



STATES OF DELIBERATION

HANSARD

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

**Royal Court House, Guernsey,
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As this is an unedited transcript, direct quotes may not be used, as corrections will still be made before the final Hansard report is published.

States of Deliberation

The States met at 9.30 a.m.

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

Billet d'État XVII

- 5 **The Bailiff:** Good morning, Members of the States. If you want to follow suit from some Members and remove jackets during the course of the day, you are free to do so.

COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION, SPORT & CULTURE

4. Secondary and Post 16 Education Reorganisation – Debate continued –

The States are asked to decide:-

Whether, after consideration of the policy letter, dated 28th May, 2021, they are of the opinion:-

1. *To agree that from the earliest date practicable, States' maintained secondary education should be delivered through an 11-18 learning partnership across three 11-16 schools and a Sixth Form Centre located on a site separate to those schools, and Le Murier and Les Voies Schools and St Anne's School in Alderney.*
2. *To agree the three 11-16 schools will be located on the existing school sites at Les Beaucamps, Les Varendes and St Sampson's and the Sixth Form Centre in a new building at Les Ozouets Campus co-located with The Guernsey Institute, the development and implementation of which is estimated to have:
 - a) *A capital cost of £43.5m as set out in table 8 in paragraph 9.4; and*
 - b) *An ongoing revenue cost which will not, in the medium term, exceed the current revenue costs associated with these phases of education.**
3. *To approve 'Secondary & Post 16 Education Reorganisation' as a project in the capital portfolio, subject to ratification by the States as part of the Government Work Plan debate.*
4. *To delegate authority to the Policy & Resources Committee, following approval of the necessary business cases, to open capital votes of up to £54m, (which includes an allowance for optimism bias as described in section 9.8) to fund the model for the reorganisation of the secondary and post 16 education infrastructure agreed by the Assembly, subject to ratification by the States as part of the Government Work Plan debate.*

Amendment 2

1. For Proposition 2, substitute the following propositions:

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2. To agree that:

(a) the three 11-16 schools will be located on the existing school sites at

(i) Les Beaucamps,

(ii) St Sampson's, and

(iii) La Mare de Carteret in the existing school which will be expanded to accommodate six forms of entry, and

(b) the Sixth Form Centre will be located at Les Varendes.

A. To note that the development and implementation of the above model is estimated to have a capital cost of £59m as set out in the table in the explanatory note; and with an ongoing revenue cost which will not, in the medium term, exceed the current revenue costs associated with these phases of education.

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2. In Proposition 4, for “£54m” substitute “£83m”

The Bailiff: Deputy de Lisle to speak.

10 **Deputy de Lisle:** Thank you, sir.

The three-school model – which is three 11–16 schools at La Mare, Beaucamps, and St Sampson's, with the Sixth Form Centre remaining at the former Grammar School site, Les Varendes – has several pertinent advantages. First of all, it avoids larger class sizes. Secondly, it avoids moving the Sixth Form Centre from Les Varendes, the Grammar School site. And thirdly, it avoids closing a
15 successful secondary school that currently serves eight parishes. I highly recommend this option to the States and to the community as a whole.

Very importantly, the model provides stability at a very crucial time as we go forward and begin the transformation to deliver non-selective comprehensive education – quite a challenge in itself, particularly when one considers the importance of a stable and successful education system to
20 building investment, confidence, and economic success in this community.

The comment against this model of three 11–16 schools at La Mare, Beaucamps, and St Sampson's and the Sixth Form Centre at Les Varendes by the Committee's policy letter was that it:

... would necessitate a rebuild requiring additional capital expenditure ...

25 We are asking here for an *extension*, not necessarily a total rebuild.

... [T]he Committee does not consider [that] to be prudent given the current financial climate.

But then, the Committee itself supports the same expenditure on rebuilding the Sixth Form Centre; here, the amendment calls for minor capital investment on extension.

30 Of course, it was always the intention to rebuild the three high schools – St Sampson's, Les Beaucamps, and La Mare – to the level of the Grammar School, and promises by Education have

been given term after term since the 2000–2004 States' term for rebuilding La Mare de Carteret Secondary School.

35 The comments by Deputy Dudley-Owen in the education debate last term were well-taken, actually, as saying:

By not rebuilding La Mare, some of the least affluent children in the Island will be negatively affected.

She said:

I believe that we should rebuild a school at that site, a site that sits on the edge of one of our biggest social housing estates, which provides the support that is so needed there by many families.

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There is no reason, sir, to doubt that statement. I think it was just the shock and displeasure of the turn-around, with respect to Deputy Dudley-Owen, when she became the President of the Committee, announcing that, in fact, her Committee would not favour continuing with that particular school being open. That has affected many in the community, particularly because that school was fed by eight parishes, so you are dealing with displeasure from, really, right across – including St Peter Port—right across this community.

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This is a superior-performing school, as well. The statistics speak for themselves, and the commitment of staff, pupils, and parents has achieved high standards of education and won through very difficult circumstances, because, as you know, they had to integrate 190 pupils from the closure of St Peter Port School. That was a very turbulent period, because there was not a culture of accepting that particular move – and it affected, also, as you know, St Sampson's school, because they had to take quite a number of those pupils as well. But it is the GCSE results, compiled by the Mare de Carteret High School Management Committee, that reflect the success, and they were discussed yesterday, as you can remember.

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55 One wonders how pushing these students onto other schools is going to work, because it is about retaining the community spirit in our school system, and once it goes in one school, it tends to reflect across the system.

The school certainly has the spirit and endeavour, and it has proven to outshine others that are even brand-new builds, because it achieved better results than St Sampson's High School new build in this last set of GCSE results that we have just had this summer. It serves eight of our parishes, it is the most representative and cosmopolitan of the lot, and not only that, it has shown remarkable achievements on the sports field. It is the school of Matt Le Tissier, as you all know, and what an achievement that has been.

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65 Some of you speak of the building, but it is not the building; it is what takes place within. Are you saying that Oxbridge, centuries old, still produce the most prestigious education despite being centuries old?

Surely, the objective is to provide a successful, competitive, secondary/post-secondary school system. We will not do that by increasing the number of pupils in a class, and anyone with experience of teaching secondary knows the danger of that. One only has to look at the competition in private schools to see that they keep class sizes manageable, at 20 or below.

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As you can see from this particular document that has only just been placed for us, in terms of comparisons, you see there that the class sizes are kept at 24–25 and lower in some subjects through this particular option, whereas, unfortunately, class sizes in the proposals by the Committee increase class sizes from 26 to 28, which will have a detrimental impact on educational outcomes. That is a proven fact: large sizes are very difficult. You have got to just put yourself in the situation of seven classes in a day coming into your classroom: 28 of them are standing outside for the next lesson, or 24 or less. There is quite a difference just there in the corridor outside your room, let alone when they start sitting down and occupying seats.

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We want to build further a world-class education system, not lose what we have, and we do not do that with closure of one of our best-performing schools and risking failure of the system as a result. Because it is about retaining the community spirit in our school system. Remember: the last

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secondary rationalisation of St Peter Port School led to a decline in standards across the board as the pupils were re-located into neighbouring schools, and only recently has the system recovered from that re-organisation; we should not wish the system to befall that again.

85 Why risk re-locating a perfectly successful Sixth Form Centre? It is all as though there is a wish to fail. The model continues with the Sixth Form Centre located where it is currently.

In proposing this model, Deputy Leadbeater and I, like the Mare de Carteret High School Management Committee, would request that all Members of the States give due regard to supporting the immediate prioritisation of extending La Mare de Carteret High School. There are various plans that have been considered over the years offering an extension to the school with least disruption to the school and the teaching environment itself. It is a large site, and with the previously proposed new one-way road on the site itself, there are solutions to remaining on-site with an increase in student numbers.

95 This three-school model, retaining the Mare de Carteret High School, has, as I said, several advantages. It avoids larger classes and retains competition across the piste. It avoids moving the Sixth Form Centre from Les Varendes, the current site, and the risk there of a new development, where one does not know whether it will succeed like the last. And of course, it avoids closing a successful secondary school that currently serves eight parishes.

100 Rationalisation in closing a successful school has implications all around. I have seen it once before: I saw it in London, where I was teaching in a large comprehensive – 2,250 students with 250 teachers. I had the advantage there of teaching geology as well as geography, which was the advantage that one has with a large school of that nature, and enabling a very broad array of subjects to be taught within the school.

105 The problem was, at that time, that that was a new secondary comprehensive and it had taken in three other schools: it had taken the grammar school in the local area [??? 09:46:30], it had taken the secondary modern school, and it had taken a technical commercial school under its wing. The problem was, within the school we had three scarves flying around during the winter with the students, and of course, we had disaffected teachers, to some degree, who had lost their additional stipends for running their particular departments in favour of, perhaps, one other colleague that they probably knew in the region anyway, but that was another matter.

110 The point I am making is that any integration like that is disruptive. In London, of course, the system is so large that, probably, you can get away with to some degree, other than internally, in that particular school. But in Guernsey, a small community, it rebounds right across, particularly when the school is housed by almost the whole community – eight parishes and a town here in Guernsey. We have to guard against that particular problem with regard to any rationalisation and closing of a successful school in this community.

115 And of course, anything like that does not really go down well with the great majority of the Island's teachers, parents, students, and trade unions. I think, if you rationalise the system, you have got to realise that what you are doing is building up the numbers in the classes – that means fewer classes across the piste, which means fewer teachers, so you have got the unions also to deal with at the end of this game.

120 Given all that and a very short speech from myself – because I could have made it a lot longer – I ask Members to support this amendment.

Thank you, sir.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop.

Deputy Gollop: Thank you, sir.

130 Although this would not be, perhaps – to coin a phrase from Deputy Le Tocq – my ideal solution, necessarily, I think I have been committed to putting an amendment along these lines and having them discussed; indeed, it is not a million miles away from ideas I had myself at the end of the summer term, and I will explain why.

135 One of the reasons why, perhaps, the last few States – we did, admittedly, see a big change at the last election – have had a degree of turnover of Members, not just through retirement – which has been a setback, in many ways, because we lost four of the five – one through retirement – of the last Education, Sport & Culture Committee, for example – that has been as a result of a degree of disillusionment, perhaps, not from some of the profession, possibly, but definitely from many members of the public.

140 Why do the public get disillusioned? There was a vox pop even the other day suggesting that the people interviewed in the street – it may or not have been representative of everybody – were saying ‘Get on with it’ and ‘Why should we be spending any money at all?’ And yes, I do come across venerable citizens of our Island who are still working, in some cases, in their eighties and have really done their best for Guernsey over decades. One of these gentlemen said to me that where we went wrong was we lost our parish schools. Now, that is a long way away from all of these debates, but it expresses how people think.

145 Certainly, I think – definitely – a theme since before I became a States’ Member, even, when we knew we were down to the Douzenier Mrs Tasker as headteacher of La Mare de Carteret, a theme in the 1990s, when Deputy Ferbrache was a member of Advisory & Finance, was that La Mare de Carteret needed a degree of reconstruction and better maintenance. It was so apt and appropriate, Deputy Leadbeater’s football tribute yesterday, because England had a great European Championship but failed in the end. And the song, of course, from Skinner and Baddiel and the others is very much *Thirty years of hurt* – or ‘Fifty years of hurt’ if you go back to 1966 – it is a sense of disappointment embedded.

155 I think the public have been disillusioned that La Mare de Carteret School has been promised for so long to be rebuilt – in the late 1990s, in the Torode amendment that I alluded to when I talked about my partnership with Deputy Trott in an earlier States, in various Education Ministries and Committees that have come and gone.

160 And it was always there: it was there in the Committee that Deputy Sherbourne and Professor Conder served on, and Advocate Green. It has been moved and moved around, so I [?? 09:52:40] at some of the people who kind of said ‘We need to look again at La Mare’ and now are very much promoting La Mare as being back on the table, but never mind. Deputy de Lisle, as a western Deputy has always been consistent in his support for La Mare and so have many campaigners within this community and without – like, for example, former Mother of the House Mary Lowe.

165 The main features of this are three evenly-sized schools at La Mare, St Sampson’s, and Les Beaucamps. In other words, it is an unusual – hopefully not *too* unusual – example of a big infrastructural project of the States actually moving forward and implementing a promise that has been made many times. Actually, it is a lot more than a promise, because we can think of things that were vaguely promised – like, for example, working on a new structure of GP funding, which is going forward, in a way; this went deeper than a promise.

170 I would probably agree with Deputy Ferbrache that Deputy Oliver and her new team at DPA have been outstanding at doing some things we could have done. Deputy Oliver will recall, in the early days of my presidency, that we actually passed La Mare de Carteret School plans. I was briefly on the Education, Sport & Culture Committee as well, and we were committed to rebuilding La Mare. I went to a meeting there; it was not particularly well attended, but nevertheless, people wanted to progress. The irony is, we are debating this in the first week, really, of the school term for 2021, and that would have been the grand opening day; we would have seen, possibly, Deputy Dudley-Owen, yourself – sir – as Presiding Officer, opening the school and it would have been a grand day. And nothing happened for various reasons.

180 La Mare would have had six forms of entry, yes. Where this is different, perhaps, from some of my more expensive options is it basically retains the existing buildings, refurbishes to an extent, because we know Deputy de Lisle and Deputy Leadbeater are two Guernsey representatives who do not believe in spending money when you can find more efficient solutions. That is important: it reduces the size to 26 and, of course, maintains the Guernsey Institute of Les Ozouets.

I will come onto one or two of the specific points in just a minute. One of the reasons why I
185 flagged up – despite, I think, teacher opposition and some issues with St Peter Port – focusing the
Sixth Form Centre at Les Varendes, at the old grammar school, but not having an 11–16 entry there
is, I agree, in a way, with Deputy Parkinson that we are a little bit too wedded to the partnership
school and catchment area concepts. But there is another side to this, and that is that Les Varendes
190 is an interesting site in itself: it is on all the main bus routes; it is, by Guernsey standards, on very
good roads – Foote’s Lane is a wide road now, so is the main road there – and it is centrally located
in the hub of the Island.

We are probably not going to have a university any time soon, as Deputy Inder implied
yesterday, but we may well need health/Partnership for Purpose hubs. What we definitely need –
the Scrutiny hearing showed this quite graphically – is, at some point, a new Home Affairs/police
195 station/central services hub that is larger and more useful for IT. That is a potential site, the half of
the Grammar School that would not be needed in this. I look at it from a logistical point of view,
not just an Education point of view; in other words, we are joining up the thinking.

The Education commentary – which is very helpful, and I thank them for all the work that they
have done on this – puts technical points about reduced tipping points, ‘temporary staff and
200 temporary classrooms might be needed at La Mare de Carteret to accommodate a peak’ – which,
of course, might even be a longer peak if our population, for whatever reason, increases. But of
course, Ladies’ College, which has had an excellent reputation for many years, for a long time had
portacabins, but it did not affect their outcomes; if anything, it gave, probably, a sense of dynamism
to the school. So I think we can overcome these issues. We have already been in an intermediate
205 stage for far longer than any of us intended, and to be very fair to Deputy Dudley-Owen and Deputy
Inder, they were on a Committee that was delivering the solution and it got stopped in its tracks.

Anyway –

La Mare School would not be able to receive the full intake until after building works were completed.

210 Yes, but we have still got Les Varendes to bring capacity at the moment.

Significant repurposing of the existing Grammar School would be required to create a standalone Sixth Form Centre.

Well, I would argue that the canteen, for example – it is not the greatest canteen; I do not think
it gives me the hot breakfasts I might like, but never mind, I am not a pupil at the school – it is not
215 huge. I think, increasingly, sixth-formers, being adults – in the sense that they can vote and, in other
circumstances, do careers, as Deputy Aldwell – actually would prefer a larger facility, rather than a
smaller one.

As for the sports hall, fitness, wellness, is very important; I, myself, was using the sports hall
recently to do my dance practice with a teacher, but only in the summer holidays. It is often used
220 for political meetings as well. It is useful to have a large hall on the Island. Look at Elizabeth College:
when it was rebuilt by the very forward-thinking founders 200 years ago, it only had a few pupils –
at one point, it went down to one pupil – and yet, it was built on a Gothic cathedral scale. So how
useful that was in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, long after the colonial people of the era had moved
on, is amazing, but never mind.

225 I think all of the issues can be overcome. We can accommodate the repurposed swimming pool.
It does not go into the music service, which I thoroughly support as a centre of excellence and great
bonding, therapy, and career-building work; but of course, that can be done at Les Ozouets, and I
think it would fit very well into the Sixth Form culture anyway. The Youth Commission has to be
considered separately.

230 I will end this speech – weirdly enough, *The Spectator* this month, this week, have featured not
so much *The Lightning Speeds*, but *New Kids on the Block*. And they have demonstrated something
I, myself, looked up a few months ago when this came before the Chamber: the enterprise of
Westminster, the famous public school – and we were delighted, yesterday, to welcome a member
from the Westminster House of Commons, the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The idea

235 is put across here that, maybe, Westminster School – which now has an annex, a subsidiary, a
partnership college called ‘Harris Westminster Sixth Form School,’ by the ‘visionary’ Lord Harris of
Peckham, so described – may well see future Cabinet ministers drawn from this school. What is this
school? It is a sixth form college; it is an eye-watering £10,497 per term – £31,000/£32,000 a year –
240 it has an incredible 2,500 applicants and only 350 places; and I do not think I would have got in,
because you need at least seven A’s at GCSE.

My point, though, is that this is a sixth form college that is hitting the highest possible range of
Oxbridge entrants and achievement, and it is a small sixth form college. It proves that with the will
and with the right philosophy, you can indeed take a sixth form college out of schools, in unusual
communities – and I think Guernsey, as a self-governing, judicially competent offshore world centre
245 is a very special community, much more so than a town somewhere in the provinces of England –
you can make a smaller sixth form work; it does not have to be in a school. And it would not be a
disadvantage for Les Varendes to have a separate sixth form, to retain its sixth form, and for the 11–
16s to go to another site. And of course, it is more equal: it means to say that you have all three
schools in a semi-rural location on the periphery of the Island’s hub, and therefore, each school
250 would gain a stronger sense of identity.

So what are the advantages of this amendment? It is cheaper in terms of capital, it honours our
promise, it will make many teachers and parents very happy to see La Mare have a great future at
a time when it has been improving significantly, and it ensures that we maximise our land most
effectively and free up at least half a large site for other corporate purposes. So let us vote for this
255 amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Roffey.

Deputy Roffey: Thank you, sir.

260 The first three speakers on this amendment have made it sound like some sort of vote of
confidence or otherwise in La Mare de Carteret High School, but I do not think that that is actually
what we are considering. I have enormous respect for what has been achieved at La Mare de
Carteret, particularly over recent years, and the turnaround since those exam results were released
after the questioning by Deputy Stephens. They have done an incredible job. It is not just exam
265 results; the sense of community down there is palpable.

But we have to look at this amendment as a whole. It is suggesting, as are ESC, that we create a
standalone sixth form college of circa 400 people – different site, same concept. As I said in my
speech on general debate, which I almost regret making, back in July now, I do not think that that
is a practical option. To be honest, to compare it with an annex to Winchester College is, I think,
270 fanciful. I think in the provision in Guernsey’s States sector, the idea that you can have an efficient,
ergonomic, standalone sixth form college of 400 and heading down is absolute fantasy.

So for exactly the same reasons I cannot vote for the substantive proposals in the policy letter, I
am afraid, I have to say to Deputy Leadbeater, that I cannot for vote for his amendment, but it is
not in any way – or I hope it will not be taken in any way as – a sign of disrespect to La Mare de
275 Carteret or what goes on there.

The Bailiff: Deputy Oliver.

Deputy Oliver: Thank you, sir.

280 I, too, have huge respect for La Mare de Carteret, but I just cannot vote for this on practicality,
because if you look at ESC’s position on the other schools – they have currently decided St
Sampson’s, Beaucamps, and Grammar – why would you want to cut out either Beaucamps or – you
would be cutting out, I guess, St Sampson’s. St Sampson’s and La Mare are so close together that,
in the scheme of the Island, you want them more spread out. So St Sampson’s, Beaucamps, and Les
285 Varendes, it makes a lot more sense, because the majority of kids live in town or in the north, so
you have got St Sampson’s for all that.

290 So it is purely on a locational basis that I cannot vote for it. And I completely agree with Deputy Roffey that that does not take away anything from how good La Mare has done. But also, it is going to cost a hell of a lot more money for the rebuild of La Mare, rather than repurposing the current buildings that we have got. So I just cannot vote for it.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy de Sausmarez.

295 **Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, sir.

I am, again, struggling with this – for similar reasons to Deputy Roffey, in fact – in that it still proposes a structure which I think is flawed. Although, I do think it has some advantages over the model being proposed by the Committee, not least that the tipping point is lower – I will come onto that in a minute – and also, it would not be cannibalising the space of the Guernsey Institute – I do
300 actually think that that creates problems. I think, irrespective of anything else about the structure and how that affects curriculum in practice, etc., I think there is a standalone problem with co-locating the Sixth Form Centre with the Guernsey Institute, and this amendment at least overcomes that problem.

305 So although I do not think it is an ideal structure in any way – I have explained my thoughts on that previously – I do think it has some advantages over Education’s proposals. Going back to my rationale that what is before us is a binary choice between which we think is better, I am open to persuasion to vote for this, although I am still torn.

I would say I query some of the capital costs. I had this with the numbers that were given to us on a previous amendment as well: I do not think applying an optimism bias over a whole bunch of
310 numbers that have previously been used in Education’s model is in any way fair. If they are right, they are right; you do not need to add a further percentage onto them. Also, again, the problem that we had with the capital figures that were given was, the assumptions were just very different. So I would take those with, perhaps, a pinch of salt.

315 But anyway: La Mare. I think it is worth looking at – Deputy Roffey referenced the fantastic turnaround that La Mare has made, and I do think that is worth applauding publicly. But I also think it is worth interrogating – not why that turnaround was needed, but how it was achieved, because it was really impressive. I am not an expert, but to my understanding, there were several factors, several really key factors in that turnaround, probably the most important of which was money: there was a lot of money put into addressing this problem, quite rightly. I think that is the first thing.
320 There is an absolutely cracking senior leadership team, fantastic leadership. Smaller class sizes and a lower pupil–teacher ratio – in other words, more teachers per number of students.

I think those are all really relevant factors and I think it is important that we look at those factors in light of the proposals that form the substantive propositions at the moment. If we know that a school turned a corner to quite the degree that it managed and with such success – as Deputy
325 Leadbeater quite rightly pointed out – if those factors are pertinent, these are what we are about to lose. We are being told that the overall budget is being rebalanced between secondary and primary sectors so that money is being taken out of secondary in favour of primary. We can assume that – well, we know, actually – in terms of the Education model, the Committee’s model, that the tipping point will be higher, class sizes will be significantly higher, and we can also assume that – actually,
330 again, we have been told that – the pupil–teacher ratio will be less favourable.

I think those are all pertinent factors. I am not sure how much it bears relevance to my feelings about this particular amendment, but I do think these are important lessons, these are important factors to consider when looking at the model that we are being asked to agree, and I do really worry about what we might lose. When we look at La Mare as an example of a success story, we are
335 about to U-turn on all of the things that made that school a success.

But I am still torn on this particular amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Murray.

340 **Deputy Murray:** Thank you, sir.

Sir, I want to commend the obvious passion which both Deputies Leadbeater and de Lisle displayed in their introduction to this amendment. The performance of the school despite the circumstances of the building within which the school has had to operate is a credit to the staff and admirably demonstrates that the most important component to perfect outcomes in any school is the ability and commitment of the teachers. Indeed, my late wife was actually taught there under the redoubtable Jenny Tasker, mentioned by Deputy Gollop. But I would have to say that if circumstances were different and it was the Grammar School or Les Varendes that was actually, at this point in time, being looked at, I would expect equal passion from a number of Members of the Assembly as well on that. This is a very difficult decision to have to make, to close a school.

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350 I further thank the Deputies for producing one of the only amendments that we have had so far inclusive of indicative costs, and on top of which, for an amendment which accurately reflects the conversations with officers so that the detailed projections are in line with the discussions that were held. That is important since this is a complex proposal and I am afraid it is fraught with challenges on a number of fronts, not least if we are to understand that this is intended to being an ongoing project 'when funds allow.'

355 I would remind Members that a full rebuild of LMDC was actually in scope for the Committee until really quite close to the finalisation of the policy letter; indeed, it had been our original intention to provide it as an option if the Assembly were minded to spend the considerable amount of money necessary in addition to the proposed new Sixth Form Centre. However, there were additional factors which had to be taken into account, and that is why, eventually, knowing that the additional capital costs were so significant – and clearly, that alone was unlikely to gain support – we reluctantly removed it as an option.

360 Some of those considerations were, for example: if La Mare was to be one of the three 11–16 schools in the partnership, it meant that we had to discount the Grammar School, which, from a geographical point of view – as Deputy Oliver has mentioned – would mean servicing the largest catchment area on the Island, St Peter Port, and it would likely require us having to, for example, bus students out to the west coast. That is not in itself a major issue, but our buses also have to service primary school pickups, our scheduled bus services; there is a wider knock-on impact.

365 Designing an education system gets complicated and it is full of interdependencies that are not always obvious. Further, it is widely known that the prospect of having to rebuild the primary school in the near future is also a possibility, and that raises the prospect of ongoing building works on that same site for several years, potentially; that is disruptive for children. Beyond that, the original existing plans for the rebuild of the secondary that we already had were to place it in the lower-lying area of the available space, necessitating a bund. Those plans for the school were also designed around the very large space standards to which Les Beaucamps was built, our newest school, and so plans would have had to be redrawn anyway.

370 Beyond that, though, the most cost-effective location for any future rebuild of the primary is actually where the secondary now stands. This particular proposal does not talk in terms of rebuilding a school which dates back to the early 1970s – I think it was 1974, according to Deputy Leadbeater. This proposal suggests that a two-form extension could be built and that the original building could be reworked to accommodate not the four forms that it was designed for, but the six forms that it would require. If we leave aside whether attempting to refurbish a building getting on for nearly 50 years in age is actually an appropriate investment, the logistics attached to the proposal are very complex when trying to migrate students from the existing Grammar School as and when that extension and the refurbishment work can be planned.

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390 Then of course, there is the considerable work necessary at the Grammar site, as proposed in this amendment. Because the Sixth Form was never built to be a standalone facility, much work will have to be done within the Sixth Form and adjacent Grammar site to provide access to the 60% of necessary facilities that the Sixth Form Centre does not currently have. On top of that, although it has not been stated, the Committee's proposal to move the Music Centre, SHARE, and Youth

Commission to the swimming pool area of the Grammar would still appear to be viable in this proposal, but unfortunately, since it would only be servicing the Sixth Form students, it is not the most effective place to site it – other than, of course, it would still have the Princess Theatre at Les Ozouets campus within reach.

395 Due to the sequencing of the building requirements and the very complex transition, this approach is likely to take about 5 years to come to fruition, leave us with a great deal of unused space at the Grammar site, enshrine the upkeep of a building already approaching half a century old into the future, and geographically not be in the right place to facilitate the town feeder schools. And even though it is not being proposed as a total rebuild, it is not meant to be cheap. Even
400 without any optimism bias, we could be looking at the thick end of £60 million, and we certainly cannot and would never ignore optimism bias on a project of this scope.

So I see this as a well-intentioned attempt to keep the LMDC on the table. But this solution is, unfortunately, impractical, and therefore unsuitable, on a number of levels – none of which reflects at all upon the obvious commitment and professionalism and success of the staff. I would therefore
405 ask Members not to support this amendment.

The Bailiff: Deputy Le Tocq.

Deputy Le Tocq: Thank you, sir. I will be brief.

410 Like Deputy Murray, I commend the proposer and seconder for attempting to do what I had sought to do many years ago.

I think, however, time has moved on, circumstances have changed. I was on the La Mare de Carteret – both the primary school and secondary school – Committee for many years and even 20 years ago, the secondary school buildings were in a dire condition. To put an extension onto that
415 only makes me think of silk purses and sows' ears; it is quite clearly not appropriate. Similarly, whilst the primary school actually is in far better condition than the secondary school, there needs to be, I think, a focus pretty soon after whatever decision we make on this to rebuild that school in an appropriate way, and I think the only way that can happen effectively is if there is not a major rebuild happening to the secondary school on that site.

420 This is very much not an ideal position to be in, but it also reminds me of some of the motivation of why I have sought to say what I said yesterday and to bring amendments: there have been promises after promises by successive Assemblies. And of course, it is fine if you pass on to someone else; you can point the finger at them if you are not in the next Assembly. But the promise back in 2001, when the Assembly then decided to retain selection, the focus was then on, 'The problem is,
425 we have a load of schools that are not of the same quality as the Grammar School' – which at that time was one of the newer schools. And so the promise was there that the rebuild would make the whole difference.

Now, it is true that the quality of buildings and certainly the space available within to be able to teach, and some of the sizes of the classrooms at La Mare – I used to go in occasionally to help with
430 RE lessons years ago – are unbelievable cramped. But we know that that is not the whole picture at all. The sad was, of course, that the next Assembly – or the Assembly after that, I think; it certainly took a long time – decided to rebuild, first of all, St Sampson's, and then Les Beaucamps, and then La Mare was left. And it was in, arguably, I think, the worst condition. So there has been promise after promise broken there.

435 It would be tempting, perhaps, therefore, to feel sympathetic to this amendment and say, 'For the sake of it, let's rebuild it.' But the fact is, the circumstances have changed quite dramatically. School numbers: the school roll is changing. The size of the school becomes an issue in the future unless feeder schools and catchment areas are changed. And in my mind, if we just look at the snapshot of La Mare, we will be taking our sights off the bigger picture, which is far more important.
440 But I am concerned, still, that this Assembly could make the same mistakes of that Assembly back in 2000–2004 of making promises it cannot keep.

The Bailiff: Deputy Ferbrache.

445 **Deputy Ferbrache:** Sir, I think the two speeches which have – I was already of that mind anyway – emphasises the point are those of Deputies Murray and Le Tocq, having regard to the practicalities. But I would like to say this – and it is an indulgence, but I do not make any apology for that – happy birthday to Deputy Leadbeater, happy birthday to La Mare de Carteret School, and happy birthday to my granddaughter Matilda, who are 50, 147, and 4 respectively.

450 In relation to that, when Deputy Leadbeater speaks, when Deputy de Lisle speaks, they speak with passion, they speak with integrity, and they speak well, and I am very influenced by what both of those gentlemen said; they have made their case as well as it can be.

But as Deputy Le Tocq says – and I have criticised this Assembly, I have criticised previous Assemblies – when we go back to the 1970s, when La Mare was built, why would you build schools that are only meant to last 25 or 30 years? That was a crazy decision; we cannot do anything about it. But as Deputy Le Tocq has said eloquently, really, all La Mare building is fit for is knocking down. If you are going to have a long-term school there beyond the next 2 or 3 years, you have got to rebuild it. That is going to cost many millions that we do not have.

455 I thought all of Deputy Leadbeater's speech was good except I think he should leave the poetry bit and the music bit to Deputy Queripel, really, (*Laughter*) but other than that, he still said it well. I think, probably, the result of this amendment is going to be a bit like the Euros: that he will get to the Final but lose the Final, in respect of all of that.

460 The point, again, in respect of this is that – and I can remember, I think, the political mentor of Deputy Trott and certainly a person I respect considerably, Deputy Bury, once saying – we had a debate about whether we were going to retain Conseillers – Deputy Bury – we did not have *Hansard* in those days – Deputy Bury then went back and listened to the tape, and I had said something about 'Conseillers should be abolished,' 'they have had their day,' 'people love titles,' and all that kind of thing. And of course when I was a Conseiller and I voted to keep Conseiller, Deputy Bury reminded the Assembly of what I very ably said. And that was done a bit to Deputy Dudley-Owen and others yesterday. And that is a fair point, but times have moved on.

465 But what I want to say to the people – the pupils of La Mare de Carteret, the parents who send their children there, and particularly the teachers – you have all done a fantastic job. It was a basket case several years ago, and Deputy Leadbeater said with pride and with ability how well it has been turned around in the last 5 or 6 years. So I commend that, but we have got to move on.

470 Deputy Gollop was talking about the parish schools, and I can remember, at Amherst, we used to go to St Peter School, St Saviour School, Tordeval School to play football, etc., and those were about the only teams we could beat; we would go there. And those schools have gone because we have moved on from parish schools because the Island – I do not share the Deputy Parkinson thing that 'It does not really matter in Guernsey; you can go anywhere because we are an Island community.' And again, perhaps that is for another issue about 'If it was a free-for-all, where would the children go?'; you would have people – 'I want to go the Varendes,' 'I want to go to St Sampson's,' and they would be filling out forms with alacrity.

475 I say to Deputy de Lisle and to Deputy Leadbeater that I am going to vote against your amendment, but I very much respect the sincerity of both of you for bringing it.

485 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Parkinson.

Deputy Parkinson: Thank you, sir.

490 I echo the words of the last speakers in saying that I think the movers of this amendment have done a sterling job of proposing and seconding it, and I think that we all admire very much the work that has been undertaken at La Mare de Carteret. But sadly, I think the time has moved on and that school cannot be rebuilt.

When it comes to the vote, I am going to abstain because I live almost opposite the entrance to La Mare de Carteret School and it might be considered that I have a personal interest in the decision.

495

The Bailiff: Deputy Inder.

Deputy Inder: Just briefly, sir: I am going to thank Deputy Leadbeater for his passion, and certainly Deputy de Lisle as well, because I know it is one of the most genuine amendments that we have seen over the last couple of months; it is from the heart of someone who was a member of one of the ESCs. It is right, Deputy Gollop, to say had the failed two-school policy letter not been adopted, La Mare de Carteret would probably have been built right now and I think we would be taking pupils into school, accepting it was not perfect in its own way, but when you have got a politicised decision where you do personality over politics, as we are seeing here, that is why we are here today.

It is also worth reminding some of the history that Deputy Le Tocq has forgotten, actually, or possibly – yes, he probably did forget. Back – I think it was – in 2015, it was Deputy St Pier who brought in the four-into-three schools. At the time, in the *Hansard*, he made the point that he did not believe La Mare de Carteret should be rebuilt, and at the time, on the *Hansard*, Deputy Le Tocq at the time said, ‘Do not go so fast; the direction is purely down to three schools, La Mare might be one of them.’

And I think, having walked around that school – and it was myself who recognised the absolute deterioration of the huts at the back. You have heard me say it before: I am a countryman. I walked into those huts, and those teachers and those pupils were living, working, and studying in rat-infested huts. There were black spots on the wall; we had asthmatic children walking into those schools coughing; and I know what rats and urine smell like, and that dance hall had it.

Now, we were under 355; we were not allowed to do anything about it. But as soon as – in terms of the personality politics that we dealt with last time – as soon as they got rid of the people that they did not want in, the chequebook was opened up and it was fixed, but that is the politics that we are in at the moment. And I think it is absolutely disgusting, the way La Mare de Carteret has been treated as a building – it has been left to go to rack and ruin – how the teachers have been treated – and I am afraid, the pupils and the teachers of this Island have been used as political footballs by people who should know better.

Deputy Leadbeater and Deputy de Lisle, I absolutely respect the amendment that you have put in here today because it is the most genuine of the teachers and some of the most difficult of our pupils, but unfortunately, I am not going to be able to support it for the reasons mentioned by Deputies Ferbrache, Le Tocq, and others in the last three or four speeches.

The Bailiff: Deputy Aldwell.

530

Deputy Aldwell: Thank you, sir.

Happy birthday, Deputy Leadbeater; happy birthday to your granddaughter; and happy birthday to my daughter, also – get that in. *(Laughter)*

Sir, this amendment asks Members to replace the Committee’s proposals with three secondary schools located at Les Beaucamps, St Sampson’s, and La Mare de Carteret, keeping the Sixth Form only at Les Varendes site. This amendment does not seek to rebuild La Mare de Carteret, but keep it hobbling along, continuing to apply sticky plasters, which has been the case for the past 20 years. As mentioned previously by Deputies in the *Hansard* transcript in 2015 on the Education debate, it stated that La Mare de Carteret should have been built 10 years previously. There were health issues, water seeping through the roof, and the buildings were probably riddled with asbestos. It also stated at that time it was not fit for purpose.

The amendment also seeks to add a two-form entry on the site and expand this as a phased development when funds allow. This would cause a huge amount of disruption for the students and staff without the knowledge of when the situation would ever come to an end.

Sir, the Committee’s plans are very straightforward. We have been on a very long journey, we have spent an enormous amount of time looking at what has been proposed before to understand

550 what is needed for the future. The Committee did not design our strategy around a table on our own, but with a whole team of educational specialists under the educational strategy advisor, Laurie Baker, over many months, where we learnt to challenge what was and what was not possible using information we had gained from our staff as guiding principles.

555 The three schools which were chosen from the education estate were for various reasons: with Les Beaucamps and St Sampson's being the newest, the third school was chosen as Les Varendes because it was the largest catchment area and would allow students to walk or cycle to school. It also had been well maintained and had a programme of ongoing works. It had the space to accommodate the Youth Commission, Music Service, and SHARE, who all work within and alongside the schools and make a huge contribution to all our students.

560 Once this had been decided on, we then worked on the numbers for the pupil school feeders into the secondary schools and found that our models worked comfortably for a smooth transition. We have taken onboard that six forms of entry would work well at each school and using Les Varendes, we had the room to expand as this was required.

Sir, I have the highest regard for the students and staff at La Mare de Carteret. I had been on that committee for 3 years before becoming a Deputy. They are the hardest working and the most passionate about their schools. It is a wonderful community.

565 But all of our high schools have a wonderful community, and each year, different schools have different results. Every secondary school is a high-performing school. As an example this year, the average for GCSEs A–C was 69.6. St Anne's actually had 77.8; Beaucamps 63.3; and La Mare 50. That is not to take away anything from the wonderful things that they have done, because they have done an amazing job. But each year, different schools have higher levels – but that is just for the cohorts; different cohorts, different levels. But it does not take away from the staff or the amazing job that they do, because they are amazing.

570 But I am afraid to say the school building is no longer fit for purpose and adding a two-storey block somewhere on the site is not going to help the situation. This proposal does not serve our students well. We have a small transition window which would allow students to have one move, with the three cohorts moving to Les Varendes in September 2024 and the new take from La Mare de Carteret 2024 then moving on to St Sampson's High.

575 I do not see that it would be possible to ask the students from Les Varendes in the 11–16 part of the school, if closed, to move to La Mare de Carteret, as per this amendment suggests, while the site is being redesigned to make half of the site into a standalone sixth form, and I question if permission would be given. It also concerns me that all the work would go on at Les Varendes while the students are still working on the site at the sixth form. With the curriculum using across four sides of that site of the 11–16, including the labs, I wonder how the school could still function.

580 La Mare de Carteret students cannot be left in limbo any longer; it is not fair to our students or staff. It would be unforgivable to have students on a continuous building site stretching into the future, waiting for the next phase of work to be planned.

585 **Deputy Leadbeater:** I thank Deputy Aldwell for giving way.

590 I did not want to interrupt anybody. There is many things which I completely disagree with, some things that Deputy Aldwell has said I disagree with. But the one thing she cannot say is that it is unfair to continue on that site, 'It is unfair to the teachers and the students to continue on that site,' because if you ask every single one of the teachers at La Mare de Carteret School, they would prefer to keep that site, even in the building it is, in the condition that it is, rather than to knock it down.

I just thought I would need to correct that, sir.

595 **Deputy Aldwell:** These plans are not fair foundations to build our future education strategy on coming out of COVID; we need well-thought out plans, a confirmed direction. The Committee have well thought-out plans, moving students smoothly into three secondary schools without disruption of building extensions, where students will be known by name and need, the schools will have their

own personalities and be communities so students feel they belong, with schools of equal size. They will have a broader curriculum.

600 No one likes change, but COVID has changed everything. We are now in a non-selective era. We certainly need to invest in our young people, give them the skills to reach their potential. We must push forward with a vision for the future skills required and a workforce well trained and fulfilled, allowing our economy to thrive.

I ask you to reject this amendment.

605

The Bailiff: Deputy Gabriel.

Deputy Gabriel: Thank you, sir.

610 It seems that today is an auspicious day for birthdays: I would also like to wish my daughter a happy birthday today. *(Laughter)* It would appear that we all had some good news, perhaps! *(Laughter)*

615 I am a little bit torn about this amendment. It does appeal to me on one hand, but on the other, I think I am going to make the decision, unfortunately, not to back it, mainly around the capital. And I follow Deputy de Lisle's passion, certainly, that La Mare de Carteret is a well-performing school. But to follow his argument, it is the people in it, not necessarily the building, so perhaps, if the people in it were relocated and nurtured, they could still perform and have that ability.

620 But to me, it strikes me that spending an extra £30 million-odd and bringing up the optimism bias, to include that, to £83 million is a far too significant amount for this school. It also commits us to further expenditure 'when funds allow,' and to be realistic, I do not think funds will allow, looking at the future, unless we make some significant changes which are already planned which are certainly going to be unpopular. So this, sort of, commits us, again, into more spending. I am not going to say that spending on our future and our children is unnecessary, but it is certainly committing us to spending.

625 So that is where I am. Thank you very much, and as previous speakers have said, it is a relevant amendment and has a degree of sense to it and it is well thought-out and there were some passionate speeches, so I thank Deputies Leadbeater and de Lisle for raising it.

The Bailiff: Deputy Bury.

630 **Deputy Bury:** Thank you, sir. I will be brief; I was not going to speak on this, but at least I have got to say that phrase now.

I was brought to my feet primarily to make clear that the 'Deputy Bury' that Deputy Ferbrache was referring to was not myself, although I am happy to offer my mentorship to Deputy Trott if he needs it!

635 I was not going to speak on this; it is tricky for me to speak, with my daughter being a student at La Mare de Carteret. However, she is fairly pragmatic on the matter and has said that we just need to do what is best for everyone, and hopefully, we all feel the same.

640 I would like to thank Deputy Leadbeater as well, and Deputy de Lisle, as many other speakers have. I think this is an important conversation to have, not centred around the emotive matter of closing a school, but the bigger picture of what it is we want to invest in in this education restructure.

645 I am also torn, because I am not comfortable – as Deputy de Sausmarez and Deputy Roffey alluded to – with the overall structure that is being proposed by ESC with the standalone sixth form, which this amendment replicates. However, for those of you that are comfortable with that, I think this amendment, therefore, merits consideration for the reasons of the performance and the community of that school that we are now about to shut down, by the feel of it.

What is it we want to invest in? As Deputy Leadbeater explained to us yesterday, 50% of our students do not go on to further education, so this section of our education system is the last mandatory area. So with the limited funds that we have, are we going to invest in that or in a section where half the people are not going to benefit?

650 So I am torn and I am not sure which way I am going to go, but I think, for those of you who are not comfortable with this standalone sixth form option, that the community and the success that La Mare have displayed over the last few years should be something that should be taken into account.

Thank you.

655

The Bailiff: Deputy Fairclough.

Deputy Fairclough: Thank you, sir.

660 I agree with Deputy Bury that this does merit consideration, particularly for the reasons that she has mentioned. I do not have as much of a problem with the standalone Sixth Form Centre as some of my colleagues.

665 I commend Deputy Leadbeater on his speech yesterday, and I have to say, I was disappointed to hear concessions that if it had not been for COVID, then La Mare de Carteret School may well have been rebuilt. Now, COVID has had an effect on public finances – we all know that far too well – but surely, not to the extent that we have to redesign an education system and estate which has to last us decades – generations, even.

670 The school was, as a number of other speakers have alluded to – and I will not be repeating a lot of the things that have been said – promised by the States that it would be rebuilt after St Sampson's and Beaucamps; that never happened, the promise was never kept. And I feel for the staff, students, and parents at La Mare, I think, as we all do, and as a States' Member, I want to apologise to them that their school was not rebuilt years ago, when it should have been. Put simply, they were sold short.

675 We cannot keep looking backwards. So what do we intend to do to reward the school, its staff, and students, after turning it around to become one of the best performing secondary schools, as we heard Deputy Leadbeater explain yesterday? We plan to close it. And the way we are told that was communicated, to my mind, left a lot to be desired; that is putting it politely. And now, here we are with a school facing closure and all that goes with it. But these are more than schools: they are communities within our community, as we found out to our cost when St Andrew's Primary School was closed and St Peter Port Secondary School was closed.

680 I am always proud to say my mum taught there, at St Peter Port Secondary, before it was closed, before finishing her career as a Home Economics and Domestic Science teacher at La Mare de Carteret Secondary School; these subjects probably do not even exist anymore. It was a job she loved. She is still friends with those she worked with decades ago. We heard Deputy Murray talk about one of the teachers there; there was a real community, and I still believe that there is. But for years afterwards, when I was out and about with my mum, people would come up to her and say, 'Hello, Mrs Fairclough,' and tell her they still made their own Christmas cakes using the recipe she had taught them years ago and tell me she was their favourite teacher; I am sure they said that to all the teachers.

690 So while I may not be an expert in education, I do know the value of a good school and its place in the community, both geographically – although all of these things are relative to Guernsey, and we have heard some of the distances that have been alluded to; nowhere is far, really, is it? – but also in the hearts and minds of those who work and study there; the value of good teaching staff; the feeling of belonging. And I ask myself, are we going to get that as a result of ESC's proposed model? We will see. I hope, whichever model we come up with, that this almost intangible aspect is taken into account in a small community like ours.

695 I do not intend to stay on my feet for much longer, but I thank the Education Committee for this document; I found it very useful. As you will see from pages 33 and 34 of the side-by-side comparison, this amendment most closely aligns with the staff survey feedback from July 2020.

700 I have nothing more to say, really, other than to commend those who have spoken in favour of this and urge those Members who have not yet made up their minds to support this amendment.

Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Dudley-Owen.

705 **Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

Before I start to speak on this amendment, I just wish to reassure Deputy Fairclough and all other Members and anyone listening in this community that change management and support of our students, our school community, and our staff are absolutely key in any plans going forward for the Committee to make sure that change is managed as smoothly and as well as it possibly can be, and we will commit to making sure that everyone is updated on a regular basis about how things are managed going forward.

710 I really want to reassure Deputy Fairclough of that because he is right: it is intangible. But Deputy de Lisle has also referred to issues around the closure of St Peter Port School, which we know did not go as smoothly as it could have done and left students disenfranchised for many years with a detrimental effect on their adult life, and that is not something that we can afford to repeat again with this States.

715 Going into commenting on this particular proposal, I must say that Deputy Leadbeater and Deputy de Lisle have engaged really wholeheartedly with officers from the Education Committee and they have reflected the facts and figures given to them by officers in their amendment. And I really respect that, because the two Deputies have come to this with an open heart and been wholly sincere and displayed utmost integrity in their presentation, and I commend that. And I have utmost sympathy with wanting to retain a really important part of our school community.

720 But the proposal is not what I expected to see. It is not a rebuild of the school; it is a new extension onto an existing facility, and that makes for a very complex plan, an expensive plan, and an elongated plan. And it is undeniable that neither the condition of the building's fabric nor the facilities currently on offer are acceptable for the Island's learners at La Mare de Carteret. A period of prolonged underinvestment due to the promise of a never-delivered rebuild have taken their toll. For that, successive terms of Government must be held accountable.

725 We want to ensure that all our students have a similar quality of opportunities, because that is fair, and that would not be the case if we continued to use La Mare de Carteret as it is today. Deputy Leadbeater is correct that I have support the rebuild of La Mare de Carteret, and that was right up to crunch time, when we as a Committee had to make a decision as to whether or not we would bring its potential rebuild to the States as our preferred option. When weighed against a very serviceable school building at Les Varendes with a much more modern extension to the current Sixth Form Centre, which can be readily repurposed as high school accommodation to rehome all the students who will be displaced by the closure of La Mare de Carteret, and other issues as well, I very reluctantly had to accept that the rebuild option was not one that we could take to the States.

730 The Committee considered carefully the site options for the three 11–16 schools, and although it was in the running for quite some time, La Mare de Carteret site was discounted from the Committee's preferred option for the following reasons.

735 Using the site of the current high school would necessitate a rebuild requiring additional capital expenditure of a minimum of £30–35 million, which the Committee does not consider to be prudent given the current financial climate.

740 The combination of the transition arrangements and the current primary school feeder model could place more families in a position of having to choose whether a child transfers to secondary school with their group of peers or attends the same school as a sibling.

745 Although it would reduce the distance students in La Mare de Carteret Primary catchment area would need to travel to school, it would increase the distance students in town are required to travel to school relative to the Committee's preferred option – including students in the Island's other social priority area, which is Amherst – as there would no longer be a secondary school located at Les Varendes, the Grammar School site.

750 As I have mentioned, the current building at Les Varendes requires only minor upgrades to continue to meet required standards for education. In a model where La Mare de Carteret was the

755 third site, Les Varendes site would not be used as a school building, which is contrary to an inefficient use of the estate.

Looking to the longer term, potential developments in housing supply, which might include variation to the type and tenure of housing in the area – especially at Le Genet – could mean that the advantage of locating a high school on La Mare de Carteret site will lessen over time.

760 The option of a rebuild would not have been fully implemented until September 2025, but that is on the basis that we did a clean sweep and we rebuilt the school in one go, and that is not the proposal in front of us; the proposal in front of us is to build a new extension onto the existing school and then to phase a rebuild. That builds in a large amount of complexities and challenges to overcome and it means that the 'go live' date for this proposal would be September 2027; this is 2 more years than if you rebuilt the school as we have explored.

765 Appendix 2, on page 42 of the comparison document, outlines the sequence of actions that have to be undertaken in order to get to the 'go live' date in as smooth as possible a way, and I would encourage Members to look at that and to see that detail.

770 La Mare is undeniably a school which has come a very long way and has seen significant improvement in the last decade. Exam results matter but we cannot and should not rely solely on those as an indicator of success, and we need to be looking at a far broader set of outcomes than just that A*-C measures. States' Members who attended the Curriculum and Standards session in our webinar series, which is still available for you to view if you have not already seen it, will have had an introduction to this and will be aware of this already.

775 But let us be clear: as Deputy Gabriel has alluded to, it is not the building itself that has brought about those improvements; it is the dedicated and hard-working staff. It is the support from the Education Centre as well, and the diligent students, and the parents supporting those students who have done that together.

780 Let us also be clear that one of the reasons that La Mare de Carteret's outcomes have improved so much is as a result of substantial targeted investment over successive years to bring about that change; it did not happen by accident. That investment in our people, our most valuable resource, will not be lost.

785 We know that the staff at La Mare de Carteret are hugely committed to their school and the excellence in teaching, as Deputy Leadbeater has acknowledged will ensure that those staff will support the children from that school through the transition period as they move *en bloc* to the site at Les Varendes, at the Grammar School site. Let's bottle the magic that is in La Mare de Carteret and share it. The ethos that we want to instil in our system is about partnership: sharing good and excellent practice, working together to make improvements for all our Island's children in the States' school sector.

790 I would like to take a few minutes of your time to explain how these proposals will work in practice under Deputy Leadbeater's amendment.

We will have to add a sizeable extension to the school to accommodate two more classes in each year, so that is ten more forms of entry. That means we need to add specialist rooms, such as science labs and arts rooms, as well as general-purpose classrooms. But this amendment also makes it clear that, 'when funds allow,' the idea would be to rebuild the remainder of the school over time.

795 There is nothing wrong with this as an idea, but in practice, schools work because we put faculties together. So it is not as simple as adding some new rooms; we would need to repurpose existing rooms so that we could add to the building one faculty at a time, and doing a school build piecemeal like this is really quite unsatisfactory, and it also takes time. So we would need to keep the student numbers on the site low to create enough spare space to make alterations around the students studying on the site, and I do not think this is the right thing to do for our students or for that school.

800 Similar issues arise when repurposing Les Varendes as a sixth form centre. Based on current and project numbers, we can only fit about half of the sixth form students into the Sixth Form Centre, so we would need to use some of the lower school site for the sixth form – and I think Deputy

805 Murray has alluded to this already. But the science labs are in a very different part of the building to the art rooms, and they are distanced from the sports hall and the refectory.

My point is this: it is not as simple as saying, 'We will close a corridor and everything to the left or right is the Sixth Form Centre and the rest can be reused for some States purpose, such as' – what has been mooted, I think – 'a police station or other, or maybe a health hub, etc.'; we would
810 either have a building that was way too big for its purpose or we would have to spend money ripping out specialist rooms and reinstating them in a different part of the building.

After we have done all that, we would have an education estate that meets the needs of today's learners but has no eye to the future, with no in-built flexibility. And it will cost more to deliver than the Committee's proposals, which have none of those issues.

815 Sir, we were in different financial waters to those that prevail today when I previously supported the rebuild of La Mare de Carteret, and our economic prospects are uncertain. This is not a rebuild on the table in front of us; it is an expensive extension and an unsatisfactory solution to housing the sixth form. Leaving Les Varendes, which is fit for purpose and the right size for use as a high school, half-full under this proposal, with only 450 children, and severely underutilised, under
820 capacity, is not a good use of our resources.

The complexities in transition, the high cost of the rebuild, uncertainty about whether the makeup of the community that it serves at Le Genet still remaining as it is today in the future, the extended 'go live' date, uncertainty over the feeder school model are all significant factors which I have taken into consideration. Members must also weigh up these factors when coming to their
825 decisions on whether or not to support this very well-meaning but complex proposal.

Thank you.

The Bailiff: As no other Member is standing to speak on this amendment, I will turn to its proposer, Deputy Leadbeater, to reply to it, please.

830

Deputy Leadbeater: Thank you, sir.

I have just scribbled a few notes that I will go through from the speeches that have been made.

Deputy de Lisle tells us that the school serves eight parishes. He speaks of 'spirit and endeavour,' the policy letter speaks of 'culture and identity'; all of these aspirational terms in the policy letter
835 can be applied to this amendment, so anybody else who wants to chuck any of these in, feel free.

I just want to look at the building of La Mare de Carteret. Deputy Dudley-Owen is right: it would make more sense to rebuild the school as a whole, obviously. I did not think that was sell-able to this Assembly; this is why Deputy de Lisle and I spoke with Education officers and looked at doing an extension – but not an extension that you bolt onto the side of the school; a campus-style
840 extension so you can drop the old one and rebuild that in the future. La Mare de Carteret originally was a campus until the early 1980s, when the cloisters were built; it was two separate buildings. So you could continue that thing; it is achievable.

When you look at the capital costs here – and I always really pity the people who have got to put these costs together, because clearly there is an optimism bias in there anyway, but clearly they
845 do not want to be held to account if the figures are too low. So this is why we get these astronomically high figures. I have looked all through this here and I think the total cost of the rebuild is potentially £74–83 million.

I went through it and thought, 'Well, actually, we could do that for £34 million completely'; that is being realistic. But then I thought, 'If that is not the case, I am getting back into construction,'
850 *(Laughter)* 'because Jesus Christ, there is a hell of a lot of money here! £15 million on the programme works! Woah!' *(Laughter)* 'That is incredible! I want a job in construction management tomorrow!'

So it is really difficult, but I really do not think we can go by these capital costs. Obviously, they did not have a great deal of time to put them together, but even if they did, I really do not think these are too relevant. We talk about 'We have to refurb La Mare de Carteret School': we have done
855 it! We have spent millions over the last couple of years on it. The roof has still got a guarantee for another 25 years. Deputy Inder alluded to the money that was spent on it last term. We do not have

to refurb La Mare de Carteret School. There will be some refurbishment works to all schools ongoing during this summer holidays.

860 That is another thing as well: talking about the works going on at Les Varendes, because there will be some repurposing works, obviously; those can be done in short spaces in the summer holidays, like they generally are anyway.

I know that whatever I say here is not going to sway the people who are going to support the Committee's model or are still convinced on 11–18; I know I am going to sway them. But I just need to outline that a lot of these facts and figures are not facts or figures. But there we are.

865 I think it has been pointed out, the Music Service, SHARE, and the Youth Commission were factored into this amendment and they were to be located exactly where the ESC policy – all we have done from the ESC policy letter is taken away the two silly things they have done: that is, move the sixth form up the road and close our best school. If you take those two silly things out, that is all we have done and kept it as it is. Any road up; you are not going to agree with me on that one.

870 Deputy Roffey – and I understand: he is an 11–18, he does not see any sense in a standalone sixth form, and I can understand that. But at the moment, we have a binary option – this amendment or the other one – both for a standalone sixth form, as Deputy de Sausmarez has pointed out. We are where we are. I am not convinced Deputy Roffey is to support this anyway; he will probably abstain or just vote against all of them.

875 Deputy Oliver's was interesting because she said it was the location of La Mare de Carteret that concerned her. But La Mare de Carteret came out as the best site for a secondary school when they did the survey for the two-school model. It is by far the best site, and the fact that you believe it might be too close – that *she* believes, sir – that it might be too close to St Sampson's, I struggle to understand the logic behind that, I really do. But anyway, I can just reassure Deputy Oliver that there was a traffic impact assessment done at the time and there were consultants brought in and they both confirmed that the Mare de Carteret Secondary School site, as is, was the best site out of the existing sites that we have got in our estate for a secondary school. I doubt that is going to change her mind anyway, sir.

880 Deputy Murray talks about the capital costs. One thing that has not been factored into is the cost of dealing with a redundant Mare de Carteret site after it has left; that is going to have to be knocked down, that is going to be a few million quid off the taxpayers to be spent on that, and I have not seen it in any of these figures.

890 The timescales, as well, of 5 years; now that is nonsense, that is absolute nonsense. You are building a tiny little two-form entry extension, campus-style extension, down at La Mare de Carteret. It is not going to be any longer than it is to build the sixth form. Obviously, you would have to build that one before you can move the students into that one, but you would have to move that one before you can move the students into that one. So a lot of the arguments based within this comparison document kind of fall flat on their bum.

895 Deputy Ferbrache's points said that we cannot continue to use the Mare de Carteret building for more than a few more years. But as I pointed out, we spent a lot of money on it and the roofers got a guarantee for 25 years, so we could quite easily use that building for 5 – even 10 – years if we wanted to – not that I would envisage using it for that long, but it is potentially possible.

900 I think I pointed it out before: Deputy Aldwell said that the amendment does not rebuild the school. But if ESC thought that rebuilding the school 100% from the start was a good idea, they should have had that in the policy letter. But they could also go away, if the amendment was successful, and come back and say, 'We prefer to do it this way'; there is still that possibility.

905 Deputy Gabriel mentioned the costs, and again, I would just reiterate what I said: these costs here are not accurate whatsoever and I honestly think that the figure of £34–35 million that I put – that is including the realistic £15 million on the two-form entry. Some of the costs they have got in repurposing Les Varendes, £12.6–13.6 million; that is virtually a new sixth form. It is incredible where these figures come from. Again, I will not continue; I will just say that those figures are nonsense.

Deputy Bury pointed out as well that we are talking about the 11–16 phase here, which 100% of our students go through, and if this massive focus on the 11–18 – or the *academic* part of 11–18,

910 because we solved the more 'vocational' – if you want to put it that way – with the TGI. So that focus is on that sixth form, on those 50% or less children that go, rather than on the 100% of students in the 11–16.

All I can say is repeat those wise words from Deputy Mooney and say, 'It is never too late to do the right thing, but after today, it maybe will.'

Thank you.

915

The Bailiff: Members of the States, we come to the vote on amendment number 2, proposed by Deputy Leadbeater and seconded by Deputy de Lisle.

Any request for a recorded vote?

Thank you. We will have a recorded vote.

920

Members of the States, it is important when we have a recorded vote that there is as much quiet as possible whilst the votes are being taken, and I simply remind Members that under the terms of the Rules, you switch your microphone immediately before voting and switch it off again, please, immediately after voting. We will try and do it so that the Greffier can hear clearly each vote that is cast.

925

When you are ready, please, Greffier.

There was a recorded vote.

Not carried – Pour 14, Contre 22, Ne vote pas 3, Absent 0

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	ABSENT
Deputy St Pier	Deputy Soulsby	Deputy Parkinson	None
Deputy Trott	Deputy Taylor	Alderney Rep. Roberts	
Deputy Brouard	Deputy Vermeulen	Alderney Rep.	
Deputy Burford	Deputy Aldwell	Snowdon	
Deputy Bury	Deputy Blin		
Deputy Cameron	Deputy Dudley-Owen		
Deputy de Lisle	Deputy Dyke		
Deputy de Sausmarez	Deputy Ferbrache		
Deputy Fairclough	Deputy Gabriel		
Deputy Falla	Deputy Haskins		
Deputy Gollop	Deputy Helyar		
Deputy Leadbeater	Deputy Inder		
Deputy Matthews	Deputy Kazantseva-Miller		
Deputy Oliver			
	Deputy Le Tocq		
	Deputy Mahoney		
	Deputy McKenna		
	Deputy Meerveld		
	Deputy Moakes		
	Deputy Murray		
	Deputy Prow		
	Deputy Queripel		
	Deputy Roffey		

The Bailiff: Members of the States, the voting on amendment number 2, proposed by Deputy Leadbeater and seconded by Deputy de Lisle, was as follows: there voted Pour 14, Contre 22, 3 abstentions, and therefore, I declare amendment number 2 lost.

930

Members, the next amendment on the list is that numbered 9, proposed by Deputy Matthews and to be seconded by Deputy Gollop.

Is it your wish to seek to lay that amendment, Deputy Matthews?

Deputy Matthews: Yes, sir.

935

The Bailiff: In that case, the first thing is that there is a motion under Article 7, paragraph 1, of the 1948 Law to suspend the Rules of Procedure necessary to permit the amendment thereafter to be laid.

Motion under Article 7(1) of the Reform (Guernsey) Law, 1948

To suspend the Rules of Procedure to the extent necessary to permit amendment 9 to be considered.

940 **The Bailiff:** Do you have anything you wish to say in respect of that?

Deputy Matthews: No, sir.

The Bailiff: Deputy Gollop, do you formally second that motion?

945

Deputy Gollop: Yes, I do, sir, thank you.

The Bailiff: Deputy Dudley-Owen, do you wish to comment?

950 **Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Yes, sir, I do.

I would like to encourage Members not to support the suspension of the Rules in this instance. Deputy Matthews has had considerable time to be able to lay the amendment in the time given in the lead-up to debating the policy letter in July and was given significant officers' support. I have also spent a lot of time, which was really helpful, speaking to Deputy Matthews about his idea since the beginning, I think, of the year.

955

So I really do think that there has been ample time to be able to explore and chew over this very complex, very unusual, and – I would almost say – left-of-centre proposal which would have significant impact on the current proposals for the Guernsey Institute. So I would encourage Members very strongly *not* to suspend the Rules on this occasion.

960

The Bailiff: I will invite you, as the proposer of this motion, Deputy Matthews, to reply to that if you wish to.

Deputy Matthews: Thank you, sir.

965

I would suggest that we do suspend the Rules to look at this. Actually, the proposal that is there – although you are right about talking about moving the Guernsey Institute – it is in several parts and it does not necessarily mean moving the Guernsey Institute; in fact, one of the options is merely moving the sixth form.

I think that there are some very good reasons to look at this amendment and I would urge Members to vote to suspend the Rules.

970

Thank you.

The Bailiff: Members of the States, I will put to you the motion under Article 7(1) of the 1948 Law, proposed by Deputy Matthews and seconded by Deputy Gollop, to suspend the Rules of Procedure to the extent necessary to permit the amendment numbered 9 to be considered.

975

Deputy Dudley-Owen: Could we have a recorded vote, please, sir?

The Bailiff: And there is a request for a recorded vote.

980

I simply remind Members as to what I said just previously. Greffier, we will have a recorded vote on this motion, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Not carried – Pour 13, Contre 24, Ne vote pas 0, Absent 2

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	ABSENT
Deputy St Pier	Deputy Soulsby	None	Deputy Haskins
Deputy Brouard	Deputy Taylor		Deputy Moakes
Deputy Bury	Deputy Trott		
Deputy Cameron	Deputy Vermeulen		
Deputy de Lisle	Deputy Aldwell		
Deputy de Sausmarez	Deputy Blin		
Deputy Fairclough	Deputy Burford		
Deputy Gabriel	Deputy Dudley-Owen		
Deputy Gollop	Deputy Dyke		
Deputy Kazantseva-Miller	Deputy Falla		
Deputy Leadbeater	Deputy Ferbrache		
Deputy Matthews	Deputy Helyar		
Deputy Roffey	Deputy Inder		
	Deputy Le Tocq		
	Deputy Mahoney		
	Deputy McKenna		
	Deputy Meerveld		
	Deputy Murray		
	Deputy Oliver		
	Deputy Parkinson		
	Deputy Prow		
	Deputy Queripel		
	Alderney Rep. Roberts		
	Alderney Rep. Snowdon		

985 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, the voting on the motion under Article 7(1) of the 1948 Law, proposed by Deputy Matthews, seconded by Deputy Gollop, is as follows: there voted Pour 13, Contre 24, 2 Members were absent, and therefore, I declare the motion lost, and therefore, amendment number 9 cannot be laid, which means we come to the last amendment, which is amendment number 8, submitted by Deputy Trott, to be seconded by Deputy Parkinson.

Is it your wish to lay that amendment, Deputy Trott?

990 **Deputy Trott:** It is, thank you, sir, and I would also appreciate listening to the States' Greffier's dulcet tones.

Amendment 8

1. *In Propositions 1 and 2, to insert the words "in principle" after "To agree".*

2. *To delete Proposition 4 and substitute therefor:*

"

4.

a) *To note that the Requête entitled 'Determining the Best Model for Secondary Education', which was signed by Deputy A C Dudley-Owen and six other signatories and which was approved by the States on 3rd March 2020, was critical of the States approving a previous model of secondary education (in January 2018) "without being presented with a detailed plan for its implementation" and (in September 2019) "without full details of the planned implementation being presented" and argued that "for the purposes of transparency and accountability it is essential for States Members to be presented with research in totality for them to be able to make an informed decision regarding what will lead to the best outcomes for the Island";*

- b) *To note that, despite the important premises of the successful Requête led by Deputy A C Dudley-Owen in 2020 and despite requiring substantial capital and revenue expenditure at a time of considerable pressure on public finances, the Committee's propositions continue to face significant and sustained opposition from key stakeholders and the Committee's policy letter clearly includes inadequate information to allow the States to provide its final approvals for all aspects of a project of this size;*
- c) *To note that in Section 9 of the Policy & Resources Committee's Government Work Plan 2021-25 ('Investing in Islanders, our Island and our Future') it was set out in paragraph 9.8 of Annex 5: Funding and Investment Plan, that "The Policy & Resources Committee wishes to ensure that the States can consider, at an appropriately early stage, the direction which certain schemes need to take.....Therefore, each scoping document will need to set out any requirement for States' decisions which is likely to be dependent on risk, value, public interest and political judgement."*
- d) *In the interests of good governance, having regard to c) above generally and the risk, value and public interest in this project in particular, to direct the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture and the Policy & Resources Committee to include within the project's scoping document, alongside the scope, goals, objectives and estimated timescale, a requirement for and timing of a States' decision with suitable Propositions to allow the States to be sufficiently informed to provide final approvals to proceed with the project.*
- ..

The Bailiff: Thank you very much.
If you could read this amendment, then, please, Greffier.

995

The States' Greffier: Yes, sir.

The States' Greffier read out the amendment.

1000 **The Bailiff:** Greffier, thank you very much.
Members of the States, this is the last of the new amendments.
Deputy Trott.

1005 **Deputy Trott:** Thank you, sir.
Sir, I am a natural risk-taker and thrill-seeker, whether as an aerobatic pilot in my late teens or as a City trader in my 20's and 30's. Calculated risks can pay, but they must be able to be weighed up; otherwise, it is simply gambling.

Sir, this amendment is not about which model the States should or should not approve; it is about good governance around a decision to spend tens of millions of pounds of taxpayers' money.

1010 Sir, the circumstances are unprecedented in my 20-plus years of experience in this Assembly, because never before has a Committee asked the States to approve expenditure of tens of millions with such little detail about the outcomes and benefits of that investment. If we behaved this way in the private sector, we would likely, and rightly, be removed from positions of authority and influence on the grounds that we had failed collectively in our risk assessment, value for money assessment, and basic good governance oversight principles.

1015 Deputy Parkinson and I are not seeking to defeat the Committee's proposed model or replace it with another model; the amendment allows the Committee to continue developing its preferred model. But it adds the necessary rigour and discipline to the decision-making process by allowing

1020 the States to provide its final approval for the expenditure in due course once the Committee has laid a reasonable amount of information before the States.

Now, sir, when I was on the P&R Committee last term, I always pushed for the big decisions to be made by this Assembly; in fact, on one occasion, it was as a direct approach from my friend, Deputy Dudley-Owen, when working on her 'Pause & Review' requête, which I voted for. It is important to remind Members that all of us in the Assembly are our Government; all of us in this system, all of us form the executive. All of us are accountable for the consequences of this expenditure. The 34 Members who are *not* members of the Committee cannot credibly say they have enough information and assurance in the current policy letter to approve tens of millions of pounds of expenditure. Now, sir, I contest that they would not with their own money, and they should not with taxpayers' money.

1030 Now, sir, I used to be paid considerable sums of money to take risks, and I think I did it reasonably successfully for more than a decade. However, I would not have gambled in this way then, with my organisation's resources – and I was paid to do so. I certainly would not, and I will not do so, today. We are not paid to gamble; we are paid to make objective, evidence-based decisions.

1035 It is said that the Committee's proposals, in their current form, do not enjoy the support of the teaching profession, which will have to implement them. It is said that they do not enjoy the support of headteachers, who will have to lead them. Sir, the public, our community, famously tend to engage with big changes of this nature only at the 11th hour.

1040 All these things considered, it is premature – and, indeed, reckless, in my view – for the States today to approve this entire plan and all the expenditure associated with it when there is so much work to do to persuade key stakeholders. If the States do this, they are setting the Committee up to fail, because if stakeholders remain unpersuaded, history will repeat itself and plans approved by the States will be dragged back to the Assembly by popular demand.

1045 Far better to put in place the correct decision-making initially, allowing the Committee to continue developing the proposals but acknowledging that the States must be able to provide final sign-off once further work has been done and once stakeholders' concerns have been addressed. That, sir, is how to deliver good governance. That is how we should make objective, evidence-based decisions. That is how we do our job and that is how we avoid a £40 million gamble on a model without precedent.

I ask for a recorded vote, sir. Thank you.

1050

Deputy Inder: Sir, I am just going to invoke 24(4) – sorry.

The Bailiff: [??? 11:22:20]

1055

Deputy Parkinson: Yes I do, sir, and I reserve my right to speak.

Deputy Inder: Sir, I would like to invoke 24(4), and if that fails, straight to 26(1).

[??? 11:22:30 – 11:23:10]

1060

The Bailiff: Members of the States, will those Members who would otherwise be entitled to speak on this amendment and who intend to speak stand in their places?

Is it still your wish, Deputy Inder, that I put a motion under Rule 26(1) to the Members?

1065

Deputy Inder: Yes, sir.

The Bailiff: This is to bring debate on the amendment to a close, Members, save for the opportunity of the President and the proposer of the amendment to speak once again.

Those in favour; those against.

1070

Members voted Contre.

The Bailiff: I will declare that lost.

1075 **Deputy Inder:** Recorded vote, please? Thank you.

The Bailiff: There is a request for a recorded vote from Deputy Inder on the Rule 26(1) motion. Greffier, when you are ready, please.

There was a recorded vote.

Not carried – Pour 12, Contre 27, Ne vote pas 0, Absent 0

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	ABSENT
Deputy Soulsby	Deputy St Pier	None	None
Deputy Taylor	Deputy Trott		
Deputy Vermeulen	Deputy Blin		
Deputy Aldwell	Deputy Brouard		
Deputy Helyar	Deputy Burford		
Deputy Inder	Deputy Bury		
Deputy Le Tocq	Deputy Cameron		
Deputy Mahoney	Deputy de Lisle		
Deputy Meerveld	Deputy de Sausmarez		
Deputy Moakes	Deputy Dudley-Owen		
Deputy Murray	Deputy Dyke		
Deputy Prow	Deputy Fairclough		
	Deputy Falla		
	Deputy Ferbrache		
	Deputy Gabriel		
	Deputy Gollop		
	Deputy Haskins		
	Deputy Kazantseva-		
	Miller		
	Deputy Leadbeater		
	Deputy Matthews		
	Deputy McKenna		
	Deputy Oliver		
	Deputy Parkinson		
	Deputy Queripel		
	Alderney Rep. Roberts		
	Deputy Roffey		
	Alderney Rep. Snowdon		

1080 **Deputy Queripel:** Sir, while the votes are being counted, could I seek clarification, please? If this amendment succeeds, will the remaining amendment fall away?

The Bailiff: No, not necessarily.

1085 **Deputy Queripel:** Thank you, sir.

The Bailiff: It can still be laid. If it were successful, there might need to be another amendment if this amendment were to carry.

1090 Members of the States, on Deputy Inder's motion pursuant to Rule 26(1), there voted Pour 12, Contre 27, which is why it was declared lost to start with and is still declared lost.

Who wishes to speak on the amendment?

Deputy Ferbrache.

1095 **Deputy Ferbrache:** Sir, Deputy Trott likes to tell us about his risk-taking and how much money he made and how good he is at good governance. I have taken so many risks in my life – and I have made lots of mistakes, but I have taken risks – and for him to use hyperbole and adjectives to boost his case does nothing, because this is a well-researched policy letter. You may agree with it or not agree with it and that will be a matter for a vote in the due passage of time, but it is well-researched.

1100 I think my understanding of good governance is just as good as Deputy Trott's; I have been involved in many commercial enterprises, both professionally and as an investor, and I realise the need for good governance. So to say that this is something that we would be taking a massive risk on – we would be risking £40 million on, all the other things that Deputy Trott said – I think is just frankly ridiculous – and I am sorry, I am not to use that kind of language. It is a delaying tactic.

1105 Deputy Trott and I started on the same route in relation to the Education debate: we both voted for selection or to maintain selection, we both voted initially – well, I voted initially, I am not quite sure how he voted; we may have voted the same way – for the two-school model. Then I changed my mind, as I have said many times publicly and in this Chamber. We both voted for the Deputy Dudley-Owen requête, we both voted for that. That only passed by 1 vote, and if Deputy Parkinson had not abstained, it would have failed, because the onus would have been to get one more vote if you are bringing something.

1110 Where we differ, I believe, is that now, we have got to make a decision. Where I would agree with him is, you do not recklessly make decisions just because you think you have to. The people of Guernsey have had enough – overwhelmingly, they have had enough – of this Assembly procrastinating. We have had debates before about Deputy Le Tocq telling us what happened 20 years ago has come back now in very similar form in 2021.

1115 We can always find a reason for delay; we can always say, 'Do it tomorrow. Forget it for today, let the people be in a state of abeyance.' If this amendment passes – Deputy Dudley-Owen will no doubt have her own estimate of time, and I will bow to that, because she is obviously immersed in this every day and I am not – it will be a significant delay. What good would that do? And then when it comes back with the detail, 'That is not enough detail. We need something else. You didn't look at this; you didn't pay due weight to that.'

1125 The greatest growth in the finance sector in the last 15 to 20 years has been compliance officers. We have got compliance officers to the left of us, we have got compliance officers to the right of us; into the valley of compliance officers we will ride every day. And what has it done for the finance sector? What has it done for business? It has mitigated its growth.

We have to have good behaviour, we have to have good standards, but enough is enough. Let's get on, let's reject this fanciful amendment. If I may respectfully say so to the person I do respect, Deputy Trott, this is not his finest hour. Let's move on and debate the policy letter.

1130 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

1135 **Deputy Gollop:** This does strike me, I must admit, as an old-stager as a little bit of a political amendment, in many respect, because it is continuing a trend we saw yesterday which made me a bit reluctant to support it, even though there is a degree of merit in continuing to be open-minded about the final outcomes.

1140 This includes this whole business about 'noting' – and noting not just a report that has been, perhaps, prepared by civil service officers or a Committee or a body or an external consultancy, but to note it in a way that is quite politically subjective, and I am not sure we want a trend of amendments like that. It might be a matter that we would have to consider, the States' Assembly Committee, as to how wide that kind of amendment needs to go.

Nevertheless, the gist of it is clear. It acts not necessarily as a frame, but as a few extra boxes to tick as a process, as a safeguard. And point (d) – which, in a way, is the only really substantive point requiring us to do something, rather than 'noting' previous requêtes and so on –

d) In the interests of good governance, having regard to c) ...

1145

– which relates to –

... scoping document ... dependent on risk, value, public interest and political judgement.

... above generally and the risk, value and public interest in this project in particular, to direct the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture and the Policy & Resources Committee to include within the project's scoping document, alongside the ... goals ... a requirement for and timing of a States' decision with suitable Propositions ...

1150 Effectively, in a way, it takes us back more to the grand old days of – as we were reflecting earlier
– not Deputy Tina Bury, but Deputy Roger Bury, when the States had many opportunities to be
informed about procurement matters, tenders, exact costs, and timelines. And I think this report
that came to us from ESC is a different kind of report; it is more of a conceptual report, it is more
1155 about looking for education outcomes and balancing things on that level – and perhaps in general
debate, I will say more about that.

I do not see this amendment as particularly harmful, and if it acts as a clearer of minds, if it
enables Education, Sport & Culture to convince more people in the community that their vision is,
on balance, the best available one, then I cannot see any significant objection to this; indeed, in the
last few days, as I have always praised, ESC produced a good document, it went some way to the
1160 'Pause & Review' wider-encompassing views that some of us wish to see and got, perhaps,
frustrated with earlier in the year.

If you work on the assumption – and I think we have to – that the political team in Education,
Sport & Culture, their good working relationship with Policy & Resources, and their excellent officer
team and specialist management team are all very well-informed and clear in their mind about what
1165 they want to achieve, then it surely cannot be too much of a Herculean ordeal or arduous task to
encourage them to codify these thoughts further and come back at the earliest available
opportunity with a more detailed presentation/portfolio/report on all the costs and benefits and
particulars – and that way, it will not only, perhaps, clarify where Education, Sport & Culture are, but
will enable greater engagement with all the parents, stakeholders, businesspeople, young people,
1170 and everyone else in the community.

So actually, although this might have been put across in a politically robust way, it should actually
help not just good governance, but the progression of the States' overall aims. So on that basis, I
am minded to support this amendment.

1175 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Dyke.

Deputy Dyke: Thank you, sir.

In terms of personal history and attitudes, I think I am in sympathy, to a large extent, with Deputy
Trott: I also hate spending taxpayers' money, as some of it is mine. I also have, in my life, done a
1180 share of gambling with my own life, in terms of leaving London back in 1982 from a nice, big law
firm to go to the Cayman Islands, where nobody even knew where it was.

But gambling is not what Deputy Dudley-Owen and her Committee are doing with us now. The
gambling on the Education debate happened in the last States, when we decided to blow up a
current system that was working quite well with no idea what was to replace it; that was the
1185 gambling. Deputy Dudley-Owen and her Committee have done huge amounts of excellent work, I
can see, over the last year. Their initial presentation, I thought, was very good, and the work they
have done over the summer in trying to summarise for us all these miscellaneous amendments is
also very good.

So we are not gambling with the education if we follow what the Education Committee has said
with as much research as it can be expected to give us. Some of the figures are not going to be
1190 exactly precise – the precise amount that the Institute will cost, or the sixth form at the Ozouets site;
hopefully, the figures, if we get our procurement systems better, might be less than are stated – but
it is not fair at all to call this gambling. We have enough information.

1195 In business, you cannot know every single thing that will happen, every single thing that will go forward. You cannot work it all out before you take a decision; at some point, you have to use your intellect and say, 'I have got enough, now let's get on with it.' I think we have got enough to proceed with making a decision in this session and not sending it back; I think it would be totally irresponsible to waste more time going back on this.

1200 Perhaps I could just address one point: a lot of narrative has developed over the last 7 weeks that the teachers are all against this project, that they do not like what the Education Committee has said. There are various points to make on that. To start with, it is for the Committee to make the decisions. I am absolutely certain that they have talked to enormous numbers of teachers respectfully and taken on board their various points and made a decision and a presentation to us; that is their job.

1205 And it is not correct to assume that the teachers are all against this or have a view that something else should be done; I have been to one of the teachers' meetings at the Varendes site, and it seems to me that the teachers are actually all over the place on this. Everyone comes to a project like this with their own prism. The teachers at Mare de Carteret would love to save Mare de Carteret – and Deputy Leadbeater has spoken very well on that. They might well wish to do that and that would be their view. The teachers at the Varendes site – some of them, anyway – would like to keep the Sixth Form right next to them; that is their view from their prism. The teachers at Beaucamps probably like to have a rather luxurious amount of space with a fairly small number of pupils there relative to its size, so they would probably like to keep that as closed as possible. This narrative that the teachers are against the Committee is completely wrong and misleading.

1215 So I would say that this amendment to defer everything – which will, effectively, just go on and on – must be thrown out, and it must not be assumed that the teachers have some view that something else should be done. The Committee must make the decision, they have given us some good proposals, and we must get on with voting and getting this job done.

Thank you.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Roffey.

1225 **Deputy Roffey:** I do not think, sir, this is about gambling or not gambling; I think it is about what level of information we need for informed decision-making, and the narrative has to change enormously.

1230 I hate to go back to the last Assembly, because I know there are Members in this one who think everything they did was the work of Satan, (*Laughter*) but when the policy letter came forward one the 'one school, two site' model, it had enormously more detail than in the policy letter before us. It did have detailed designs for schools, it did have traffic assessments, it did have transition arrangements in there, and it was still criticised heavily by those who were opposed to the plans for not having enough detail. And one of those strongly criticising it was the President of the Education, Sport & Culture Committee.

1235 So I tend to agree with Deputy Dyke: I think what this policy letter does is give us enough information to make a decision in principle; I absolutely agree with that. And I am pretty sure that we will make a decision in principle and I am pretty sure I know which way it will go, and it probably will not please me and I do not think it will please, despite what he says, the vast majority of the teaching profession.

1240 However, as Deputy Trott said, we are the Government. We have this weird system in Guernsey that nobody else has: we are the executive – Policy & Resources are *not* the executive; we are – and we are asked to make a final sign-off today with no idea about traffic assessment; really, only the most hazy idea about costs; only outlined plans that have been presented. Of course, you can make a decision in principle about whether the structure, the general approach, is correct, but if you are signing it off finally, never to come back before you, on the basis of what we have today, then our standard of evidence on which we want to make our decisions has plummeted from what it was in the past.

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1250 I am pretty sure that it has and I am pretty sure this amendment will not get traction, but I am going to vote for it because I do not think I have anywhere near the detail to actually sign off this as is. And it is not just the money; it is also the impact it will have in every other way on the future of our Island. I am happy to give an overarching opinion one way or another on whether the structure is right. I do not see how anybody on this really scant level of detail can actually sign it off, and sign it off finally, say, 'That is it. Never come before this Assembly again.'

The Bailiff: Deputy Parkinson.

1255 **Deputy Parkinson:** Thank you, sir.

I want to address this issue of alleged delay. In our processes, a Committee that is engaged in commissioning a major capital project has to build the business case for the investment they want to make, and if the policy letter, as presented to us today, remains in its current form unamended, they would have to take the business case for each element of the proposed redevelopment of the educational estate to the Policy & Resources Committee for sign-off and their approval. So those
1260 business cases are going to have to be developed whether this amendment succeeds or not.

The issue of alleged delay is, frankly, a red herring. The question that this amendment poses to the Assembly is, 'Do you want to leave it to the Policy & Resources Committee alone to sign off on the final plans that are presented, or do you want those final plans to come back to the Assembly for approval?' The additional delay in bringing it back to the Assembly is only the delay in turning
1265 the plans into a policy letter and bringing them to the States; it might take 4 weeks.

Now, the question is: if we do not ask or demand that the final approval, the final sign-off, comes back to this Assembly, that is a considerable abdication of our responsibilities. And it is also, in terms of gambling – Deputy Trott's term – a huge gamble on the part of ESC and the Policy & Resources
1270 Committee, because they alone will be taking political responsibility for whatever happens. If there are any hiccups in the road, if it turns that some parts of the plans do not work well, the only people who will be blamed for whatever has gone wrong will be the ten Members of the Assembly who signed off.

Frankly, I think it is just politically unwise on their part to resist this amendment. If they were
1275 sensible, they would say, 'Okay, the Assembly should have the final sign-off and then we have all bought into the decision,' and if there are any problems – if there are budget overruns; if there are practical problems in delivering Education's model, which I am sure will be approved today – then the whole Assembly would have taken responsibility for those plans and we would all share in the responsibility for whatever has gone wrong and sorting it out. Actually, from their perspective – I
1280 think – they would be in a much more comfortable position.

Now, it may be – because it appears the 'coalition,' if I can call them that, are going to vote against this amendment – that some Members do not want that responsibility. They want to be in a position, when this all done and dusted and the new Sixth Form Centre is built and all the other facilities, where, if it goes wrong or if it turns out to be millions of pounds over budget – 'Well, it is
1285 not our fault: we didn't sign it off.' Well, fine. If that is your position, that is understandable; I do not think it is very creditable. I think the States needs to observe proper governance processes, because if it does not, there are grave risks, politically.

But more importantly, at the end of the day, this is about doing the right thing with taxpayers' money. At the end of the day, we are all responsible for these tens of millions of pounds; should we
1290 not have the final say on the final push of the button? 'Yes, those plans are okay.' We do not need detail in the Nth degree about exactly where each teacher is going to park his or her car; we just need sufficient detail to be able to make an intelligent decision about 'Are we going to go and push the button and spend all this money on this project?' And I do not think anybody could possibly contend that the policy letter, as it currently stands, provides anything like the detail anyone would
1295 need to make that decision responsibly.

We are accepting, I think, today the argument that a lot of the development of the plans is operational stuff, that will be done after the decision in principle is made. I will forever regret that

we appear to be turning our back on 11–18 schools in the States sector; I personally think that will be a disaster for States education in Guernsey, but that may very well be the decision the Assembly arrives at.

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But having made that decision in principle, we have been told that most of the detail is in the operational stage and they will go ahead and work up that detail after the decision in principle is made. Well, fine, okay. Let them go away and work up the detail; come back with costings that are more accurate – at the moment, we have, effectively, ballpark estimates – come back with detailed plans, detailed costings; and ask the States to sign it off. I think it would just be an abdication of good corporate governance for us to say, 'No, we don't want to see that stuff. No, we're very happy to let Deputy Ferbrache and his colleagues approve it all and we'll just accept if it is good enough for them, it is good enough for us.'

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So I think this amendment should be very uncontroversial; all it is asking for is good governance. And I do not think it requires a lot of extra delay. The point is, this work has to be done anyway; the question for you is, 'Do you want to approve the final plans, or are you happy to delegate that approval to someone else?'

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Thank you, sir.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Taylor.

Deputy Taylor: Thank you, Mr Bailiff.

I am going to start with my negative parts on this. I really do not like – similar to the amendment that was amended by Deputy St Pier yesterday – these 'to note' – basically, Items 4a, 4b, and 4c. I do not think they really add anything. I can totally understand why they are in there and the theory behind it; I just do not think it adds anything constructive. That is my feeling on those. So on first of read of that, I was ready to screw it up and stick it in the recycling. But I did get all the way through to *d*, and that did peak my interest, so I am pleased I gave you the time of day there, Deputy Trott.

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Also, in Deputy Trott's opening speech, he did kind of bring me on board. Naturally, I have got to disagree with him on something: he did say he has not seen a policy requesting such sums without clear benefits – not his exact words, but the general gist of it. I am fairly sure we were both sat in the harbour debate, which requested a considerably larger sum of money with considerably less detail on what the benefits actually would have been. But that is a different story, we will leave that there.

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Where I think I have now been lost on this amendment is with the speeches, now, from Deputy Parkinson, and I kind of feel I need to justify my reason for my vote against this proposition. It is mainly because I am happy to delegate my vote, so to speak, to members of Policy & Resources and the Education, Sport & Culture Committee. The reason is, I do not see that as gambling. I have not been in the investment banking world or anything like that, but when I leave my business on a day-to-day basis and I leave my members of staff there to do the job that has been given to them, I trust them; I do not think it is gambling, leaving them to do their job. I believe the members of ESC were appointed to do this and Policy & Resources have the final say on signing off; I personally do not have a problem with that. And if it does go horribly wrong, I will still accept responsibility for delegating my vote in that way.

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So I just wanted to outline my reasoning for voting against this proposition, and I would also urge other Members to vote against it too.

Thank you.

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The Bailiff: Deputy Meerveld.

Deputy Meerveld: Thank you, sir.

I think there are few people in this Assembly who have been as passionate about the education debate, in both the last time and this, as myself – except, possibly, Deputy Dudley-Owen. There is

1350 no other issue that has certainly consumed as many hours of my political career to date as education. So I am very passionate about it.

But having said that, I have not participated greatly in the debate over the last couple of days because I have not felt I needed to. But this amendment does drive me to my feet because of what I perceive to be political machinations and the whiff of hypocrisy.

1355 We are being presented with – if I can speak over the Red Arrows – a policy letter that does ask us to make a decision on fairly high-level principles on how we want to proceed. Deputy Roffey pointed out that the two-school model had a lot more detail – and I give way to Deputy Ferbrache.

Deputy Ferbrache: Terribly sorry – we have got Red Arrows, and Deputy Trott has told us he was an acrobatic aeroplane pilot, *(Laughter)* so perhaps he could go and help them. That is all, sir. *(Laughter)*

The Bailiff: Deputy Meerveld, it is a matter for you as to whether you compete at the moment with the sounds from outside. We are trying to get the windows shut, which might move some of the noise away from us.

Deputy Meerveld: May I suggest that we, potentially – because the air show is on at the moment – convene now for lunch? I would be happy to take up and continue after lunch. So break early and come back early?

1370 **The Bailiff:** Members of the States, I will put to you the motion that we adjourn at this point but resume at 2 o'clock. Those in favour; those against.

Members voted Pour.

1375 **The Bailiff:** I think that is declared carried. So if people want to get outside and see what is going on, then we will now adjourn, but resume at 2 o'clock, when we will continue with Deputy Meerveld's speech.

*The Assembly adjourned at 11.55 a.m.
and resumed at 2 p.m.*