



**STANDING COMMITTEE
OF
TYNWALD COURT
OFFICIAL REPORT**

**RECORTYS OIKOIL
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**PROCEEDINGS
DAALTYN**

**SOCIAL AFFAIRS POLICY REVIEW
COMMITTEE**

Department of Education, Sport and Culture

HANSARD

Douglas, Monday, 21st June 2021

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Members Present:

Chairman: Ms J M Edge MHK
Mr P Greenhill MLC
Mr M J Perkins MHK

Assistant Clerk:
Ms G Phillips

Contents

Procedural.....	35
EVIDENCE OF Hon. Alex Allinson MHK, Minister; and Mr Graham Kinrade, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Education, Sport and Culture.....	35
<i>The Committee sat in private at 11.11 a.m.</i>	52

Standing Committee of Tynwald on Social Affairs Policy Review

Department of Education, Sport and Culture

*The Committee sat in public at 10.08 a.m.
in the Legislative Council Chamber,
Legislative Buildings, Douglas*

[MS EDGE *in the Chair*]

Procedural

The Chairman (Ms Edge): Welcome to this public meeting of the Social Affairs Policy Review Committee. I am Julie Edge MHK and I chair this Committee. With me today are Mr Peter Greenhill MLC and Mr Martyn Perkins MHK.

Please could we all ensure that our mobile phones are on silent or off so that we do not have any interruptions and for the purposes of Hansard I will be ensuring that we do not have two people speaking at once.

Today we start with two representatives of the Department of Education, Sport and Culture. They were last before this Committee on 19th April, as part of a panel about the pandemic. The last time they were here for general oral evidence was 26th October 2020. Welcome.

EVIDENCE OF

**Hon. Alex Allinson MHK, Minister; and
Mr Graham Kinrade, Chief Executive Officer,
Department of Education, Sport and Culture**

Q84. The Chairman: For the benefit of *Hansard* and anyone listening please could you both introduce yourselves, including your title and how long you have been in post.

The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture (Dr Allinson): Certainly, Chair.

My name is Dr Alex Allinson, MHK for Ramsey, I am currently Minister for Education, Sport and Culture, and I was appointed in March last year for that role.

Mr Kinrade: Good morning, Mr Graham Kinrade, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Education, Sport and Culture and I came into post in September last year.

Q85. The Chairman: Thank you.

I suppose a good place to start today would be the introduction of lateral flow tests into our schools. Have you had any update as to how that has gone, today being the first day?

The Minister: Certainly. We need to put it in perspective. Obviously, lateral flow tests have been used in the United Kingdom and a lot of other jurisdictions over the last year as a screening tool and the Isle of Man Government have been looking with interest at their roll-out, in terms of

surge testing as well in places like Liverpool last year and what sort of value they have when you are moving from an eradication policy, pretty much to a mitigation policy.

30 We have been working quite closely with the Directorate of Public Health and also the Department of Health and Social Care, Manx Care now, to see what we could do in terms of the school environment and more generally in terms of screening for COVID-19 as we gradually open up the borders. And so the use of lateral flow tests in areas where you have got large numbers of people, whether that be a restaurant, a theatre show or, as we have seen in the United Kingdom, football matches, there is a lot of interest in how they can be used to try to make those safer. But
35 also very much a belief that it should be voluntary, that you cannot compulsory test people. You can, I suppose, if you are paying to go into a theatre but not in terms of a school environment.

So we have been working quite closely with the Department of Health and Social Care in terms of drawing up a policy, working with head teachers, and bringing these in as an offer in terms of secondary schools, and it would be an offer. Working with head teachers on how they are
40 distributed, though, as well because if you get a lot of children suddenly getting them and poking swabs down each other's throats and throwing them round the school yard it is not actually achieving what you want.

From what I gather, they have been ordered, they are on Island and they will be distributed this week. Letters have gone out to all the parents involved, and in conversations with head
45 teachers they were very much of the opinion that parents should come in and collect them for the children. The parents have the choice, really, in terms of whether their children should be tested or not, because that was some of the feedback that we had been having from parents.

Q86. The Chairman: So it has not started today?

50 **The Minister:** The programme has started today but in answer to your question, 'How many will be given out later on today?' I cannot actually tell you. From what I am aware the tests are on the Island but I am not quite sure the quantity because, again, that side of it, and the letters that went out, has been organised by the Department of Health and Social Care.

55 **Q87. Mr Perkins:** Has it been generally well received by the parents?

The Minister: We have had some enquiries from parents. I think most parents, because they have seen what is happening across and may have relatives who are going through the same thing,
60 see the potential value to it. I have had one or two contacts from parents who do not want their children tested and I have reassured them that this is an offer, a voluntary test that they can take up. Similarly, one parent contacted me who was a bit concerned about peer pressure from other children, that their child might be forced into testing, which is why are working with head teachers and we have agreed the policy that it is very much the parents who collect them rather than the children bringing them home to the parents so we have that governance of the whole system,
65 really.

Q88. Mr Greenhill: And what will happen if someone does test positive in that way? What has been put forward as the steps that happen after that?

70 **The Minister:** In exactly the same way as people are home testing in the United Kingdom, the recommendation is if you do get a positive test then you phone 111 and you self-isolate. That will then be confirmed through a PCR test.

The Cochrane review of lateral flow tests had some conflicting evidence in terms of the sensitivity and specificity of them. There are quite a few now being manufactured by various
75 companies around the world which all have slight differences. The Department of Health and Social Care have chosen one particular device and looked at the quality and the accuracy of it and we are running that. So we are not anticipating a lot of false positives, but if a test was positive

80 we would ask people to contact 111, double check it and then take that further, if the PCR test confirms that it was a true positive.

Q89. Mr Greenhill: Just to follow up on that, in addition to calling 111 if there was a positive, are they meant to say something to the school themselves, or how does that proceed?

85 **The Minister:** They would not be directed necessarily to start talking to the schools themselves. What we do in terms of an outbreak plan is have very close co-operation between the Director of Public Health and the contact tracing team and the school. Often the schools obviously would be informed, depending on the risk assessment. As we have seen previously, either a class, a year group, or sometimes the entire school has been asked to self-isolate. But we are trying to make
90 sure that parents themselves are not made to feel responsible for looking after a process which is very much to do with public health, because contact tracing is a bit of an art form to get it right and make sure that you are informing the right people, giving them the right advice and the right reassurance at the right time.

95 **Q90. The Chairman:** And the device that has been chosen, is it different from what is being distributed to UK schools?

The Minister: There have been a number of devices distributed to UK schools, depending on the locality. The device chosen by the Department of Health and Social Care has been approved
100 by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority (MHRA) and one of the benefits of it is that it is designed for home testing so the swabs are taken just from the nose, whereas some of the tests in the United Kingdom were done with observed swabbing – you have probably seen the pictures of people coming into schools and somebody on the other side of a glass screen watching them take a throat swab and a nose swab. These devices, as I said, they are just nose
105 swabs and just for use at home, so they get round some of the issues that they have had in the United Kingdom in terms of staffing it and in terms of sometimes teachers feeling responsible for administering what is very much a health programme.

Q91. The Chairman: And with regard to following up, once you are using the process and seeing how it is working, who is responsible for looking at the data and reporting back?
110

The Minister: Again, the programme is being run in conjunction with DESC but very much by the Department of Health and Social Care and Public Health. They will be looking at simple things like the uptake; how many people want to do this? That is a big unknown at the moment, at a
115 time when, thankfully, we do not have any live cases of COVID-19 on the Island.

But what it also does is it allows us to gain some familiarity with these devices so that if in the future we were to have a major outbreak and we did want to mass test an entire school, it would not come out of the blue, we would have the devices in stock and people would be familiar with their use, so I think that builds in a little bit more resilience in terms of the education system.
120

Q92. The Chairman: With regard to catch-up for our students who have lost considerable time over the last year, has anything been planned? Is anything getting planned for the summer?

The Minister: In terms of the catch-up, I think there has been a lot of conversations about missed learning and lost learning due to the shutdowns we have had and the way schools have been closed. What people have to remember, though, is that that learning carried on, albeit
125 remotely, and a lot of young people and students have actually caught up remarkably quickly.

One of the things last year, as schools reopened, was teachers were asked to try to reassess not only whether children had not progressed, but whether some of them had perhaps regressed,

130 particularly the younger ones, and there was some evidence of that in terms of reading and writing skills.

Our teachers have been working incredibly hard to try to allow people to progress properly, and certainly whilst there may be some individuals who still need some extra help, and that has been given, I do not think that overall people have been disadvantaged.

135 In the United Kingdom there has been a lot of talk about summer school programmes. A lot of those are looking particularly at those young people and students who are transitioning from primary school to secondary school and there have been various models mooted, perhaps starting a week early and allowing those children just starting secondary school to become more familiar with their environments. Certainly from talking to school leaders on the Isle of Man, they do not see necessarily the importance of that here because we have managed to reopen schools very quickly. We have been concentrating on that transition and doing it actually a lot earlier. So at the end of last summer term we had a lot of children going into secondary schools, as planned, to make them more familiar before the summer holidays. So I do not imagine that we would need to run similar summer programmes on the Isle of Man.

140
145 Also there is the issue of resources and teachers needing a bit of a break over the summer, because they have been working remarkably hard, particularly at the moment in terms of helping out with the exam grading which has been going on, which has been a lot of extra workload for them.

150 **Q93. The Chairman:** So the summer school programme that was previously in place where they did the transition for students who perhaps needed to upskill slightly for secondary, that is not happening this year?

The Minister: Chair, in terms of a summer school programme, we have a transition programme. Schools have never opened during the summer just for transition, to my knowledge. It certainly did not happen last year but perhaps, Graham, you could comment on that?

155
160 **Q94. The Chairman:** I will have to correct you there, the schools used to run summer school programmes. I think it was the last week of the school holidays or certainly one week within the school holidays.

Mr Kinrade: Each individual school may have its own arrangements by which it reaches out to its students, and that is the business of the school having seen the cohort of children coming in and whether they feel that is a requirement or not.

165
The Minister: But that is very different –

Q95. The Chairman: It previously got funding from the Department for that. Is the funding still in place for that, if the schools wish for it?

170
Mr Kinrade: If they called for it that funding would still be in place.

Q96. The Chairman: And what sort of funding is that?

175
Mr Kinrade: The same as it has ever been, it has not changed.

Q97. The Chairman: Okay, thank you.

And just one more really on the outcome of the pandemic with regard to digital solutions. If we do end up in a situation, say in the next term or the next school year, how is the digital programme progressing for access for students?

180

185 **The Minister:** There are a number of options there. You have got the actual remote learning programme itself, which has been refined significantly from this time last year. A lot of work has been put in to that, both by the Department and school leaders to perfect it, to share best practice and to try to get more of a uniformity.

I think certainly when we had the lockdowns earlier on this year you could see that there have been significant improvements in terms of the quality and quantity but also the feedback, which was very important that came out of a lot of the consultations we did, was that parents wanted to make sure their children were getting that positive feedback. But also there is obviously the issue of access both to the devices themselves and to broadband connectivity. We have been working quite hard to try to increase that access, particularly for disadvantaged children who are digitally disadvantaged as well as everything else, by providing laptops and providing connectivity as well, but there is still some way to go there. That fits in with some of the other aspects of Government, particularly the national broadband programme to try to make sure that people do have access to the internet wherever they live on the Island. Certainly, Mr Perkins, in your own constituency, there are people who find it very difficult to get online, whatever device they may have, and we need to bridge that divide both in terms of education but also in terms of our society.

200 **Q98. Mr Perkins:** Can I just go right back to the beginning of this last outbreak. Are you satisfied that the Education Department has enough input into the process, Silver Command or whatever it is, through the Department of Health, I imagine. Are you satisfied that that is now better than it was?

205 **The Minister:** I think right from the start of the pandemic Government had to adopt a new way of working. So, as you say, in terms of the officers we have a Bronze, Silver and Gold Command which was set up. You could say in some ways that is very much a military way of dealing with a crisis. You get everyone who has access to information but also who is affected by policy in the same room at the same time, whether virtually or physically round the table, and that was one of the benefits in terms of that structure going through the pandemic to make sure that you had that communication and access to information. Obviously at the same time you have got the Council of Ministers going on as well and having huge numbers of meetings at various times of the day or night, seven days a week, to deal with what was very much an emerging situation both in terms of cases, but also in terms of knowledge – we are now suddenly all virology experts, whereas most of us did not know what Messenger RNA was 18 months ago, so it has been a steep learning curve.

215 In answer to your question, yes, I think that the lessons learned from that must continue to be refined. Certainly Education, Sport and Culture always have a seat on the table if they are needed, and that is whether we need to input into a decision-making process or whether a decision is being made around schools or all the other facilities we run, and so that information can be shared very quickly.

220 **Q99. The Chairman:** And do you think an officer from the Department is able to actually give a full picture of the logistical side and the concerns within schools? Do you not feel that a representative from perhaps a school environment should be involved? It perhaps would have helped. There certainly was not any communication with them for the last lockdown, I believe.

225 **The Minister:** I think that comment is not particularly helpful. There has been a huge amount of communication with teachers and head teachers. The question is *when* that communication takes place, and it has to take place once the full picture is known and often once the decision-making processes is underway because schools, and particularly school leaders, need to have that full information to make the right decisions for their environment and for their school community.

230 I think there has been a huge amount of communication with school teachers by the Department, throughout this process. One of the things that we have all learnt to do is to

235 communicate virtually, and regular Teams meetings are run with all of the primary and secondary
school teachers, either individually or together, and I do not whether you want to comment a little
bit more in terms of the increase in the level of communication we have now.

Mr Kinrade: Certainly. I can only speak from when I have come into position in September, but
240 during the lockdowns that we have had to navigate through in that period of time, the first one of
those, we had daily meetings.

Now, communication is an interesting piece, isn't it? Because we do not want to communicate
so much with schools that actually we are getting in their way when they are trying to deliver on
the ground. So it started off, I think, with two weeks of daily meetings with primaries and
245 secondaries. We did those separately because the issues concerning both environments were
different and I did not want to conflate into one meeting for our benefit of only having to meet
once. Those meetings, I will grant you, varied, they were always set for an hour, sometimes they
were 10 minutes, if there were no issues and nobody had anything they needed to resolve,
sometimes they ran a little over an hour if there were things live. Then at the end of the second
week we discussed as to whether we needed to keep that level running and we did not. I think we
250 backed it out to three days, we did a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. And today, as we are this
week, it is more appropriate meeting once a week.

That virtual environment is really powerful, because what I do not particularly want to do is
have all communications driven through email because it is great for giving out a message but it
is really poor picking up what is a nuanced problem that you are facing today that a 30-minute ...
255 no, 30-second, quick conversation, would just resolve, and having resolved it with one head you
inform all heads as to what that is. So we found that virtual space – whilst it has its limitations in
some ways, it is hard to beat face-to-face looking across a table at somebody – it has been really
powerful for as little disruption as possible into the schools at the point when they are trying to
deliver, but to ensure that they are kept up-to-date with anything we feel we need to update them
260 with, but then to enable a question-and-answer session, and I have had nothing but praise for
those sessions, as it has kept everybody within the loop.

So to go back to your earlier point, Chair, would one officer then be able to represent? I sit on
Gold Command, as it happens, I feel when I sit in those meetings with the head teachers I am well
informed as to what the issues are and what is live and needs raising at that level.

265 **Q100. The Chairman:** It is great to hear that you are doing that; operational meetings with the
head teachers to get their views. But it was quite clear on the third lockdown that perhaps there
was not good communication with head teachers before decisions were taken on. Would you not
accept that? A quick conversation over an important strategic issue is not an operational meeting,
270 which is what you have described, but with regard to risk mitigation, do you feel that was effective
at that point in time?

The Minister: I disagree with you, Chair. Again, I have had this conversation with you in this
very seat previously. If you are talking about the third lockdown, I have previously explained that
275 it was an emerging situation and once we knew the true extent of the outbreak, we had clear and
very relevant discussions with school leaders. But particularly on that Sunday, we did not have the
full picture in terms of the risk and so we did not at that time communicate that with all teachers,
but as soon as we had enough information and data to make a valid decision that was shared with
all the relevant teachers.

280 **Q101. The Chairman:** I do not think I am talking 'all relevant teachers'. It is just that emerging
situation, I think you do need leaders who are involved possibly in the situation, and that perhaps
was a little bit of a gap.

285 **The Minister:** Absolutely. But, as we have said, to actually have a decent conversation you need
all the facts. We are often dealing with an extremely rapidly changing situation on the Isle of Man
when you have got outbreaks, of whatever infection they may be, whether it is rotavirus, whether
it is salmonella, whether it is influenza, whether it is measles, which we have not had recently, but
we have certainly dealt with mumps outbreaks and also some problems with glandular fever in
290 our secondary schools, so with all these environments what we need to do is get the right data,
get the right advice from clinicians, and then communicate that into the decision-making process,
both within Government and also with the school leaders.

Mr Perkins: I think that we should move on, not get bogged down with COVID.

295

Q102. Ms Edge: Yes, we will move on from COVID! Let's talk progress.

Obviously prior to the pandemic there were issues with regard to teachers' pay and the unions
were involved. Could you provide a brief update; is that all sorted and is everybody now working
with a new pay structure?

300

The Minister: It is not necessarily a new pay structure, Chair.

Since 1992 the Isle of Man have very much followed the United Kingdom model, particularly
the British model, in terms of the School Teachers' Review Body, who look at aspects of
recruitment retention and teacher pay. Normally, each September they produce a school
teachers' pay and condition document which is then submitted to the Secretary of State for
305 Education in England, and there is actually a part of their Education Act which then dictates how
that should be applied.

As you say, there was a previous dispute in terms of particularly the STPCD settlement for 2018,
whereby rather than an across-the-board increase of 3.5%, it was staged, so it was 3.5% for
310 unqualified teachers and for the main pay grade a 2% uplift, for leading practitioners and a 1.5%
uplift for leadership, and certainly some of the unions who represent teachers were unhappy with
that gradation rather than across the board, and that was one of the issues that certainly led to
ballots for industrial action by all the teaching unions and disquiet with the way that the pay
settlement had been applied. Now, as you are aware, we have hopefully addressed some of those
315 concerns with a pay settlement. However, there are more wide-ranging concerns from teacher
representatives in terms of overall teacher pay, but also in terms of conditions as well, and that is
an ongoing bit of work now.

Three of the unions have called off all their industrial action and one has suspended it so this
is still a real situation, it is not something that has been sorted and put to bed and what we are
320 involved in is trying to rebuild those relationships, rebuild that sense of culture in the Department
that puts people first, but also deal with some of these real concerns about teacher pay and
conditions. Because right across the board, I think since 2008, we have seen an erosion of pay,
both in the private and the public sector, and it is going to be a challenge to see how we address
that at the same time as obviously dealing with the results of COVID in the way it has affected the
325 overall economy. But we are in active negotiation and active dialogue with all the unions to try to
address some of these issues, as well as deal with their concerns about issues like recruitment and
retention, which stem from pay to a degree, but it is not just about pay, it is about conditions and
it is about how people are treated and valued by the service they work with.

330 **Q103. Mr Greenhill:** And how has that actually affected the staffing levels? Are people leaving?
Are you seeing people wanting to come over here?

The Minister: That is a very good question. There was a *Guardian* article in November last year
and the headline was, 'Exodus of exhausted head teachers predicted in England after the
335 pandemic.' I think when you look at teaching staff, what they have had to go through to switch
from in-school teaching in a classroom to doing that virtually has been absolutely exhausting.

340 I know from talking to teachers, trying to monitor 20 or 30 children on small screens on a Teams meeting can be a lot harder work than if they are in front of you visibly and trying to make sure that the quiet ones have a chance to talk, it takes a lot of concentration and an awful lot of skill and also we have been having to deal with some of the issues around exam grading, both last year and this year, which have caused extra work. Teachers have been taking on the role of dealing with risk assessments for their schools and making them as safe as possible, both for them and their students and on top of that we have got the fact that teachers have their own families as well and will have their own concerns.

345 It has been interesting looking at the number of people leaving the profession. We always get a bit of a turnover, people will retire or move on to other jobs or move off the Island. In the school year up until August 2019, we had 30 teachers leaving, until 31st August 2020, we had 17, and up until August 2021, we expect around 18 teachers to leave, and we are recruiting to try to replace these people and also to try to grow the teaching profession.

350 So as yet we have not seen what was feared of a mass exodus from teachers from the Isle of Man and from the education service here. But it is a concern, obviously, and that is where we come down as part of the action plan on the back of the Beamans Report and the analysis was to change the culture of the education service so that people feel valued, want to stay here, but more than that, actually want to help with the recruitment of new teachers to our Island.

355

Q104. Mr Perkins: Will you have enough at the start of next term do you think?

The Minister: If I can hand over to you, Graham.

360 **Mr Kinrade:** Currently, on the data that we have in front of us today, yes, we will. There are one or two subjects within secondary schools that are particularly difficult to recruit to. But we have got a number of recruitment drives, for want of a better word, where we have worked very closely with Locate Isle of Man to update the benefits book, so every time we put out a job application this book goes with it to explain the Island and what the benefits of living on the Isle of Man are and what the pay and conditions are like on the Island. That was a fantastic piece of work, I have to say, from Locate. That is up on their website and through that Locate portal we have had over 150 contacts into that portal now, since March 2021, which is a great number of interest. I am not saying 150 will generate into jobs, but that is a good number of contacts to have through.

370 We have just launched within the Department, about March I think this year, maybe April, again working with OHR, a 'refer a friend' scheme, which I know other areas of Government are looking at, but we have communicated that across our organisation, and that is live within education at this moment in time. We had a good article in *The Times Educational Supplement*, that was about three or four months ago now.

375 So we are doing an awful lot as part of that much wider plan of culture, which is broken down into how do you actually deliver that? Part of that is an organisational development plan which looks at how you restructure your organisation over the next five years and what the key elements are in there around recruitment and retention, but it takes time, unfortunately. It would be lovely if we could just flick a switch and fix that problem but we just need to keep building and building on that. At this moment in time, we would expect to have enough people in post.

380

Q105. Mr Perkins: Can you use Teams to have, for example, one Ramsey Grammar secondary teacher teaching a subject that you cannot get somebody for in Peel? Can you use Teams to actually get the children in Peel to log into that? Have we thought about that?

385

Mr Kinrade: You could. You could do all sorts of things.

Currently I know the schools move students around to address different subject areas and delivery within one space.

390 Probably the most exciting piece of work, in my eyes – I hope everybody else shares that
view – is we are about to kick off a lot of work streams; we have worked very closely in developing
a strategy, we have worked with teachers and head teachers to say what are the key areas that
we need to start looking at and addressing? And some of those would be obvious, you would look
at assessment criteria or we would look at the curriculum, but one of those is going to be how do
we deliver that curriculum in the future? Does it encompass more digital? Is it better to be moving
395 children around? I think those are conversations that we need to have with our colleagues and
understand what the wider view of the best delivery mechanism is going forward, but luckily on
the Isle of Man, most of those things are possible, anything is possible.

Q106. Mr Greenhill: And I think in terms of the potential gap that might be there with people
400 leaving, we have talked a little bit about subjects there, but what about head teachers or deputy
heads? Are we seeing that there might be some places that we do need to fill very quickly in that
context?

The Minister: If I can answer that because I have talked about people leaving, but when you
405 look at recruitment, up to September 2019, we had 70 teachers recruited, up to September 2020,
we had 30 teachers and up to September this year, we expect to appoint 35 new teachers.

The 'refer a friend' scheme that Graham Kinrade has talked about is something I think we need
to do more on the Island. This is a scheme whereby teachers can talk to their friends, recommend
they come over, and if they are successful will actually get a financial reward for that because the
410 best advert for the Isle of Man actually is the people of the Isle of Man and if we can harness some
of those – and we are going to review this and see if it works for Education, there is a huge scope
there for rolling it out to other areas, particularly Health and Social Care, to see if we can actually
perhaps bypass some of the more traditional routes and use the resources we have, which is the
people who work for us.

415

Q107. Mr Greenhill: But if I can be specific about is there the potential that some head teachers
will not be there next year that are in place now? And what are we doing about looking at bringing
those sort of people in?

Mr Kinrade: I think at the moment on the head teacher posts, we have appointed to all head
420 teacher posts bar one, where we have asked somebody to act up in the interim, and we will
re-advertise that in the autumn term.

But I think probably what you are moving towards there is professional development and
whether we have been able to do enough in the past to enable people to step into those roles,
425 and that is absolutely on our radar as to what does leadership development look like within the
organisation and how do we enable that in the future.

The Minister: There is also obviously the role of succession planning as well, so trying to get an
idea when people are thinking about leaving and planning ahead, rather than just working when
430 they submit the letter of retirement or resignation. And certainly that is something, I think, we
have been far keener to try to pursue as well so we can do some proper workforce planning,
looking over the next couple of years to see what roles we will need to replace, but also what roles
will need to expand.

Q108. The Chairman: I do not think this is anything new. I am not hearing anything new today.
That has always gone on, there has always been personnel development. There were NPQH
435 courses run for recruiting. But I suppose the big concern, and I have not heard you mention it
because we have focused on schools, is the principal of the University College has resigned, a
replacement for September, how many people applied for that post?

440

The Minister: I did not comment on it because I was not asked directly about UCM but I am quite happy to talk about that.

445 Yes, the current principal has said that she will be leaving this summer. There was an interview process and we had quite a large number of applicants apply for the job. Whilst we looked very carefully at the various applicants, and some were really high quality, it was not felt that we necessarily wanted to appoint at that stage and so we will be re-advertising. What we are working on at the moment is an interim solution until we get a permanent applicant and a permanent person for that position. But there were a lot of people interested in the job.

450 **Q109. The Chairman:** And just with regard to recruitment and retention, is it your intention to implement the STRB recommendations for pay going forward? Do you think that is probably one of the barriers, if they are coming to the Isle of Man and they are looking at something different, it is a profession and they go into a profession to stick with the links for their profession?

455 **The Minister:** Chair, I think you make a very valid point. The largest number of teachers we have are recruited from the United Kingdom and they are aware of the situation. We do have, and we have been quite successful in recruiting, people from Southern Ireland as well and from Scotland and Wales, and each of them have a slightly different system. But certainly pinning pay and conditions to where we want to attract people from makes perfect sense.

460 There is also a political incentive in the United Kingdom to raise the starting salary of teachers and also to look at the weighting, particularly the London weighting, given the expense now of things like accommodation.

In Tynwald we have talked a lot about affordable housing. Well, if you are a teacher relocating to the Isle of Man on what could be quite a low starting wage to begin with, you will need that extra help, which we do give, but I think it is part of a wider scheme that we need to at least remain competitive with the United Kingdom if we are going to be able to recruit from that. But obviously these sort of conversations are held with teacher representatives on a regular basis going forward in terms of the regular meetings which are held between the Department and the union representatives here.

470

Q110. The Chairman: With regard to assessments going forward what are you putting in place with regard to performance assessment from September? Because I think it is a bit of a grey area at the present time.

475 **The Minister:** Are you talking specifically around teacher assessments?

The Chairman: Around teacher assessments, yes, is there any update on that?

480 **Mr Kinrade:** Certainly. Probably one of the most positive things we have had is we now have a really strong working relationship with the unions. We have a partnership forum where we meet with all of the recognised unions regularly; it varies, it depends on people's diaries, but at least bi-weekly. And out of that there was an agreement, right at the start, that probably the first thing we need to look at was the appraisal process. The appraisal process was not well received within the teaching profession, it was not well viewed by the unions and, I have to say, I was not a fan myself. That new document is virtually complete now. It has been a fantastic piece of work, and it really showed how, if we put the past behind us, and the unions and ourselves and our teaching profession all work together to a single outcome we can achieve really quite impressive things.

485
490 So we now have a professional development framework, it is not an appraisal framework, and the purpose of professional development is a positive process that develops and improves people and enables us to ... it talks of the succession planning that we have just been talking about, and it talks to the professional development. It is an entirely different way, rather than saying, 'This is what you should be doing, please evidence it.' To saying, 'You are professionals. We absolutely

495 understand what you are doing and what we need is further conversation as to how we can
engage and help and drive that forward and help you develop in the direction that you wish to
go.' Off the back of that there is a support framework which is where, if we did have any issues
around capability, as it used to be known, then the support framework is there to support staff
through those issues and help get a positive outcome.

500 **Q111. The Chairman:** And that is in place now or is still in discussions, ready for September?

Mr Kinrade: They are. They will be there for September, they are just getting the final ticks and
checks through the partnership forum with the unions.

505 **The Chairman:** Okay, thank you.

Q112. Mr Perkins: Moving on. As a Committee we are obviously very concerned about mental
health issues. How many children have you got absent because of mental health issues?

510 **The Minister:** Unfortunately I do not think I can answer that question down to that detail, to
be honest with you, because in terms of mental health obviously that may be a significant, more
permanent issue or it may be just a temporary problem that young people have.

515 We have always known that people coming into schools from the community will bring their
problems with them. Occasionally there are problems within the school community itself, whether
that be bullying or harassment or things like that which have to be dealt with and which can
exacerbate those problems. What we have gone through in the last 14 months, I think, has
amplified all these issues.

520 There were various bits of work going on before COVID hit our shores in terms of a listening
service in schools, in terms of mental health first aid training for teachers, and for pupils as well if
they wanted it. Those have all been accelerated, particularly over the last six to 12 months, with
a lot more teachers wanting to learn more about mental health and wanting to learn the skills to
recognise problems to support their students but also their own colleagues as well who have been
under a huge amount of stress, as we all have, over the last year.

525 What we have also been doing, particularly in secondary schools, is encouraging those schools
to reach out to the third sector as well, and as a Department trying to have much closer pathways
and relationships with the Department of Health and Social Care, now Manx Care, in terms of that
small number of young people who need referral on to more specialised provision.

530 One of the things in terms of the education strategy that is going to be laid before Tynwald
next month is really the key to this is early intervention. The key to this is recognising mental
health issues in young people at an early stage so you can intervene with quite low level
intervention, such as counselling, such as therapies, to stop them then coming to the extent that
a young person can no longer come to school and that young person then has to be referred to
CAMHS, and we are all aware of the pressures they are under and sometimes the time it takes to
be seen by those professionals. That ideally should be a really small number of young people if
you can intervene early with the right people with the right skills, and that is what we are working
towards.

535 There have been some fantastic examples around our Island of schools taking this on board,
either liaising with the third sector or sometimes employing their own staff to provide that sort of
counselling and support for their school communities.

540 **Mr Perkins:** Thank you.

Q113. The Chairman: You mentioned that you have encouraged schools to go out to the third
sector. I think most of us are aware that Isle Listen appears to be in a lot of the schools, was that
something that was contracted and they have to use that service or, from the way you explained

545 it, you said the schools can go out to the third sector, so can they go to anywhere in the third sector or are there restrictions?

The Minister: In answer to that question the Department has no contract with Isle Listen. We are talking to a range of third-sector organisations, Isle Listen is one. But, for instance, Motiv8, will also be involved in schools. There are other mental health charities that provide some work there
550 as well. Cruse have been incredibly useful when we have had, unfortunately, some bereavements, either with pupils or staff or serious incidents, and they have come in and done some fantastic work.

So as Graham Kinrade has said, in terms of the culture, we are trying not to direct and tell schools what to do. What we are doing is trying to enable them to take on board some of the help
555 that is already out there in our community and make the best use of it, but obviously within a governance framework, so that we know that the right people are coming into schools to provide the right interventions and also that we have the outcome data about this as well.

Because in answer to your question, how many children are not at school today because of mental health issues? I will have to be honest, I do not know. I could possibly find out, but again
560 people sometimes are not at school for a whole range of issues, whether that be health or mental health. But what we need to do as an education service is support schools to try to find out where those children are, what extra help they may need and make sure they get access to that extra help, so they can either come back into the school community or they can get their education through other means so that they do not fall behind.

565 **Q114. The Chairman:** You mentioned mental health first aid and obviously the CEO will know what we are talking about here with the six Rs; a lot of comment is made around resilience and how that is getting built up within the youngsters of today, mental toughness. Are they all covered within that mental health first aid? Or is that a separate focus that perhaps should be getting
570 looked at?

The Minister: If I can just clarify, the mental health first aid courses, which a lot of teachers have enrolled on, are purely voluntary, and they are very much about understanding what mental health issues are, how they present and how they affect people.

575 When you are talking about resilience in schools that has always been something that has been key to the Department, and never more so now in terms of resilience with coronavirus, but particularly in terms of mental health issues that people know (1) that they recognise how they are feeling themselves and (2) that they have got the confidence to access the help that is available and they know how to get there and they are signposted adequately, and that is something that
580 we are extremely keen on enhancing and growing further.

Q115. The Chairman: Sorry, I was talking about resilience for students and building resilience so that they can deal and cope with situations. Certainly there was a mental toughness programme that was run for, I think it is for Year 10, in the past. Are these programmes still
585 continuing so that students are becoming ... we all want them to really succeed in life, are they getting the best opportunities?

Mr Kinrade: I think, Chair, it is an interesting question. I remember the programme you are referring to. If I am honest I cannot tell you whether it is still running right now, it is not on my
590 radar.

However, I think ... how do I put this? What we have to watch is that we do not see individual problems and put in an individual solution to it; so we want to build resilience so we have put in something about mental toughness. Actually, if we if we boil down what resilience is about, resilience is very heavily tied to the culture, the way in which our organisations work and the way
595 in which we treat people and the challenge that we would appropriately bring to individuals to

enable them to develop that resilience over time. I am not sure it is something that can just be addressed in a single programme.

600 As a Department, what we are very keen here to do is not be talking about individual programmes or individual strategies to tackle this problem. We want one high-level strategy that ties all of these elements together and then tackles them in a cohesive way through very clear deliverables that overlap cleanly and support all of the things that we think are important.

605 So resilience, absolutely, should be at the heart of everything to ensure the ways in which we are talking to students and staff are enabling them to grow and develop and to manage and self-regulate themselves going forward. That is all part of resilience, rather than just saying, 'Oh, we have a bit of a problem here, let's put this in.' It is a much wider strategic approach that is required.

610 **The Minister:** And it is certainly something that cannot really be addressed by one lesson once a week.

Mr Kinrade: If only.

The Chairman: Well it certainly was not, that is why it was across; it was completely across.

615 **Mr Kinrade:** I think you are right, I think it was Year 10.

Q116. The Chairman: But with regard to you were talking about a strategy there, a high-level strategy. When will that strategy be delivered?

620 **Mr Kinrade:** The strategy is to be laid before Tynwald in July. So the strategy is complete. It has been to all sorts of people, we have had it through as many stakeholders as possible, and it was formed over three or four months, if I am honest, from multiple conversations with staff rooms of teachers or groups of head teachers, all of the unions have offered very supportive and useful feedback, to be quite honest.

625 So I think what we have now is a very well-rounded document that is about to be laid before Tynwald. What you will see there is it encompasses all of the things that we are talking about here today: how do we recruit? How do we retain? How do we manage resilience? It is broken into five high-level key areas, curriculum, learning and achievement – not surprisingly in a Department of Education – early intervention, as the Minister mentioned earlier, employability, health and wellbeing is a key focus and corporate responsibility, and then underneath those five high-level
630 areas, you will find the strategic priorities underneath each of those that we want to deliver. What we are looking at here is to drive focus so that everybody within the Department is aware of what our priorities are, how we are going to get there, and then off the back of each strategic priority will be very detailed delivery plans that talk about who, how and when.

635

Q117. The Chairman: And that is a continuation from Beamans? That is part of the transformation team is it that have brought that forward or the implementation plan from Beamans?

640 **Mr Kinrade:** Beamans generated the CoMin report that we had to work to and we have delivered that broadly in the reorganisation and the new posts that we have put to the centre. This is a strategic approach now. This is the Department taking its next five years forward and looking at what the strategic priorities are for this Department.

645 **The Minister:** Yes, because Beamans was very much about the structure, but also about healing what was described as a fractured relationship. The structure of the Department is one thing. What this does is it does not just say what the Department looks like it is what we do as an

650 education service, not just the Department, what is that shared vision for education and sport and culture right across the Island and getting the buy-in from as many people as possible to actually make this effective and also to make us accountable to actually deliver that.

655 **Q118. The Chairman:** So the transformation team are about to all finish if this is accepted by Tynwald, the strategy, what will be the way forward for the Department; have you got a layer of management for the Department and a layer of management for the transformation team still?

660 **Mr Kinrade:** No, the transformation team initially came across for a period of three months. The piece of work that came out of the transformation team *per se* was the restructuring of the Department and in that restructuring of the Department there was an open recruitment process to the posts that we needed. So the transformation team as such do not exist in that form anymore.

665 **The Minister:** And I have got an Answer for you in the House of Keys tomorrow in terms of those extra roles. Again, the transformation team was just to try to turn things around but see which bits needed to be turned around. We have now got all the permanent roles appointed and so the transformation has happened. What we now need to do, though, is evolve and so the next important bit is the strategy really.

Q119. Mr Perkins: We shall look forward to seeing that in July Tynwald!
670 The question that I have got then from that is: is the old Education Bill dead and buried? Is it finished or are you looking long-term to introducing another Bill?

675 **The Minister:** The Bill we are working with at the moment is 20-years-old. At the time it was fine, it is relatively short Bill. It is very much an enabling Bill and so for the last 20 years, as things have evolved, we have been working around it because it does not mention a whole lot of things that we now have to have to deal with.

680 I think, ideally, it would be nice to update that legislation. I think as Tynwald we often want to make sure we have legislation that is fit for purpose. The previous Bill in its genesis, there were problems there. There were objections by a whole range of people, including school leaders, who felt that they were not involved right at the early stages of having a clear vision that would then drive legislation rather than legislation that would then make you have a vision to support it. And so I hope that the work we have been doing with school leaders, and more broadly in terms of our society, can create that shared vision of education which can then be cemented with a newer bit of legislation.

685 The legislation we have at the moment does not stop us doing anything. There are lots of other ways of dealing with it but I would hope that in the next few years by sitting down, by talking with people – whether they be school leaders, whether they be home educators, whether they be anyone keen and passionate about education on the Isle of Man – we can actually get a new bit of legislation that not only defines the role of the Department but also defines our responsibility for providing education to all the people on our Island, whatever age they may be and wherever they may be learning.

690 **Q120. Mr Greenhill:** Understandably we have been talking a lot about education and there was just one minor reference in there to sport and culture. I wonder if you can give us a quick and brief update on any problems that we have been having there and what you might be seeing as solutions for those areas?

The Minister: I apologise for that, because it is Education, Sport and Culture, you are right that those two important parts of what we do sometimes do get overlooked in the wider field but, of course, there is so much synchronicity between them. For instance, during the summer, the sports

700 and recreation and the youth services run a summer programme for young people, which has got an educational input.

I think the big challenges in terms of sports, obviously with the lockdowns, have been with some of the infrastructure projects we have been involved with which have become far too complicated and have been delayed, and we need to advance on those.

705 But I think overall in terms of an inclusive sports ethos on the Island that tries to invite as many people in as possible, the work that has been done, for instance, the Manx Youth Games, even though there was a lockdown, we still had thousands of young people taking part. The increased accessibility for people with disabilities and increased supply of equipment that they may need has been phenomenal as well. So I think we have made some real inroads there, as well as supporting elite athletes through Sports Aid.

710 In terms of the arts and culture of the Isle of Man, again, that was severely hit by lockdowns, with people not being able to perform. But actually, talking about resilience, people went online and performed online. The Arts Council, particularly, supported a huge amount of that and during some of the darkest days people were still able to communicate, play together musically, recite poetry, and do that online. And we saw actually, when the lockdowns eased, a renewed interest in the arts of the Isle of Man. Some of the performances at the Gaiety have been completely sold out, we have had far more people coming to the cinema and far more people come to various activities. The Pride Festival that was held last weekend was completely above people's expectations in the number of people who wanted to take part in a community event and the number of people who wanted to take part in sharing our common culture, and I see that as something that certainly we want to be able to do to encourage and grow and in the future, as well as the education side of culture, which obviously happens within schools, whether it be Manx language, whether it be arts and design or whether it be drama.

725 **Q121. The Chairman:** Just to go back to the plan that is coming to Tynwald in July, is that a plan that is coming forward under the current legislation and what you can do under that has it got vision for the future of what legislation you might change?

730 **The Minister:** Again, this is a strategy for the Department, so Education, Sport and Culture. It is a strategy that can be delivered within the existing legislation, I have got no doubt about that. But as we expand some of the things we want to do, for instance, with the additional educational needs code or those sort of things, I think more and more politicians will want there to be a statutory responsibility for the delivery of that, for that accountability, and I see that as being provided best through quite clear legislation which sets out our responsibility as a Department, the responsibility of the service, but also meets the expectations of the people that we are providing that service for. We can do that at the moment, for instance, through the articles of schools, through articles of governance, we can do that. But I think new legislation will give a clear message, in writing, of what we want to achieve as Tynwald and as an Island for our young people and for anyone involved in learning.

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Q122. The Chairman: With regard to the additional needs and the code of practice, you went out to consultation. When will that be published?

The Minister: Over to you.

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Mr Kinrade: The code itself? The consultation has been published.

750 **The Minister:** The consultation has been published. The code itself is being worked at. We need to feed that back to those key stakeholders who took part in the consultation, but I think the idea was we are going to publish in September?

Mr Kinrade: September is when we would be aiming for in its initial phase, yes.

755 **Q123. The Chairman:** And would it be implemented in September or is that just the consultation response?

Mr Kinrade: I think we would need to see what the outcomes of that code are, because there may well be some requirements in there to bring legislation forward or there may well be some requirements to look at funding implications, so it would be wrong of me to sit here and comment on what the outcome would be of something that is yet to be completed.
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The Minister: There were two things: there is the clear code of what we do and what we provide and then how we provide that. I think most people would accept that if we have a proper code for additional educational needs, it will need more resourcing and it would be wrong to promise the earth and then not deliver. What we need to do is make sure we have those resources at the same time, and that is what we are going to be working with a whole range of people within Government and within the service over the summer to achieve.
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Q124. The Chairman: Okay, and finally, do you think the benefits of having an independent report have helped, and that should be something going forward that should happen, perhaps every five years?
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The Minister: I think an independent review of the service is very useful. However, I do not think it necessarily should have to get to that point.
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If you have an education service which is *listening* and taking on board the voice of those people who work for it and work with it, you should not have to fly people over from another island to tell you how to run your education service. I hope that now, if we concentrate on getting the culture right and concentrate on actually valuing people and valuing their voice, we can actually grow and evolve the service.
780

But certainly I think the work of your Committee and other Committees to actually bring us to task on that and ask difficult questions and take evidence from other people is very valuable to make sure that we actually do the job that we have been set out to do.

Q125. The Chairman: I am sure there are a lot of people who perhaps would disagree with you, because obviously there is an education system in the UK that does have regular inspection and regulation, so do you feel that the Tynwald Committees are doing that inspection of the Department?
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The Minister: You are talking about getting, for instance, Ofsted, over (**The Chairman:** Yes, for example.) to report on the Education Department itself, rather than necessarily schools, which I know has been mooted. I am not averse to that. I think once we get the structure right, once we get the strategy right and once we start delivering then I will be more than happy for somebody to come over and double check that we are actually doing the right job and doing what we wanted to do.
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What I was referring to earlier, though, when we talked about external reports, is Beamans came because of a crisis within the education service and a fractured relationship. I hope that that never happens again and I hope we can make sure that any inspections that are done on the service are about service delivery and delivering according to our promises, our expectations and our obligations, rather than trying to pick apart where things have gone wrong. They should be making sure that things are going right.
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Q126. The Chairman: And just one last one on exams, we have not really touched on exams, and it is a very anxious time for people and obviously our teachers have been involved with doing

805 the assessments for the students this year. Are you doing anything with the exam boards to ensure
that the Department is remunerated for that additional work that the teachers have had to put in
this year?

The Minister: You are quite right that teachers have had to take on extra responsibilities and
extra duties to deal with the requirements of exam boards. Again, teachers are not deciding
810 grades here, it is the exam boards that are deciding grades. The individual exam boards, depending
on the individual subjects, have been setting out what they want from teachers so that they could
award the right grades to those pupils. Now, there has been talk in the United Kingdom at a
national level as to whether there should be some recompense, and I know some of the teacher
unions are pursuing that with some of the examination boards.

815 As a Department we are working quite closely with those boards to make sure that we provide
exactly the right information they need so that the students can get the right awards that they
deserve. What we have not been doing at the moment is arguing about the money, but if that
becomes more of an issue in terms of the national framework in the United Kingdom we would
certainly add our voice to that.

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Q127. The Chairman: And are you confident that the results will be delivered to the students
on time and on the day they expect them this year?

The Minister: Unfortunately that is not in our gift to give. We saw some serious problems last
825 year in terms of results due to a high-level Ofqual decision about using an algorithm. I am fairly
confident that those lessons, painful as they were, have been learnt and we are in a much better
position than we were last year in terms of people getting the grades that they deserve.

However, there will be an appeals procedure so that they can apply to the examination board
if they are unhappy with their grades.

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Q128. The Chairman: Just one last one for the CEO, what would your priorities be for the next
parliament coming in, what are the priorities you would like to see for your Department? I am
sure the Minister and you have talked about this!

835 **Mr Kinrade:** I think the key priority that really I have had from day one, since I have walked
through, is addressing the early intervention. Probably what you notice most is we intervene a
little too late in problems, whatever they may be, whether it be a behaviour issue or whatever,
there are multiple areas that we can be intervening into. If we can intervene earlier into the lives
of young people and into ... I was going to say the lives of teachers, I do not mean that. If teachers
840 are having an issue within their environment, if we can get in early and help people resolve those
problems while they are small, the outcomes and the savings for society and the individual are
huge, so that would be my key priority.

Q129. Mr Perkins: Can I just pick up on that? Obviously you are in contact with the DHSC on
845 that, do you get any feedback before the children actually arrive in school that there are some
problem families that may need a bit of extra help?

Mr Kinrade: Our pre-school assessment centre does a huge amount of work in this area, and
we have sight of the children who are coming to us and the issues that may bring for us to deliver.
850 What we tend not to do, at the moment, is understand the financial impact of that and plan
accordingly. That is the bit we need to get better at.

Mr Perkins: Thank you.

855 **The Chairman:** Thank you for really what has been a rushed session. It was supposed to be the annual review, which we would normally get probably a full morning at, so thank you for coming in this morning and the Committee will now sit in private.

860 **The Minister and Mr Kinrade:** Thank you.

The Committee sat in private at 11.11 a.m.