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18th March 2025

Dear Sir

P.2025/26 – BLANCHELANDE COLLEGE, ELIZABETH COLLEGE & THE LADIES' COLLEGE: FUTURE FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Policy & Resources Committee (“the Committee”) has considered the above Policy Letter which is scheduled for debate at the States’ meeting commencing on 19th March 2025. Deputy Soulsby, as a member of The Ladies’ College Board of Governors, recused herself from this discussion.

It is recognised that the Policy Letter will attract a range of strongly held views; indeed the Committee itself has not reached a collective position and will speak as individuals during debate. The Committee is however unanimous that it is incumbent upon the Assembly to work together to find a consensus and provide some certainty to Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and The Ladies’ College (“the Colleges”) as well as wider stakeholders.

The Committee recognises that the Colleges are an integral part of the Bailiwick’s education provision. As a government, we have a responsibility to ensure that the Colleges, their student bodies, parents and carers, and the wider community have confidence that the decisions made in respect of the future funding arrangements are evidence-based and informed not just by the direct financial costs but the wider strategic implications.

The majority of the non-conflicted Members of the Committee believe that the importance of the Colleges to industry has been well demonstrated by the statements issued over recent days by the Institute of Directors and the Guernsey International Business Association. Both groups have focused heavily on the wider economic benefits of a strong independent education sector in attracting and retaining businesses and families, drawing comparisons to our competitors including Jersey. They have additionally highlighted the important role of parental choice. **Similar points are made by the Colleges in their comprehensive letter of representation. These views are shared by the majority of the non-conflicted Members of the Committee.**

The Committee for Education, Sport & Culture has concentrated heavily within its policy letter on educational and financial considerations and consequently there is limited data presented on the wider economic value and contribution of the Colleges. The Assembly will need to carefully consider, given the representations that have been made, the weight which should be attached to these wider points, particularly given the demographic challenges that the Bailiwick faces. These same demographic challenges further strengthen the case for establishing a mutually beneficial partnership approach going forward.

Given the divergence in the policy positions held by the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture and the Colleges, conflicting views are put forward regarding the Colleges' ability to adjust their financial models in such a way as to avoid fee increases should States' funding be phased out. **Should the Colleges be correct that a reduction in States' funding would result in increased fees and a potential reduction in their student numbers, concerns have been raised regarding the potential destabilising effect on the sector. The three Colleges individually provide specific education offerings, which collectively complement the States' schools, and the Committee would be concerned if the viability of one, or more, of the Colleges was detrimentally affected.** The Committee is unclear as to whether this potential, and impact, has been fully modelled and understood.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lyndon Trott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Lyndon" on the first line and "Trott" on the second line.

Deputy Lyndon Trott OBE
President