

## Standards-Not-Tiers Press Release

1st July 2008

### **No mandate! It's Official. School Reorganisation Plans are Un-Democratic.**

Standards Not Tiers have welcomed a statement made by David Pugh on behalf of the Isle of Wight Conservative Association that effectively shelves the current formal consultation embarked on by the Council last month.

Chairman of Standards-Not-Tiers Chris Welsford said "whilst we are pleased that Mr Pugh accepts that we need to put this to the people, nobody should forget how much time, money and more importantly goodwill of teachers and parents has been squandered since he took office in September 2007. Having wasted all the good work done by officers and the Children's Commission during the three years following the 2005 election, he is now being forced to climb down. Would the Conservatives have made this decision had it not been for the pressure that we and others exerted in respect of their broken election promise? We also need to keep in mind the effect on all of us, parents, teachers, ancillary staff and children, of the radical proposals that were made in January and the subsequent farce of a consultation that followed. They are only doing this now because they are under pressure to win the next election. What David Pugh and Alan Wells have demonstrated is how powerful politicians are and how easily their poorly thought out plans can make a misery of the lives of ordinary people".

Standards-Not-Tiers made a pledge in January that it would field candidates at the next council elections in 2009. Following a meeting of potential candidates in May, it was decided that supporters of the group would stand as independent candidates. At that meeting it was established that there were sufficient potential candidates to take a majority at the next election and that whilst Education would be the central plank of their combined thinking, democracy and fairness would be the group's main theme, as a contrast to the selfish and dictatorial stance adopted by the current Tory Group.

Debbie Hart, a member of the SNT Executive said: "This is all about Democracy. We would like to hear from others who are unhappy with this administration and who would like to see a non-party political approach to local government on the Island. We would like to encourage people who would be prepared to step forward as independent councillors and promote the virtues of conscience and principle in local government."

For further information editors should contact Chris Welsford, Chairman - Standards-Not-Tiers  
07854 744 062 or 01983 853 600

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