Dear parents/carers

The LA have recently responded to an enquiry regarding the proposed building programme at All Saints from a Cllr and have shared the detail with us. We have published this on our website for your information.

Best wishes

Carla Bradshaw

From Richard Vaughan, Deputy Head of Strategic Development to IOW Cllr (not named)

Progress on securing the required funding for the new school is making very positive progress. As has been discussed in the past the DfE Priority School Building Program (PSBP2) is a national programme and therefore, follows a defined process which cannot be deviated from.

The All Saints’ site along with several other school sites across the Island have for some time been due for investment through PSBP2. The initial proposal from the DfE was to invest circa £2m in to the site, this would have seen some demolition of existing structures and a small amount of new build and refurbishment. Through extended negotiation with the DfE we have managed to move them from what they initially planned, to a new school option. This will see 95% of the existing structure demolished and then rebuilt. The only existing part of the school to be retained would be the original frontage and this only after significant refurbishment.

Over many months, along with DfE colleagues we have worked up a costed solution that we collectively believe will deliver what is required to support long-term primary education on the Freshwater site. This is now in the form of an Outline Business Case (OBC) and is with the DfE Capital Director for sign-off. It is possible this will be achieved by the end of the week subject to any questions he might have. Once the OBC is approved we move in to a detailed design phase, this will culminate in a planning application to the IoW council later this year. The next stage is to then tender the project and agree a final cost figure upon tender return with the DfE. This is the figure the new school must then be delivered for.

The DfE as part of the PSPB2 process don’t send out notes saying something is agreed until you reach the OBC stage, up until that point they and us are building a case for investment, this we have done. The one comment I can offer at this point from the DfE came from the PSPB2 Program Director, in a recent phone conversation we had he was happy to state that ‘ we’re in a very positive position and the speed of progress to date had be exceptional’.

As soon as we have sign off to the OBC I will ensure the news is shared fully with all stakeholders. To that end, the Implementation Groups which will oversee the closure of All Saints’ and relocation of Yarmouth Pri are developing a communication strategy that will ensure news and progress is shared on a regular basis through all possible channels.

I do understand the frustration that exists in some areas at this point however, do please reassure the Parish Council that progress is being made and the first major milestone should shortly be achieved.