed by Department Members that the DOI and Ramsey Town Commissioners offer various apprenticeships. Mrs Christian, MHK, noted that Bus Vannin currently have 10 Manx apprentices and it is a highly successful programme.

The Minister confirmed there will be career advice drop in sessions held over the summer for the young people who may have missed career advice sessions due to the pandemic.

The Minister reassured Education Council Members that the figures suggest that majority of people who are long term unemployed are 40-50years old.

The Head of Legislation and Policy Development confirmed the VTAS and Apprenticeship Scheme has the same amount of funding.

School Budgets – An Education Council Member raised their concerns that the school budgets are getting to schools too late in the year for sound expenditure decisions to be made. The Minister stated that the issue has been noted and it will be looked into to determine whether budgets can be provided earlier in the year.

Assessment in Schools – The Minister asked Education Council Members how schools are being supported with the assessment process. There was discussion about the difficulties teachers are encountering due to the different criterias each Awarding Body offers & the Awarding bodies are continuously updating the advice.

It was collectively agreed that teachers have adapted extremely well and it was noted by the Minister that the Department needs to protect teachers from personal attacks from parents due to the current assessment approach. The Minister commented that the Department is keen to support schools with assessment and Jan Gimbert has been providing updates.

There was discussion about if the exam boards will go back to traditional assessment or whether may continue with the continuous assessment method. It was felt by Education Council Members that traditional assessment methods may be more effective and fair but not suit all children and we should wait and see what happens with exam boards when things settle down.

Free School Meals – Education Council Members enquired if free school meals vouchers would be issued in the Summer holidays. The Minister noted that the Department would be reluctant to due to the cost.

The Minister shared that there was a Poverty Report issued last week that looked at the criteria for free school meals. The cost of school uniforms was highlighted by Education Council Members as an area for concern.

There was discussion about the cost of school uniforms, in particular PE kits. Education Council Members raised their concerns that the price of branded school PE kits is raising barriers for children and the Minister agreed there could be cost savings on

	<p>sports uniform. Suggestions included schools providing branded kits for the first teams and allowing pupils not in the first teams to wear unbranded kits and for schools to offer badges that can be sewn onto kits. The Minister suggested Education Council Members discuss the issue of school uniform costs at their school governors meetings.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Update on the Department’s Restructure</p> <p>The CEO provided an update and confirmed the proposed structure that was provided in November is now widely in place. The CEO noted the new positions have now been filled.</p> <p>The CEO shared that the role of school governors is going to be reviewed by the Head of Business Development and as part of this work all stakeholders including Education Council Members will be consulted with.</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that the Education Improvement Service and the Inclusion and Safeguarding Team have now been amalgamated to form the Education Advisory Service and the Director of Strategic Advice and Support role has replaced the previous Director of Education role.</p> <p>SSRE is currently suspended, however schools are continuously self-assessing.</p> <p>A Policy and Legislation hub has also been formed and policies will now be delivered to schools, to reduce the work load of schools and allow them to focus on Education.</p> <p>School Maintenance issues should now be raised with the Estates Manager and Headteachers should submit tickets to the DOI for minor works.</p> <p>Education Council Members raised their concerns that schools and their grounds are looking unkempt & this sets a poor tone for the children and parents.</p> <p>There was discussion about the state of Castle Rushen High School and two Education Council Members feel the school is no longer fit for purpose. The Minister noted that a clearer process on how to access works should be in place, schools should contact the Estates Manager and schools should be provided with a timeline of works completion.</p> <p>Both Department Members in attendance offered their support to co-ordinate with the DOI to improve the process.</p> <p>Education Council Members were asked to send their priority works items to the Estates Manager.</p> <p>An Education Council Member suggested a dedicated team for school works would be more effective. A Department Member noted that there is currently a bottleneck in construction industry and many areas are struggling for workers.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>Response to Beamans – Implementation plans and timeframe</p> <p>The CEO provided an update on the teacher’s dispute. Three unions have withdrawn and one Union has suspended their action. The Union with suspended action is seeking a 30% pay rise for teachers and this is not practical. The CEO is having weekly meetings with Unions and they are working collaboratively to discuss and review</p>	

	<p>policies. The CEO commented the relationship between the Department and the Unions is good. It was noted that the relationship with staff is dependent on Leadership and Head teachers. The CEO has encouraged HT to provide staff briefings in schools. The CEO noted that quarterly briefings will be implemented in schools, led by the CEO and Deputy CEO.</p> <p>The CEO noted that the Department's response to Beamans is a five year strategy.</p>	
6	<p>Update on the future of the Education Bill</p> <p>The Minister acknowledged there have been barriers to the Education Bill's progress, but noted he is confident once the fundamental work with schools has taken place the bill will be progressed.</p> <p>The Minister noted the Department can enable change through the current Bill and Articles of Government and if needed the Department can submit an amending Bill. The Minister hopes the Bill will be looked at in 18 months.</p> <p>The Head of Legislation and Policy Development noted that the Department is now taking an opposite approach than before with the vision being the driving factor – vision – values – policies – secondary legislation and then primary legislation. It will cement the work being currently undertaken together. The SEN code of practice is the priority and is being prepared for the next Tynwald sitting.</p> <p>Education Council Members raised their concerns about the behaviour of secondary and primary age students. The CEO noted that the Department is working with Manx Care to support children that require support to access education. Discussions about curriculum reform and how the curriculum can better engage students with the view of reducing poor behaviour have taken place at Secondary Heads meetings.</p> <p>The Minister noted that early intervention and alternative pathways are being discussed with schools. There was discussion about social issues impacting children and the impact of the third lockdown on primary age pupils in particular. Education Council Members suggested that having more than one adult in the classroom would alleviate some of the issues.</p> <p>Education Council Members felt more support should be in place for children who are suspended from school. It was felt that some children are bored and struggling to engage. The CEO noted that when we group children by age we are going to see that issue.</p> <p>EHAS and CAMHS are underfunded and with extensive waiting lists. It was discussed that schools are using Isle Listen with twenty therapists.</p> <p>The Minister noted that as part of the mental health strategy that early intervention is preferred, however the Department is working with the 3rd Sector and working on clearer pathway to CAMHS. Education Council Members have concerns that the 3rd Sector are not communicating with schools effectively, it was noted that this is due to confidentiality agreements and the Minister is looking at how information can be shared appropriately.</p>	
7	<p>Capability procedure – Process</p>	

	<p>An Education Council Member raised concerns that the current capability process appears to be drawn out and negatively effecting primary school children building up school aversion. There was also concern on the negative effect it can have on Head teachers where it becomes personal, in industrial tribunals etc.</p> <p>The CEO confirmed that the Department is the employer and OHR are there for advice and support.</p> <p>The Head of Legislation and Policy Development noted that it can be a long process but needs to be a fair and supportive process to help staff return to meeting standards. The CEO noted early intervention is key and asked for an Education Council Member to make him aware of the situation behind the comments made.</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Progress update on the proposed new Castle Rushen High School</p> <p>Education Council Members shared their view that Castle Rushen High School is no longer fit for purpose. There was discussion about the increasing numbers at the school, with the new housing developments.</p> <p>The Minister confirmed that the Department has received a budget from Treasury and top up funds are available which the Minister feels will build a decent school. The Minister is keen to push over the summer and plans to be drawn up. The Minister noted the need to develop a pragmatic and adaptable school that is 'future proof'. It was confirmed the earth works taking place next to CRHS will free up the spot to build on as CRHS continues to function.</p> <p>The Minister confirmed the plan that development works will be spade in ground by 2023 and the design phase will start this summer.</p> <p>It was noted there are historic issues which can be temporarily addressed by the use of mobile classrooms but it may be 6 months until the mobiles can be obtained. Education Council Members felt that the school should be more eco-friendly and the Minister commented they are balancing working with DEFA for add-ons.</p>	
<p>9</p>	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Ardwhallin- The Minister confirmed resolutions are taking place at present & the building is owned by the 3rd Sector and the staff are DESC. The Minister confirmed there may be activities for the Duke of Edinburgh over the summer but the facility itself will not be fully open over summer.</p> <p>Ballakermeen High School- Capacity Concerns</p> <p>An Education Council Member raised their concerns that BHS are receiving 2 mobile classrooms and there are still capacity issues. Will they get planning by September? The Minister is aware and agreed that the catchment areas for Douglas schools needs to be reviewed.</p> <p>The CEO stated he is working with Ballakermeen High School and St Ninian's High School to agree a solution and we require a willingness for radical change as extensions and mobile classrooms are no longer suitable.</p>	

	<p>An Education Council Member suggested a 6th form college running to 8pm. The CEO and Minister commented that the Department is looking at all possibilities including blended learning and potential for 6th form students to study remotely during free periods.</p> <p>Northern School catchment areas</p> <p>It was highlighted that some of the northern primary schools have provided leaflets encouraging parents to attend their schools and there are no changes to catchment areas at this time.</p>	
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