

Full Council 18 July 2019

Notice of Motion

Academisation of Budmouth College, Chickerell – proposed by Cllr R Hope seconded by Cllr G Taylor

To consider the following motion proposed by Cllr R Hope, seconded by Cllr G Taylor and supported by:

Cllrs D Gray, J Dunseith, S Jones, R Legg, D Morgan, N Ireland, M Rennie, P Kimber and P Barrow

Background

Budmouth College has been in the heart of the community for over 30 years and has worked hard to build an ethos and culture to support the community it serves. Although it is acknowledged that there are aspects that do need to change it has a firm foundation, a foundation which needs to be preserved. This school is unique in that it serves one of the most deprived parts of the Dorset Council area which brings its own challenges, challenges that this school has risen to over the years.

There are significant concerns in the local area from students, parents and the wider community about the proposed academisation of Budmouth College. These concerns were the subject of a Notice of Motion to Weymouth Town Council on 26 June 2019 which was brought by Cllr Fuhrmann and supported by Weymouth Town Council. There was a request from WTC that academisation and the position that Budmouth College finds itself in should be highlighted to Dorset Council.

The school has a new Head Teacher who has an excellent track record and is held in high regard; the senior management team has been changed and feedback from teachers and parents since he took office have been positive and reflect a wider sense that the setting is robustly addressing the concerns raised at the last Ofsted inspection with positive and measurable results.

There has been a letter sent to the Rt Hon Damian Hinds from senior councillors and officers expressing concerns regarding the process of academisation at Budmouth College; these concerns both reflect and extend those raised by the community.

(This letter has been the subject of a leak to the media which is in no way condoned)

Motion

This council:

- a) Supports and acknowledges the work of senior councillors and this Council's Executive Director of People - Children in writing to the Rt Hon Damian Hinds, Secretary of State for Education, stating their concerns regarding the proposed academisation of Budmouth College.

- b) Will make further representations to the Secretary of State for Education seeking his agreement to a delay in the timetable for academisation whilst the progress of Budmouth College since the last Ofsted report is assessed and further consultation is undertaken.
- c) Will seek confirmation from the Regional Schools Commissioner of the reasons for the choice of intended academy provider and evidence of the adequacy of the due diligence carried out to ensure the appropriateness of the chosen organisation supplying the service.