

Dear Chairman / colleagues,

I was very pleased to be able to join other groups in making a presentation to you all, on Monday 8 October, on the ESF Foundation [Amendment] Bill, supported by two of my colleagues, Mr Sunil Nanda, Chair of Kennedy [primary] School and Mr George Tso, Chair of South Island [secondary] School.

I would first like to clarify that the Management Committee is comprised of all Chairs, from all ESF School Councils.

We have been, over the times associated with the development of this Amendment Bill, completely supportive of the Audit Department [then the PAC over-sight] and the ICAC enquiries, relating to the review of the workings of the Foundation.

From that time, we have worked closely with ESF Centre and all investigations that have been carried out and, as individuals, many of us participating in the detailed work leading to the gestation of the Bill that sits before you. In that regard, I can, on behalf of all Chairs, confirm that we worked to ensure that there was the widest possible involvement in that work, from all 'stack-holders' of the English Schools Foundation. We are satisfied that it represents a prudent, comprehensive and balanced approach to the future management and development of the organisation, going forward.

In that regard, I should note that, within the groupings that are contained in the new ordinance, there are, we believe, opportunities for every individual and group to have their voice heard and any relevant inputs received and carefully, fully, considered.

This starts at the grass roots of each school, where there are bodies for parents; teaching and non teaching staff, as individual bodies, representative of their membership, as well as, in a balanced way, represented on each School Council. At this level, there is also the inclusion of the Principal of each school and an equal number [as with parents / teachers] of independent representatives from the Community.

The Councils meet a minimum of 6 times per year, with full involvement and discussions on all aspects of school management, as well as the development of teaching and learning.

Beyond this local activity, we have our ESF-wide committees and Councils [such as our Management Committee] who also meet on a regular basis and are in close, consultative and advisory way, even outside those meetings, with the full range of ESF Centre management, including the Chief Executive.

We firmly believe that the future Board, as proposed, will ensure that the fullest cognisance of all relevant issues for the teaching and learning of all students in our schools will be given a fully balanced opportunity to be understood and appropriately balanced against individual school and overall ESF, closely-monitored adherence to the overall budget of the organisation.

We look forward to the Committee's early approval to the proposal before you, believing that the suggested amendments are an unnecessary step, with the Amendment Bill already having suitable checks and balances allowing the widest practical representation of all stake-holders in the Community.

sincerely, Bill Sharp Chairman, ESF Management Committee