

Hales, Laura

From: Dave & Hanne Miller [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 August 2009 00:33
To: Competition, Cowes
Cc: Mazillius, Roger
Subject: Cowes Secondary School competition - representation

Dear Mr Moffat,

With respect to the competition to run the proposed new Cowes Secondary School the following representation is made.

Whilst the Cowes Pathfinder Partnership appear passionate about their vision, the AET proposal appears to have the strongest business model and support structure behind it, and as such appears to be the lower risk option to pursue improvement in educational results and other Every Child Matters outcomes.

Other issues that are considered to be important, and requiring detailed assessment by appropriately qualified and experienced professionals are:

- Whether the Ethos and Management Style, via the governing body, will support or alienate the professional teaching and support staffs that are the inspirational face of education to our children.
- Whether the academy model, with central funding, and off-island top level management would bring advantages that outweigh any detriment to other educational provision on the Island, or to a lesser extent, the economic well being of support industries on the Island.
- Whether the bidders can provide a successful and comprehensive educational offering on their own, but also effectively access additional offerings from other providers on (and potentially off) the Island.
- Whether the proposal offers a fair admissions procedure that maintains accessibility to the local community which it predominantly serves. It is noted that the AET proposal seeks discussion regarding 'fair banding' but it is not clear whether this is proposed as a tiebreak within more established criteria, or as the main criteria, whereby the current criteria, such as siblings and location, would become the tie breakers. It is noted that the Cowes Pathfinder Partnership proposals refers to criteria not compliant with the School Admissions Code.

Related feedback:

1. The implementation date (for 11-19 provision) should be subsequent to the availability of the new OSP funded building.
2. The public awareness session (held on 13/07/09) was not managed appropriately to allow sufficient questions to be posed. This was also the case at other such meetings. Addition sessions that were cited did not materialise. Notes from the session were not emailed to all attendees that left email addresses.
3. The discontinuance of high schools was heavily promoted to parents as being tied in with new and refurbished secondary schools funded by BSF/OSP. The late separation of these initiatives is considered unethical.
4. Risks arising from the proposals are considered to be inadequately mitigated, especially for the most affected cohorts in the short term.
5. The objectives of raising standards are not justified on a per-school basis, and are perceived to be unjustifiable for every school.
6. Insufficient information was provided at the consultation stage (and subsequently) to allow parents to form a considered opinion of the proposals being consulted upon. (See mandatory DCSF guide)
7. Consultation input was not all adequately represented. (See also all Public Questions - Cabinet meeting 24/11/08)
8. The change of timetable (from that agreed at the cabinet meeting in November 2008) has resulted in unacceptable inability of parents to obtain clarifications relating to the proposals, due to school

24/08/2009

holidays.

9. Within the Voluntary Aided sector, proposals are considered to be related to (and now unduly influenced by) the Christ the King College 'approved' expansion proposal of February 2009, which referred to the expectation set by the earlier decision to approve the retention of year 9 in 2009 - a decision made by the LA but which should have lawfully been made by the Schools Adjudicator, upon evaluation of information available.
10. The proposed timescale for initiation of alternative provision is considered unachievable, especially if academy status provision is selected.
11. The proposed timescale is considered unachievable, with acceptable risk, and it is noted that there is a statutory requirement for LAs to publish a composite prospectus for 2010 by 12/09/09.
12. The IW council website's statement on publishing identities '*Please note, if you object, your comments may not be taken into account in the published committee report.*' (potentially to discourage representations), is considered unjustifiable, and contrary to duties imposed (to consider representations, and personally identifiable information), and powers granted, by legislation.

I hope the above representation is constructively considered.

Regards,
Dave Miller