

Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel

Key points from Meeting with representatives of the Beaulieu Parents Council

- The savings of 1.5% in 2018 and 2019 equate to an overall reduction to the grant of 6% to the Primary School and 12% to the Secondary School.
- The Council recently held an emergency meeting with parents in order to discuss the proposed changes. The general view of parents was that of concern that this change would be the first of many fee increases over the coming years.
- Many parents had written to the Minister directly in order to express concern and had all received the same standardised letter in response.
- 36% of children in education attend one of the non-fee paying schools. The Council noted that this saves the States £8 million per year and equates to a £47,000 saving per student over the course of their education. If fees increased in line with the UK, it was estimated that 3,000 extra places would be required in non-fee-paying schools. A 5% drop in children attending fee-paying schools would eliminate any savings made as a result of this proposition
- The Council expressed concern that no meaningful research had been carried out by the Department.
- **The Council also noted that each of the 4 fee paying schools are using different financial models and therefore the Council feel that it is unfair to treat them all the same. In the case of Beaulieu many cost savings have been put in place to bridge the disparity between the funding of the schools and the fact that Beaulieu has to pay for its own capital costs (via interest bearing loans from the States of Jersey).**
- The Council had received a Freedom of Information request detailing the budgets of non-fee-paying schools. They acknowledged the tight financial constraints that non-fee-paying schools operated under but noted that many schools often ended up overspent. Beaulieu did not have this luxury to fall back on due to ongoing costs in capital projects etc.
- **The Council made reference to the published Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel Report (P68/2016: MTFP Addition:Comments) that concludes that ‘the investment that has been provided, is less than needed and late.’**
- **The Council concluded that the proposed savings will ultimately lead to an additional cost to the States of Jersey as parents decide to transition to non-fee paying schools or indeed are unable to afford the option of fee-paying schools in the first instance.**

- The Council detailed several efficiency savings and explained that £1 million had been saved over the past 5 years. These included savings to staffing costs, outsourcing of cleaning contracts, Information technology changes, outsourcing of the uniform shop and a reorganisation of the administration and finance teams.
- The Head teacher had already confirmed with parents that any fee increases could not be absorbed by the school and the additional costs would be passed on to parents. This was the opposite of what the Minister had explained in the JEP.
- **The School's Campus Development Fund had raised approximately £500K in committed donations from parents to address the deterioration in the Buildings. Again concerns were raised that parents are unlikely to be able to afford to cover the fee increases as a result of the knock on effect of the proposed savings, as well as the commitments being paid as part of the appeal.**
- The school has increased its fees by roughly 3.5% every year since 2013. The Panel requested figures detailing the number of students who have left the school as a result each year.
- The Council explained that nearly all avenues for making efficiencies had been exhausted and making further savings was likely to be very difficult. It was acknowledged that cuts had to be made within the department but these must be fairly distributed between all schools.
- **The Council presented an Infographic to the Panel detailing all of the concerns raised, as well as highlighting details of the savings, efficiencies and generation of additional revenues. The Infographic also highlighted Beaulieu's inclusive approach to education and the support given to the special education needs of specific pupils via the school's learning centre.**