

193/JB/MJC

9th October, 2014

The Minister,
Treasury and Resources Department,
Sir Charles Frossard House,
La Charroterie,
ST. PETER PORT.
GY1 1FH

Dear Deputy St. Pier,

re: Providing Access to Equality of Educational Opportunity for the Pupils of the La Mare de Carteret Schools

My fellow members of the Board and I were both surprised and disappointed to receive your letter of comment to our States Report. I would remind you that the overarching recommendation of the Treasury and Resource's Project Assurance Report 2 was that *"this is an exceptionally well planned and managed project with strong stakeholder support providing a compelling business justification for proceeding"*. There was a conditional recommendation, which was that *"subject to completion of the Outline Business Case, the review team believes that the likelihood of the project being delivered successfully is very high, and would recommend therefore that the project proceeds to the delivery stage"*.

Your letter of comment fails to note that the amber status awarded to the project was owing to a "sole factor" of completion of the financial implications of the Outline Business Case (OBC) and the chief reviewer's comment that the reviewers are *"pleased to report... that this exercise is now underway and should allow for the OBC to be completed well in advance of the States Debate in November"*. It is difficult to see how this statement can then be represented as the review teams finding *"a large amount of information was not available"*?

Your Board will be aware of the frustrations we have experienced with Treasury and Resource's political withdrawal from the Project Board in the summer of last year as this has, we believe, hindered a joined up approach to the Project with limited engagement and understanding of the Project within Treasury and Resource's political board. Our surprise at your letter of comment is that it raises a number of questions that we would have expected to have been aired much earlier in the process at, for example, the Strategic Outline Case. During the Strategic Outline Case meetings with the Review Panel, the Department was criticised for not expanding the community facilities which we rejected on the basis of affordability. Indeed, the Department was similarly advised on its other capital prioritisation bid to ignore affordability issues and instead propose the consolidation of the College of Further Education in one phase at a cost of £70 million instead of the Department's recommendation of simply vacating the Coutanchez site to release the land for development by the Housing Department.

We are further disappointed with the absence of the professional financial support provided to this project despite your advice to the States that this would be available to support SCIP projects. I specifically note the recommendation in the LMDC SOC PAR review in January 2014 that your Department should provide “*guidance on the preparation of at a minimum, capital cost, and major maintenance and utility expenditure profiling so that key design decisions can be justified.*” None of this was provided by your Department in support of this project, nor was a Finance and Benefits Manager appointed to support the project as your officers advised it would do.

However, we recognise that we have not yet convinced your Board of the compelling case for this project and we will work with your Department to address your outstanding questions at this late stage. We are pleased to see that your officers have already accepted a request for a meeting with Education Department staff next week to allow Treasury and Resources to improve their understanding of the Project and enable your Board to support the recommendations in the States Report. We hope that your members will also be able to attend the presentations on Monday at the La Mare de Carteret schools, but if this is not possible, we would be delighted to arrange another opportunity at a time which is convenient for them.

Yours sincerely

Deputy R. W. Sillars
Minister

cc: All States Members