

Statement of concerns by the former President and Vice President of the Committee for Education Sport and Culture

We are issuing this open letter in anticipation of an announcement by the current Committee for Education, Sport and Culture (ESC), which we hope will be a comprehensive plan for the future of Secondary and Post-16 education in Guernsey. As detailed in costings, implementation timelines and transition modelling as the three-school model published by the previous committee on October 14th, 2017.

We wish to seek confirmation that what will be presented shortly will provide the detail needed to reassure the public that the two-school model, subsequently described as one-school on two sites (federated model) is achievable and will deliver the benefits which the current committee persuaded the States Assembly it would.

Deputies Matt Fallaize, Richard Graham, Rhian Tooley and Mark Dorey (all current members of the committee for ESC) publicly stated that they began working on their two-school model in August 2017. Deputy Gavin St Pier, President of the Committee for Policy and Resources subsequently supported this group in setting up a 'shadow committee' to develop an alternative education plan, including allocating up to £93k in funding for additional research. They were also given unfettered access to all staff, resources and all research behind the three-school model of the then serving committee.

The majority of the members of the current ESC Committee have now been working on their two-school model since August 2017, have had unfettered access to the staff and resource of ESC since October 2017 and have been in post sitting on the Committee for ESC since February 2018. We believe that this is more than enough time for them to have formulated a comprehensive and detailed plan equivalent to the three-school plan published by the previous Committee more than a year ago.

We are concerned that the uncertainty surrounding the proposed two-school model has already resulted in damage to our education system. With large numbers of teachers leaving the service this summer, potentially disrupting the studies of current GCSE students. Plus, increasing numbers of parents choosing to send their children to the private colleges, undermining the economies of scale within the public system. Any further uncertainty or delays will only exacerbate these issues.

Also, we have heard many complaints from local businesses that the uncertainties surrounding our education system are discouraging potential employees with children from accepting positions in Guernsey, hindering business development, reducing productivity and ultimately undermining our economy.

It is essential for current and future generations of young people, our teaching professionals and our economy that these uncertainties are addressed by the current ESC committee with comprehensive and detailed proposals equivalent to those presented by the previous committee.

In the previous ESC Committee's proposal for THE FUTURE STRUCTURE OF SECONDARY AND POST-16 EDUCATION IN THE BAILIWICK included:

- Detailed plans for transitioning to three non-selective schools by 2023 with the construction of the new school on the La Mare de Carteret site beginning in June this year, four months ago, and scheduled for completion by September 2021
- Plans to create the 'Guernsey University College' in partnership with the College of Further Education, the Guernsey Training Agency, the Institute of Health and Social Care Studies and UK universities to expand further and higher education opportunities
- Further delegation of powers and resources to individual schools (local management of schools)
- Detailed costings and schedules for redeveloping the all secondary and post-16 education properties for a total estimated cost of £108m

After 15 months of planning and nine months serving on the Committee for Education, Sport and Culture it is time for the current committee members to present the States, students, parents, teaching professionals and the electorate with a clear, detailed and fully costed implementation and transition plan for their two-school proposal.

Besides fully detailed and costed implementation and transition plans; the committee will also need to address:

1. What land will have to be acquired as part of their plans and if that land will require compulsory purchase actions
2. The impact on infrastructure, particularly the road network, to enable new schools of 1,400-1,450 student capacities
3. Plans to address pupil welfare and discipline issues exacerbated by larger schools
4. How the two-school model will function in accordance with the accepted standards relating to pay conditions of service for teaching professionals and if the unions have been consulted
5. Changes to the Education Law, which the current committee previously stated are a prerequisite for change

The detailed three-school proposal by the previous committee for ESC for developing THE FUTURE STRUCTURE OF SECONDARY AND POST-16 EDUCATION IN THE BAILIWICK can be found at: <https://www.gov.gg/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=110792&p=0>

Former President: Deputy Paul Le Pelley

Former Vice President: Deputy Carl Meerveld