

Response to questions from the Guernsey Press re no swimming pool planned at LMDC 17-10-14

As you know there is some concern from the school committees and PTAs over the lack of a swimming pool and the impact of having to travel away to another one.

They have pointed out this will result in travel time that could otherwise be spent in lessons.

The Education Board has given serious consideration as to whether or not the rebuild of La Mare de Carteret Schools should include the provision of a new swimming pool (estimated at an additional £4.05m on the project cost) similar to those at the other secondary schools. It has decided that it would not be appropriate for a number of reasons:

- Guernsey has a surplus of swimming pools in the secondary phase and there is no need to build a new one at the new schools based on a supply and demand usage analysis;
- The existing pools are generally under-used during school curriculum time
- The Education Department has rationalised swimming pool use in the primary phase as there is a surplus of capacity;
- A modern fit for purpose swimming pool has significant annual operating costs which would need to be funded through general revenue. There will always be a need to prioritise expenditure from the States revenue budget and it is difficult to see when the costs of maintaining another swimming pool could be justified against other competing demands for funding;
- The Guernsey Sports Commission has advised that there is limited demand for after-hours usage of an additional public swimming pool as the island is well served by public swimming pools and a new pool would simply cannibalise the existing market.

However, the Education Board is aware that the two School Committees have been very supportive of a new swimming pool being constructed, and as a result the Board has designed the other external sports facilities to allow for future consideration of provision of a pool at a time in the future should the States have the necessary funds.

It should also be recognised that the Education Department has established a federated approach to the sharing of facilities and staff within its secondary education sector. La Mare de Carteret would become the Island focus for indoor sporting competition, complementing the competitive swimming facilities and external multi-use games areas at St. Sampson's High, the outdoor activities sports facilities and pool at Les Beaucamps and the swimming pool and external grass and hard pitches at the Grammar School & Sixth Form Centre.

Pupils attending both new La Mare de Carteret Schools will still have access to swimming as part of their curriculum. Schools are used to carefully timetabling these lessons to ensure that they minimise the loss of any lesson time caused by the need to travel the short distance to another school site.

Swimming is also only a small part of the rich and diverse PE curriculum offered in both our primary and secondary schools and we believe that this curriculum will be significantly enhanced by the new facilities we are proposing to build at La Mare de Carteret, both for the pupils of La Mare de Carteret schools and across the Federation.

