

750 Minutes 750 of the Education Committee Meeting at the Education Learning Centre held on Wednesday, 18 July 2018 at 09.00hrs.

Present:	Hon. Christine Scipio-O'Dean	Chairperson
	Hon. Kylie Hercules	Deputy Chairperson
	Hon. Dr Corinda Essex	Member
	Hon Clint Beard	Member
	Hon. Brian Isaac	Member
	Mrs Robyn Franconi	Secretary
	Mrs Shirley Wahler	Director of Education
	Mrs Wendy Benjamin	Assistant Director of Schools
Invited:	Mrs Julia Drozdowskij	Primary Advisor

50.1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Education Committee.

A warm welcome was extended to the Primary Advisor, Mrs Julia Drozdowskij whom was in attendance for Agenda Item3.

50.2 MATTERS ARISING

The Committee noted that the criteria for Band 3A students had not been circulated as requested in the previous meeting. Following discussion to clarify some confusion in respect of which documents was in question, it was agreed that the criteria would be circulated by the Secretary.

ACTION: Secretary

50.3 REPORT FROM PRIMARY ADVISOR

The Primary Advisor's End of Contract Report was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting and noted.

The Director thanked Mrs Drozdowskij for her contribution across the Education Directorate. Mrs Drozdowskij noted that it had been a pleasure working with the staff and children on the island and added that the potential and calibre of the students were exceptional.

Mrs Julia Drozdowskij, presented an overview of the areas of work completed, as well as suggestions on ways forward that would enable continuity.

Areas of the work completed, included:

- The first cohort of teaching staff nearing completion of the Cambridge Certificate in Educational Leadership
- Improvement and consistency in teaching across the primary system with the benefit of the ICT system & connectivity
- Standards in English and Maths rising with implementation of new schemes
- Assessment schemes developed in English and Maths

Ways forward as suggested, included the following:

- All teachers on island to undergo training in Educational Leadership, utilising the Cambridge model
- Sharing of good practice
- Continuous Professional Development/Up-skilling of staff
- Precision teaching to match the needs of pupils

Mrs Drozdowskij specifically commented on the importance of sustaining the Education Leadership course, the extension of bright children and quality first teaching.

The Committee members individually thanked Mrs Drozdowskij for the report and expressed their gratitude for her valuable work in primary schools and willingness to solve problems and cover shortages sometimes with difficult groups.

50.4 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR EDUCATION

The document was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

The Director indicated that following meetings with the teachers, five priorities were identified. The proposed Strategic Priorities for the academic year 2019/2020 remain unchanged from the previous year.

The Director noted however that for 2019/2020 the priorities would move to a more outcomes-focused formulation of Education objectives, with more detailed phrases that describe the desired outcome.

Strategic Priorities for Education for 2019/20 were agreed, and will be prioritised by Legislative Council. These are:

- Improving student attainment and achievement at all levels, particularly in the key areas of literacy and numeracy
- Working to ensure that schools are welcoming and inclusive learning environments that provide opportunities for all students to achieve
- Continued support for the training and upskilling of new and serving teaching staff to support better teaching and learning in schools
- Working through the St Helena Community College (SHCC) to provide opportunities for training and development to meet the needs of the community and the developing economy of St Helena
- Supporting overseas scholarships to help develop the future professionals and leaders of St Helena

50.5 SHCC 2018-19 COURSE PROSPECTUS

The document was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

The Director stated that the purpose of circulating the document to the Committee, was to make Members officially aware of the prospectus. The Director noted that information would be added as the policy is revisited and all information would be uploaded onto the SHCC website. The Committee approved the prospectus subject to minor amendments and thanked the Director for putting the document together. The Secretary to circulate the revised document once amended.

ACTION: Secretary

50.6 ACCESS TO SHCC

The document was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

The Director advised that there was a request to consider extending SHCC courses to residents of Ascension Island.

It was understood that this access would be limited to distance learning courses only and that arrangements would need to be made in Ascension, independent of SHCC, to provide suitable internet connectivity to support student learning.

The Director noted that it would be reasonable to provide access and support services such as registration, advice and guidance to potential learners in Ascension, but that it would not be expected of the St Helena Government to subsidise costs for these learners as is currently done for St Helena residents.

The Director provided the Committee with the comments and suggestions from the SHCC Board and in conclusion the Education Committee supported making SHCC courses accessible to persons residing on Ascension Island, with the condition that the cost of courses on offer will be payable in full (unsubsidised). The full cost recovery would include the actual cost of the course, examination fees and any associated administration costs as well.

The Education Committee were further asked to consider whether the charging policy for SHCC students in St Helena should continue to distinguish only between SHG employees and all other residents for fee purposes or whether there may be some additional consideration of a tiered fee structure which more fully subsidises those individuals deemed to qualify as local students. The Director provided comments from the SHCC Board in this regard as well.

The Committee agreed that the community should benefit from the funding provided to subsidise courses through SHCC and that there should be distinction between Local and Non-Local Fees. The Director indicated that some work would be required in order to provide a formal policy in this regard and would therefore not be implementable for the September 2018 student intake.

50.7 SHCC CHARGING POLICY

The document was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

The Director explained that the existing Charging Policy had been circulated with the track changes to enable Members to easily identify suggested changes.

Members discussed, commented and made further suggestion in respect of the Charging Policy. The Committee approved the existing SHCC Charging Policy with new courses after review. Changes as approved would be effective immediately.

The Committee were also asked to consider whether a tiered approach to changes should be extended beyond the SHG employee/non-SHG employee system currently in place. After some discussion it was agreed that proposed impact of future changes in this respect would be prepared and presented to the Committee in a formal document once adequate supporting information had been gathered.

50.8 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

The document was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

The Assistant Director of Schools explained that in recent years St. Helena has seen an influx of people of different nationalities and cultures and as a result has developed into a more diverse community. She added that this diversity is also evident in the school system with school communities being more diverse than ever before.

The Assistant Director of Schools noted that The Education and Employment Directorate is responsible for ensuring that equality and diversity is portrayed and respected, with all treated fairly and equally in the school system.

The Committee were asked to review and approved An Equality and Diversity Policy is to be implemented in all Island schools with immediate effect.

The Committee discussed and commented on certain aspects of the Policy. Members asked that an overall statement be included in the document indicating that we are opposed to all forms of prejudice.

The Committee approved the Equality and Diversity Policy, subject to minor changes, for immediate implementation in all the Schools. The Secretary will circulate the revised document once amended.

ACTION: Secretary

CLOSED AGENDA

50.9 BUDGET

The revised budget was circulated to the Committee.

Concern was raised that no information was available from Corporate finance in respect of expenditure for the last few months. In the absence of this information, it was requested that forecasted data be presented at future meetings.

50.10 STAFFING

The staffing update was circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting.

One of the Members questioned the resignation of the Advisory Math Teacher as it was thought that his contract would be extended.

The Director advised that the teacher in question however accepted another post abroad.

The Director noted that with the retirement of the current Head of 6th form at Prince Andrew School, the Advisory Science Teacher will take over 6th form and recruitment will commence for someone to take over distance learning.

The Director informed that the new English teacher held a PHD with previous experience as advisor and consultancy head.

She added that four applicants were shortlisted for the Teacher Trainee post. The Chairperson if there was any way in which all four candidates could be funded if they were found suitable and successful. The Director indicated that an additional £10 000 per candidate would be required to fund more Teacher Trainees. It was agreed to await the recruitment and to decide whether further consideration was necessary once the recruitment process had been concluded.

50.11 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Education Committee will be held on Wednesday, 15 August 2018 commencing at 09.00 hours. This meeting will be held in the SHCC Hall.

There being no further items to discuss the meeting closed at 12.25pm

Hon' Christine Scipio-O'Dean
Chairperson
Education Committee

Date: 18 July 2018