

Department of Education and Children

Education Council Meeting Held On 28th September 2012 at 10.00am At the Professional Development Centre, Santon

Present: The Hon Tim Crookall, MHK, (Chairperson); Mr T Wild, MLC

Mr R Bankes-Jones; Mrs H Bradley; Mrs E Godby; Mrs G Skinner; Mr S Bevan; Mrs M Frankwick; Mrs T Martin; Mr R Smith; Mrs J Pendree; Mrs B Brereton; Mr D Parnell; Mrs L Strickett; Mr R Turton

Apologies: Mr J Turner, MLC; Mr K Woodford; Mrs S Kissack

In

Attendance: Mr S Dobson, Chief Executive Officer; Mr M Barrow, Director of Education; Mr J Gill, Head of Legal and Administrative Services; Mr J Swindlehurst, Manager Legal and Administrative Services; Mrs J Buss – Secretary

Item	Business	Action
1.	<p>The Minister opened the Meeting by welcoming everyone and by saying how delighted he was to have been appointed as the Minister for Education. He also thanked those Council members who would not be returning for their dedication and hard work in the past.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Mr J Turner, MLC; Mr K Woodford and Mrs S Kissack.</p> <p>Minutes of Previous Meeting The Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2012 were confirmed. The Minutes were then agreed and accepted by those present as a true record and could be signed by the Minister.</p>	
2.	<p>Matters arising from the Minutes not shown elsewhere on the Agenda. SB asked if there was any up-date on the issue of centralised purchasing. SD responded that there were a number of things going on through procurement. If it was felt that items could be purchased significantly cheaper elsewhere, Neil Davidson should be informed. SD stated that sustainability was the key issue in procurement.</p> <p>SB also enquired if school meals were included, for the purchase of food. SD said that he did not have a specific answer on this.</p> <p>GS advised that Ballacloan School now had the canopy.</p> <p>RBJ asked for an up-date on the Dyslexia Policy. He was informed that this had been approved by the Department last week. A copy would be sent to Council members.</p>	JS
3.	<p>Governing Body tenure and Chair of Governors modification Members were informed by JG that the Chair would be left in place until 1st December, when the new Education Council members were appointed. The Chair would then take office with effect from the calendar year of 1st January. JG advised that the Instruments</p>	

and Articles for schools were being amended to reflect this.

4. Questions from the Education Council Members

Question (1) raised by Mr R Bankes-Jones - *'Request for an up-date of the comparative nursery provision in terms of where they were; where they are now; how they are functioning; their hours of business and their capacity.'*

- in response, the Director of Education stated that all but one of the facilities was operating. This was Manor Park, which only had one child registered, on account of the success of the local playgroup. He explained that the Department could not request information from the nursery providers, but stated that 260 places were available; $\frac{3}{4}$ of those eligible had already applied for credit and approx 200-300 more were taking up the new provision. Peel Clothworkers' in particular had proved very successful. MB explained that there would be more creative approaches in the coming years, and the fact that the DEC were not interfering but were trying to 'influence', made the private providers feel more comfortable. Social Care would be working closely with the inspectorate and it was felt that the Department would certainly not be losing track of the children. As claims start to come in, a geographical pattern will begin, which can then be mapped.

Question (ii) raised by Mr R Bankes-Jones – *'Is the Department considering changing the level of qualification to receive funding for degree course fees to a minimum of 2 B's at A level? What provision is being made for students who do not have the points, the means or an alternative career path?'* – MB advised that there had been no discussions about raising the bar or altering the points and he did not know where this notion had come from. The Minister stated that this was not to say that discussions on this matter would not take place in future. MD stated that the Department will need to review everything over the next couple of years to see what can be done jointly, on for example vocational courses, for young people who will not get to University. The Department currently has a close relationship with DED.

Question (iii) raised by Mrs T Martin and Mrs G Skinner – *'Are all High Schools going to allow pupils to re-sit English and Maths exams if they get a grade C or below?'* *'Is the Department's position on the GCSE English results this year, still to 'see what happens in the UK', or will it be make representations directly?'* – the Director of Education confirmed that secondary schools had been asked not to penalise pupils who were expected to get good grades in English and Maths. Some schools may have difficulties on account of timetabling issues, but the Isle of Man College of Further and Higher Education had been asked not to charge for re-sits and AQA had stated they would not be charging for November re-sits. Secondary Heads would actively be taking up the issue of English results with their professional association, as the Isle of Man does not have control over exam boards.

Question (iv) raised by Mr S Bevan – *'Can the Minister advise if the DEC will be introducing the English Baccalaureate Certificate in place of GCSE's?'* – MB responded that the Department would be deliberately resisting initial pressure to introduce this and would be taking time to look at other options. A watch would be kept on Wales and Northern Ireland to see which route their authorities took. In terms of the curriculum, school Heads should take responsibility for what is used within their school, with the Department providing the decision making power.

Question (v) raised by Mrs G Skinner – *'When will the new Education Council members be advised which schools they have been assigned? Will there be any changes in the roles and responsibilities they were appointed to fulfil?'* – JG responded that all but one police check had come back and that formal letters would be sent to the new members shortly. An allocation for schools was currently being

drafted, but there would be 3 members for the Secondary schools; 1 for Primary schools; 2 who met the relevant criteria for the church schools and 2 for the Isle of Man College of Further and Higher Education. Therefore each member would sit on one secondary school and 2 primary school governing bodies. JG pointed out that the Secondary schools had asked for a non-teaching Governor to be appointed. JG stated that he expected the Roles and Responsibilities to remain the same, with the exception of some HR recruiting issues which Heather Christian and Mary Slater were currently reviewing. Mrs H Bradley proposed that there should be 4 members for Secondary Schools. This was seconded by Mrs J Pendree. The Minister said that he would discuss this proposal with JG.

Question (vi) raised by Mrs G Skinner – *'Will the Department be lobbying Tynwald for an increase in the budget next year, as further cuts will undoubtedly impact even further on the results and outcomes of young people?'* - SD replied that the issue of the budget was never off the Agenda, as the Department had taken a huge cut last year. It was felt that although the budget was manageable going forward, it would still be necessary to look at ideas for savings, both from within the Department and from the schools themselves. BB enquired if there was procurement for the purchase of fuel. It was advised that an agreement with the Department of Infrastructure had just recently been signed off, whereby fuel for vehicles used on official business could be purchased at 10 to 12 pence a litre cheaper. The system was rigorously controlled, via mileage monitoring.

Question (vii) raised by Mrs L Godby – *'Request for a discussion on the role of the ESO and at what stage should concerns be raised that an ESO is being used in place of a teacher?'* – MB responded that a Level 2 ESO would not be left unsupervised with a class. Some Level 3's might be left in a 'whole class' situation, but should not routinely be used to cover classes. They should not be planning the class work, but could supervise groups or work in pairs. Level 4's should not be used as substitute teachers, but could be used as cover supervisors if required. In Secondary schools, a Level 3 with the correct level of experience could be used as a Form Tutor to take registrations etc.

Question (viii) raised by Mrs G Skinner – *'How many different NEET's courses are being run across the Island? Who is funding them? How and by whom are they being monitored? Is there co-operation and collaboration between the various courses?'* – MB responded that this was mainly the responsibility of DED, with Youth involved in some of the organisation, detailed as follows :

For young people who have left education, there are currently:

- Prepare for Work Course. Gain knowledge about the service sectors, communication, customer service and workplace behaviours. Includes a placement. Funded by DED.
- Development Through Adventure – delivered by Children's Centre and funded by DED. A 16 week programme.
- M&S and Co-op are offering sessions to 16 -25 yr olds on starting your own business. Not a course. No Gov funding.
- Youth Service is delivering sessions offering information and guidance from Café Laare, Pulrose and Ramsey youth centres. The sessions include options for accredited learning. These are not courses as such but a collection of units (2 or 3 credits). Young people can choose from a selection offered through Open

	<p>Awards. DEC funded.</p> <p>Other initiatives, for those still in education (therefore not NEET)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Ballakermeen High School (some DED funding) and IOM college are offering courses that allow those who have not achieved 5 GCSEs at A*-C including English and Maths to achieve this. The course includes a BTEC Travel and Tourism or Outdoor Education + GCSE En and Ma. This is sometimes described as a NEET course but those students have never been NEET - although they might have become so. <p>There are also many L2 courses at the IOM College.</p> <p>The NEET strategy group has an action plan and associated data set. It meets quarterly to record progress and share information. The group has representatives from DEC, DHA, DSC (social services & benefits), DOI, DH, 3rd Sector and DED (chair).</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Any other Business</p> <p>JG advised that it would be necessary to appoint two members for a short period, to sit on the Peel Endowment Committee, one to act as Chair, in order to sign off the accounts. Mr R Bankes-Jones and Mr R Smith volunteered.</p> <p>A Member enquired if the Apprentice Aid Trust was still in operation. JG confirmed that this was indeed the case, through the College Student Support Services.</p> <p>A Member enquired about the Noble's site and expressed concern that both Ballacloan Infants and Fairfield School were in excess of 100 years old and were no longer fit for the purpose of educating children in the 21st Century. The Minister responded that this was discussed through Tynwald but it was felt that this matter would be pushed back further to 2016/17 on account of finance. A Member added that the schools involved would struggle to accommodate numbers in the forthcoming academic years.</p>	
	<p>The meeting ended at 11.15.</p> <p>The date of the next meeting is to be advised.</p>	

Signed
Minister for Education and Children

Date