

CHAPTER 4

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE AVES

... research, in essence, is not complete unless it is shared with others who can benefit from it (de Poy & Gitlin, 1998: 288).

... first, educational change is not just a technical process of managerial efficiency, or a cultural one of understanding and involvement. It is a political and paradoxical process Second, significant, educational change can no longer be achieved ... in a step-by-step, linear process ... it is much more messy than that (Hargreaves, 1998: 282).

With Poy's and Gitlin's notion of sharing in mind, I hope that the recommendations made in this chapter will not only contribute to the future development of the AVES, but also make a knowledge contribution to the field of adult learning; curriculum implementation; economy and the workforce; and curricular sustainability in isolated contexts.

Hargreaves' argument in respect of educational change reminds us that planning, implementing and institutionalising curriculum change can be very complex. It is a reiterative process that requires solutions to risks, threats and issues that arise in its implementation. The research identified the strengths of the AVES and demonstrated that the Service has made a very good start in co-ordinating and delivering Adult and Vocational Education on Cascara Island. The data also recognised weaknesses in management and learning provision; areas in need of attention; and strategies for taking the AVES forward – particularly in light of the possibilities that air access might bring to the island.

4.1. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE AVES

Given the ethical considerations that I needed to employ in conducting and writing up my research findings, I wanted to devise a strategy whereby my research findings could be practically shared with relevant stakeholders on the island, while at the same time protecting the identity of my research participants.

I decided that this section of the thesis would be written so that it could serve as a stand-alone document which summarised the main recommendations that emerged through the data.

In adopting this approach, I was mindful that my research participants operate in the small Cascarian context where sensitivities can be amplified – particularly in respect of issues relating to power and politics. As such, I take full responsibility for the recommendations made in this chapter, and no data sources have been revealed.

The recommendations made could be circulated to all interested stakeholders and might serve as a convenient framework for future planning within the AVES and the Education Department on Cascara Island. This research might be seen as a review process that has explored the challenges and achievements of the AVES in respect of the sustainable delivery of an adult and vocational curriculum on an isolated island. I hope that the findings will be of use to the AVES as it reinvents itself and plans its strategy to move forward. These recommendations might also be used as the basis for informing a revised and revamped AVES Strategy that will endorse a new curriculum and actively aim to both support adult and vocational learning and economic development in the interesting and fluid context of Cascara.

The recommendations in this section of the chapter are presented as follows:

- Pressing priorities for the AVES
- Integrating lifelong learning on Cascara Island
- Reconsidering contents and delivery of AVES learning opportunities
- The AVES staffing structure
- Quality and learning in respect of AVES courses
- Leading the AVES
- AVES Charging Policy and funding
- Advice, Information and Guidance
- Next steps for the AVES

Through these recommendations, I have aimed to offer practical inputs that are intended not only to guide the development of the Service and its supporting curriculum, but also pave the way for improved learning and the subsequent positive impact that this might have on the economy of Cascara³⁸.

4.1.1. Pressing Priorities for the AVES

In light of the current uncertainty in respect of the air access project, the overarching goal of the AVES should be to equip a significant minority of the working population with high level professional skills, a similar proportion with key technical specialist skills, and the majority of the population with intermediate level multi-skills. In doing this, Cascarians with newly acquired skills will be in a better position to multi-skill and engage in a wide variety of tasks. In mainland contexts such tasks would usually be performed by more specialist technical staff, and often such tasks might be shared among a number of different personnel. The human resource deficit on Cascara does not allow for this luxury. To achieve this the AVES will, with the support of all stakeholders, need to:

- make the best use of all available resources;
- adopt a flexible approach to curriculum delivery that is personalised and innovative;
- engage leadership and support from influential decision-makers across the spectrum of Cascara's community; and
- invest positively in the future by continuously and timeously responding to the island's ever changing needs.

In striving to reach these goals, the AVES should address the following five key priorities over the next few years:

- stabilise the delivery of NVQs;
- develop alternative vocational paths;
- expand the scope of key skills on offer under the AVES;

³⁸ It is at this point that the report may be separated from the body of the thesis for presentation to AVES stakeholders. When this is done, all pseudonyms used in the recommendations will be changed back to the original names and titles.

- centralise the development role of the AVES; and
- secure high level stakeholder support.

4.1.1.1. Stabilise the Delivery of NVQs

The AVES needs to pay particular attention to the regime of NVQ delivery on island as these awards are highly sought after, they have credibility locally and they have currency abroad. For these reasons, it is imperative that the system of NVQ delivery is stabilised and that efforts are concentrated where there is the most immediate potential and fewest alternative vocational paths currently available on the island. This stabilisation process should also involve the training of a local counterpart who will manage the delivery of NVQs locally; as well as the establishment of an NVQ Support Officer position that will contribute to the longer-term sustainability of NVQ provision on the island. This will not only reduce costs but contribute to the overall sustainability of NVQ provision on Cascara Island.

4.1.1.2. Develop Alternative Vocational Paths

The AVES needs to make the development of alternative vocational paths using e-learning and video conferencing a priority as this seems the only viable solution given the shortage in human resource and the island's insularity and isolation. One of the biggest challenges of offering quality and accredited learning on the island is associated with the cost of human resource – largely due to the time that it takes for skilled trainers to travel to and from the island. The AID have made additional funding available to facilitate the development of e-learning opportunities and further recommendations in this regard will be discussed in 4.1.3. Coupled with, but not restricted to the development of e-learning is the need to increase the curriculum options that relate to non-academic areas, particularly in the technical and trade focussed disciplines.

4.1.1.3. Expand the Scope of Key Skills on Offer under the AVES

The AVES should endeavour to expand the scope and delivery of key skills and other 'second chance courses' on offer to adults who contribute to the Cascarian

economy. Such an approach could assist in aiding and equipping a high proportion of the adult population to develop skills that are more basic in nature. This in turn, would contribute to these learners continuing to achieve intermediate level vocational qualifications and consequently they would be in a better position to contribute more effectively to the economy of the island. This will also be discussed more fully in 4.1.3.

4.1.1.4. Centralise the development role of the AVES

The AVES needs to develop its role as the Island's central learning resource and learning hub. In developing this approach, the AVES should make an effort to promote learning for its own sake. In the first instance, wide consultation should take place with stakeholders in both the public and private sectors, as well as with AVES clients, politicians and representatives of the AID. Such a process will highlight the need for a more centralised island-wide training Service and it might gain the necessary approvals and support to make this happen. A platform such as this will offer Cascarians the opportunity to engage in learning and development opportunities in areas of personal interest. Such an approach will not only enrich the lives of individuals who participate in such opportunities but it will benefit the economy and the whole of the Cascarian community.

4.1.1.5. Secure High Level Stakeholder Support

Linked to the need for stakeholder consultation, the AVES needs the support of the Cascarian Government and an advisory team that might be called the AVES Task Team. (This will be discussed in more detail as a separate recommendation in 4.1.6). High level support will assist with the strengthening of developing support systems, stabilising the AVES curriculum and will also promote a positive climate for an integrated Lifelong Learning Strategy on Cascara Island. The support that the AVES gets in the form of the Education Department and the Education Committee is insufficient to maintain the Service in its endeavours to provide training opportunities to the entire island. The implementation and delivery of an appropriate and relevant curriculum needs high level political support. The AVES Management Team and the Executive Education Officer need to collectively ensure that strong links exist with local and

overseas government (in the form of the AID) and that representatives from both the public and private sectors are actively communicated with and engaged in the direction that lifelong learning will take under the AVES.

Addressing these five broad key priority areas will aid the future sustainability of the AVES. Actioning them will ensure that future provision of the curriculum and its delivery under the Service will support economic and personal development.

4.1.2. Integrating Lifelong Learning on Cascara Island

To aid the AVES in meeting its goals and priorities, the assistance of local government and the AVES Task Team will be required. With the help of these decision-makers and the collaborated efforts of all of the stakeholders of the AVES, island resources should be brought together in an integrated Lifelong Learning Strategy that supports curriculum delivery, taking cognisance of the following issues:

4.1.2.1. Revisit the Original AVES Strategy

The existing AVES Strategy needs to be revisited in light of the ongoing air access developments on Cascara. What needs to be ascertained is what the implications of these will be in respect of the AVES and the curriculum that it offers. Additionally, the recommendations made as a result of this study might also be taken on board to complement and redirect the current Strategy and its supporting Operations Manual. It would be useful for local users, implementers and recipients of the Strategy to engage with the document, reflecting on what is working; what is not working; what is still relevant; what is no longer relevant; and what should be amended so as to improve the provision of learning on offer from the AVES.

4.1.2.2. Centralise Government Training Responsibilities on Cascara

In certain areas of adult and vocational development and training on Cascara, there are inconsistencies in respect of who, or which government department or private sector agency is responsible for training and development. An example of

this exists in the co-ordination of the Work Experience Programme and the Youth Training Schemes which are available to young people and school leavers. This programme is currently controlled by the benefits section of the Employment and Social Security Department, with the Executive Human Resources Officer approving appointments. The responsibility for this function should be placed entirely with the AVES and associated budgets and staffing should be redeployed to the Service. The associated staffing implications of this will be discussed in 4.1.4.

4.1.2.3. Tertiary Training Funding to be placed under the AVES

An additional area for consideration in respect of integrating the approach to adult learning on Cascara would be to place the responsibility of controlling the tertiary study bursary budget under the AVES. As the AVES conducts regular Training Needs Analyses and liaises with public sector departments and private sector businesses on an ongoing basis, it is in a strong position to inform what the current training needs and requirements on the island are. The responsibility for bursaries for local students to take degrees and other qualifications off island is currently held with the Scholarships Committee and falls within the remit of the Human Resources Department. This committee comprises membership of the Executive Education Officer, the Head of Cascara Community High School, the Executive Human Resources Officer and a representative from the Cascarian Development Bureau. The AVES Manager should be given representation on the committee and the financial aspects of bursary provision should be controlled by the AVES. This arrangement will aid the AVES in ensuring that training offered to Cascarians accords with the Strategic Planning Framework of the AVES in respect of both the needs of the island and the targeted training provision of the AVES. One final observation is that such an arrangement may also aid in shifting the balance of bursary provision more towards vocational learning as this area is under-represented when compared with the awarding of academic bursaries to young Cascarians who go to the metropole to engage in further education.

4.1.2.4. Extend the Provision of Formal Qualifications

In addition to the many locally offered unaccredited courses, the AVES should explore possibilities for the provision of formal qualifications that will develop the public and private sectors professionally. By adopting an approach that incorporates the similar collective learning and training needs of government departments, businesses and individuals, resource allocation will be utilised to maximum benefit. Such an approach will also allow for Cascarians to be collectively upskilled and will support the notion of mobility and portability across government departments and between the public and private sectors.

4.1.2.5. Consolidate working relationships with Cascara Community High School

Another recommendation in respect of integrating lifelong learning on Cascara Island relates to the planning and provision of the full post-16 curriculum at Cascara Community High School (CCHS). As the post-16 curriculum at CCHS falls under the AVES umbrella, the working relationship and partnership between the AVES and CCHS needs to become closer and more robust. The starting point for achieving this would be to give the AVES NVQ and Quality Assurance Co-ordinator some sort of representation within the school in respect of the curriculum and its provision at this level. In addition to this, the appointment of two additional AVES Co-ordinators to oversee learning in the realm of technical and trades and in work placement and youth trainee development should be considered. This will be discussed in 4.1.4. These appointments will aid in supporting the provision of the curriculum at CCHS, particularly in respect of assessment and guidance; and in the workplace for assessment, quality assurance and support.

4.1.3. Reconsider Content and Delivery of AVES Learning Opportunities

To date, the AVES has placed great emphasis on the credibility associated with internationally recognised and validated qualifications. Alongside this, it has also complemented these with locally delivered short courses that motivate, interest or upskill the various categories of adult learners who engage in learning opportunities on offer under the AVES. This approach seems appropriate given

the Cascarian context but the future pattern of learning provision should be planned and based on a model that is fit and appropriate for the Cascarian context. In striving to achieve this for courses and qualifications included in its curriculum, the AVES should consider the following issues that relate to content and delivery:

4.1.3.1. Aid the Development of Technical Skills that reflect Economic and Social needs

Following the closure of the island's Trade School in the 1980s and the general gap in the provision of adult learning and development until the establishment of the AVES, the AVES should focus on developing technical skills which reflect Cascara's forecasted economic and social needs across both the public and private sectors. A start would be to offer this learning at intermediate and supervisory levels in sectors such as: agriculture; business; finance; customer services; construction (and its various sub-sectors including electrical installation and plumbing); health and social care; motor vehicles and automotive engineering; and hospitality. These are essentially already to some extent the focus under the AVES Curriculum but there is scope to grow this provision. Increased partnership working with Cascara Community High School will also drive this process forward.

4.1.3.2. Develop Apprenticeship models that are fit for Cascara

The experience of attempting to implement full metropole accredited apprenticeships under the AVES AID Development Aid project on Cascara has proven that the island does not yet have the infrastructure to fully manage and support these awards. It would therefore seem appropriate that a local model of apprenticeship provision be developed which will not only solve the immediate issue of giving young Cascarians the opportunity to engage in appropriate learning programmes but it will also provide a platform for the AVES to slowly develop the human resource infrastructure needed to support the accredited versions of such learning programmes. The local apprenticeship models would be implemented exactly as those in the metropole with the structure, content and assessment done using the documentation and materials prescribed by the

awarding body in the metropole. The only difference, for the meantime, would be that completion would not culminate in an overseas accredited qualification. This is not ideal but it does provide a platform for a rigorous and structured learning programme as well as the opportunity for the NVQ Centre under the AVES to use the local model as a means by which to train staff and to establish appropriate links and infrastructures that will lead to accredited provision in the future.

4.1.3.3. Improve the Cost-Effectiveness of NVQ Provision

The AVES needs to broaden and strengthen the assessor and internal verifier infrastructure under the AVES NVQ Centre. The fragility of the centre in respect of these vital components is of great concern to the overseas awarding bodies. One way of doing this might be to waive charges for the training of assessors and verifiers – particularly for those from the private sector, who currently have to pay for participation while those from public sector do not. (The issue of fees and charging will be discussed more fully in 4.1.7). In addition to this additional assessors and verifiers might be more encouraged to participate in the NVQ process if part-time salaries were more commensurate with their responsibilities. The consensus amongst stakeholders is that AVES rates for assessment and verification need to be increased.

This practice would require that the AVES maintain relationships with the overseas awarding bodies with which it currently works. An increased pool of assessors and verifiers will aid in the ability of the AVES to offer overseas accredited apprenticeships locally. This will take time but will not hinder the Service from continuing to develop strong work-based NVQs in the relevant sectors.

Funding incentives need to be provided to local employers to take on apprentices and in so doing they will support training and development in their respective fields. This will apply particularly to the private sector and if registration and participation fees are waived, it would follow that NVQ enrolments might improve. The effect of these should be two-fold: to reduce the frequency of external verification visits by the awarding bodies and to spread the costs of the NVQ

infrastructure over a wider body of students, assessors and verifiers thus reducing the unit cost of NVQ delivery.

4.1.3.4. Establish Options for Distance and e-learning

As the AID have funded the infrastructure for increased bandwidth that will support distance and e-learning, the AVES should explore and put in place, as soon as possible, credible learning opportunities that support skills development on the island. Cascara Community High School has already established links with awarding bodies and providers of learning by e-conferencing in the metropole. It would be logical for the AVES to extend and develop these relationships to include appropriate academic and vocational learning opportunities. In respect of electronic and distance e-learning, I would suggest that the AVES:

- identify a core curriculum that can be offered consistently;
- use a blended approach with video-conferencing, online materials, tutor support via email and facilitator support during all timetabled lessons;
- identify the key providers of further and continuing education which Cascara can use for the forthcoming 5 years;
- identify ways of working to maximise support to facilitators and learners via working practices under the AVES that extend to CCHS; and
- improve access to IT facilities for facilitators and all AVES learners.

There are many traditional learning opportunities available through distance learning organisations based in the metropole that might be considered by the AVES. Many distance learning organisations offer courses in: the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE); International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE); and AS/A2. These organisations offer a range of learning modes that include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- Textbook only, no tutor support
- Textbook and tutor support
- Video Conferencing
- Online materials, no tutor support

4.1.3.5. Reconsider the Priority of Tourism Training

Although tourism is still a necessary economic activity on the island, the reality is that it is not going to grow rapidly until there is any form of access development on Cascara – whether this be by air or improved sea access. It is important that this area of provision remain in the AVES Curriculum but that it be treated, along with other sectoral training previously identified as priorities in the context of the then anticipated airport, as having a lower priority for the time being. This should be reviewed once a final access announcement has been made by the AID. In the interim, most of the tourism training should be covered under the Customer Service umbrella on offer by the AVES.

4.1.3.6. Develop the range of Accredited and Unaccredited Learning Opportunities on offer

The AVES should also consider developing the range of both the accredited and unaccredited courses that it offers. Such a move has both financial and practical implications but the developments should be planned with the following in mind: the learning needs of the island's adults; the availability of resources; and the demand that might exist for new learning opportunities.

Where possible, courses should be offered in coherent modules that are worthwhile individually but that can be grouped together to enable candidates to gain qualifications over a convenient period of time. This will aid in improving the status and credibility of learning and subsequent certification of opportunities under the AVES.

As South Africa (SA) is closer in proximity to Cascara than the metropole, the AVES should consider options for institution-based courses, on-line courses and most especially visiting teams of specialist trainers from this country. With the favourable exchange rate of SA to that of Cascara, it might prove worthwhile and more cost effective to source training providers from SA.

4.1.3.7. A Revised and Updated AVES Curriculum

The aforementioned recommendations suggest a need for a revised curricular framework. This framework is cognisant of the current socio-economic climate in respect of air access to Cascara. The following curriculum categories are recommended:

- i. Continuing and Further Education Opportunities
- ii. Training in Local Crafts and Culture
- iii. Training in Tourism and Customer Care
- iv. Training and Retraining to aid Work-Based Efficiency
- v. Sports and Leisure Learning Opportunities and Activities
- vi. IT Training and Distance Learning Opportunities
- vii. Foundational Vocational Training at Cascara Community High School (CCHS)
- viii. Work-Based Assessment through National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)
- ix. Training related to Natural Resources
- x. Local Trades Training
- xi. Work Experience and Youth Training Scheme
- xii. Learning Focussed on Personal Interests

These categories, detailed in Appendix 25, are not mutually exclusive and some learning opportunities might be classifiable into two or more of the curricular areas. For each curricular category the following has been stated: aim of the category of learning; the curricular areas identified to be on offer under this category; and who should be the target learning audience for this category. These curricular categories incorporate all aspects of learning, and encompass content (and in some instances approaches) that are deemed relevant and important to the island's current socio-economic positioning. This list of curricular categories also highlights areas of current priority and political importance.

What is of utmost importance is that the curriculum on offer should aim to serve both the public and private sectors and it should provide equality of access to learning and development. Wherever possible, the AVES should seek to develop

collaborative participation between departments, private sector companies and individual members of the public. A Training Needs Analysis (TNA) should continue to be conducted every two years as this will keep the learning opportunities on offer relevant and appropriate. Given the poor participation of the private sector in the previous TNA it is imperative that they are actively encouraged to participate in future analyses as this will better inform changes to the AVES Curriculum and subsequently benefit the economy of the island. As much of the AVES clientele are students at Cascara Community High School, it is important that these students are also included in the TNA exercise.

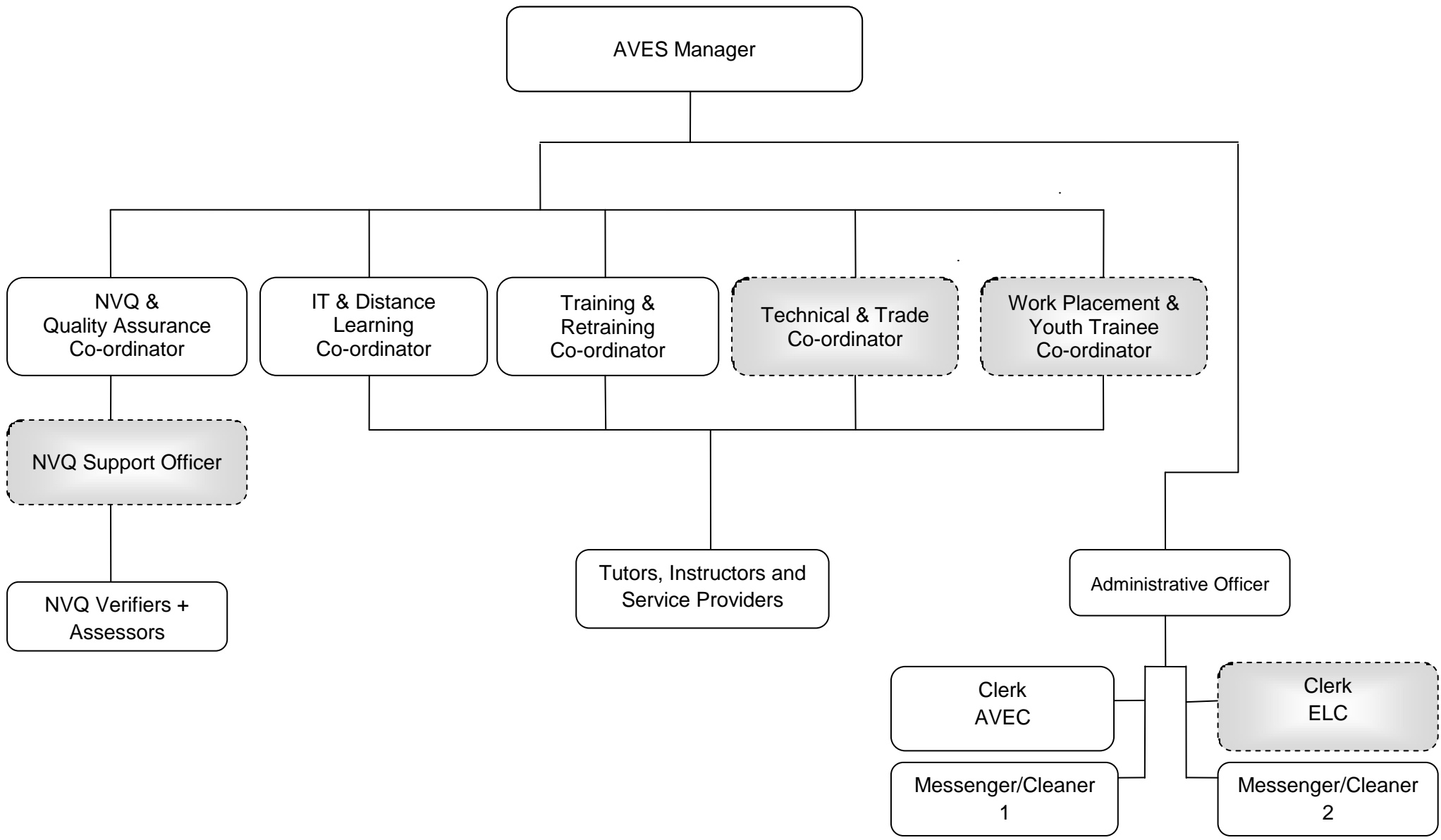
It must be remembered that this framework, as with the ever-changing Cascarian landscape, should constantly evolve to meet needs as they change and arise.

4.1.4. The AVES Staffing Structure

If the AVES is to extend the scope of the curriculum that it offers as well as take on additional responsibilities that are currently managed and co-ordinated by other government departments, this will have an impact on the AVES staffing structure. Organogram 2 summarises the current and suggested staffing structure with the associated reporting lines. The newly suggested AVES posts that need to be created or transferred from other departments to the AVES are shown in grey scale. A discussion on these recommendations follows:

Firstly, it would be wise that the titles of the current AVES Co-ordinators are changed to more fully represent the actual functions that these co-ordinators carry out in respect of their AVES duties. To this end, the following two posts should be renamed as follows: the post of *Community Learning Co-ordinator* should be renamed as *Training and Retraining Co-ordinator*; and the post of *IT Co-ordinator* should be renamed as *IT and Distance Learning Co-ordinator*. The posts of NVQ and Quality Assurance Co-ordinator is appropriately named.

To support the longer-term sustainability of NVQ provision on Cascara, a new post to support the NVQ and Quality Assurance Officer should be established within the Service. This could be named that of NVQ Support Officer.



Organogram 2: Current and suggested AVES Staffing Structure

[Key: AVEC – Adult & Vocational Education Centre; ELC – Education Learning Centre]

To support the development of local trades training and to co-ordinate the implementation and institutionalisation of locally offered apprenticeships a new post should be established to primarily support the following areas of the proposed curriculum:

- the provision of training in Local Crafts and Culture;
- the provision of training related to Natural Resources: Agriculture, Farming, Fishing and Conservation; and
- the provision of Local Trades training.

Such a position might be named *Technical and Trades Co-ordinator*. This co-ordinator will need to work closely with the NVQ and Quality Assurance Co-ordinator in establishing a local framework for apprenticeship delivery that will lay the foundations for future accredited provision in these areas.

In respect of centralising the co-ordination of Work Experience Placements and Youth Training Schemes under the AVES; an officer currently employed within the Employment and Social Security Department could be redeployed to the AVES to take up the new post of *Work Placement and Youth Trainee Co-ordinator*. Centralising this function under the AVES will streamline the logistical and budgetary processes associated with the work experience and youth trainee functions.

The Work Placement and Youth Trainee Co-ordinator should work very closely with the Technical and Trades Co-ordinator in offering and developing work-placement and youth trainee opportunities that provide a blend of work-based experiential learning as well as the opportunity to participate in formal learning programmes. Some of the youth and work placements might be of a technical and trade nature – in which case there will be a need to work with the Technical and Trades Co-ordinator, while others might fall outside of this area and encompass learning opportunities in other areas of the curriculum. What is important is that the Work Placement and Youth Trainee Co-ordinator play a mentoring and supportive role in respect of learners who engage in these schemes, so that they are supported as they make the transition from the formal schooling sector into the world of work.

The AVES is formally established at the Adult and Vocational Education Centre (AVEC), but it also operates at the Education Learning Centre (ELC), on adjacent premises. The expansion into the ELC has been relatively *ad hoc* and has evolved as needs for the expansion have arisen. The AVEC is supported by an Administration Officer, an office Clerk and a Messenger Cleaner but such support does not exist at the ELC where only a Messenger Cleaner is in post. An office Clerk should also be appointed at the ELC to support the logistical and administrative functions of the AVES training that takes place there.

Furthermore, the Education Officer for Primary and the Education Officer for Teacher Training (who are both based at the ELC) might also benefit from administrative support that such a clerk may be able to offer.

4.1.5. Quality and Learning in respect of AVES Courses

One of the biggest areas of criticism of the AVES is that of the quality of some of the learning provision, and more specifically the content of certain of the local courses on offer. To address this and to raise the status and credibility of the opportunities on offer under the Service, the AVES needs to put quality processes and procedures into place. Accredited courses such as the NVQs and VRQs implemented under the guidelines set out by overseas awarding bodies have stringent and rigorous quality assurance processes attached to them. What is important now is that the AVES moves towards putting internal quality assurance processes in place.

The section on Quality Assurance in the AVES Operations Manual highlights the need for internal quality assurance, but given the growth of the Service more rigour needs to be placed on assessing the quality aspects of learning under the Service.

The AVES needs to start considering measurable ways of knowing and understanding what is being covered – both in content and methodology – in all of the learning opportunities offered under its umbrella. Traditional course evaluations are currently being used and these are beneficial use to the Service but what is required now, is a system of internal quality control that makes what is on offer fair and meaningful, making all involved in the process accountable.

Curriculum Area	Candidates		Curriculum		Tutors/Assessors/ Internal Verifiers
	Internal Assessment and moderation	External Assessment and moderation	Pre delivery	Post delivery	
1. Continuing and Further Education Opportunities	Accredited Programmes – Formal assessment and testing via examination	Externally marked and moderated by awarding/accrediting bodies	Standardisation by AVES management	Learner evaluation Tutor evaluation	Learner evaluation Observation/assessment of tutors
2. Training in Local Crafts	Non accredited/assessed programmes – Portfolio of work (optional) Record of achievement sheet (optional) Sampling by nominated AVES Co-ordinators	N/A	Standardisation by AVES management	Learner evaluation Tutor evaluation	Learner evaluation Observation/assessment of tutors
3. The Provision of Training in Tourism and Customer Care	Non accredited – Record of attendance and/or Portfolio of work assessed by tutor Record of achievement sheet Accredited – Formal assessments and testing via examination Sampling by nominated AVES Co-ordinators	N/A Moderation by awarding body	Standardisation by AVES management	Learner evaluation Tutor evaluation	Learner evaluation Observation/assessment of tutors

Table 19: Proposed Quality Assurance Framework (Part 1 of 4)

Curriculum Area	Candidates		Curriculum		Tutors/Assessors/ Internal Verifiers
	Internal Assessment and moderation	External Assessment and moderation	Pre delivery	Post delivery	
4. The Opportunity for Training and Retraining to aid Work-Based Efficiency	<p>Non accredited – Record of attendance and/or Portfolio of work assessed by tutor Record of achievement sheet</p> <p>Accredited – Formal assessments and testing via examination</p> <p>Sampling by nominated AVES Co-ordinators</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Moderation by awarding body</p>	Standardisation by AVES management	<p>Learner evaluation</p> <p>Tutor evaluation</p>	Learner evaluation Observation/assessment of tutors
5. Sports and Leisure Learning Opportunities and Activities	Non-assessed, unless a formal course through a distance learning organisation – see 6.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Learner evaluation
6. IT Training and Distance Learning Opportunities	<p>Locally accredited/assessed programmes – Record of attendance and/or Portfolio of work assessed by tutor Record of achievement sheet</p> <p>Accredited programmes – Marked online</p> <p>Sampling by nominated AVES Co-ordinators</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Moderated by awarding or examining body/provider.</p>	Standardisation by AVES management	<p>Learner evaluation</p> <p>Tutor evaluation</p>	Learner evaluation Observation/assessment of tutors

Table 19: Proposed Quality Assurance Framework (Part 2 of 4)

Curriculum Area	Candidates		Curriculum		Tutors/Assessors/ Internal Verifiers
	Internal Assessment and moderation	External Assessment and moderation	Pre delivery	Post delivery	
7. The Provision of Foundational Vocational Training at Cascara Community High School	Formative and summative assessment via portfolio based around projects, practical assignments, written questions, online testing. Portfolios sampled by internal verifiers according to Centre strategy and plans.	External Verifier monitors QAC and IV practices every 6 – 12 months (via visit or remotely) and samples assessment practice and decisions via candidate portfolios.	QAC meets with Deputy Head Curriculum, IV and Director of Learning at CCHS to ensure relevancy to curriculum needs at KS4/5		Director of Learning, IV and QAC monitor practice via Observation/assessment of tutors/instructors/ assessors Sampling portfolios Standardisation activities CPD records Candidate feedback Learner evaluation
8. The Provision of Work-Based Assessment through NVQs	Accredited Programmes - Formative and summative assessment by A1 assessors via portfolio of evidence using a range of assessment methods. Portfolios sampled by internal verifiers according to Centre strategy and plans.	External Verifier monitors QAC and IV practices every 6 – 12 months (via visit or remotely) and samples assessment practice and decisions via candidate portfolios.	QAC receives updates from awarding bodies, and liaises with IVs. Heads of Departments to ensure relevancy of provision Learner evaluation		QAC and IVs monitor practice via Observation of assessors/IVs Sampling portfolios Standardisation activities Candidate interviews
9. The Provision of Training in Natural Resources: Agriculture, Farming and Fishing	Short courses Portfolio of work Record of achievement sheet Sampling by nominated AVES Co-ordinators	If accredited moderation by awarding body	Standardisation by AVES management	Learner evaluation Tutor evaluation	Learner evaluation Observation/assessment of tutors

Table 19: Proposed Quality Assurance Framework (Part 3 of 4)

Curriculum Area	Candidates		Curriculum		Tutors/Assessors/ Internal Verifiers
	Internal Assessment and moderation	External Assessment and moderation	Pre delivery	Post delivery	
10. Local Trades Training - Apprenticeships Short courses	Apprenticeships 12 – 18 months Accredited and non accredited - portfolio of evidence Short courses Portfolio of evidence Record of achievement sheet Sampling by nominated AVES Co-ordinators	If NVQ/VRQ accredited – see 4.6 If accredited moderation by awarding body	Standardisation by AVES management	Learner evaluation Tutor evaluation	Learner evaluation Observation/assessment of tutors
11. The Facilitation of a Work Experience and Youth Training Scheme (based on formal experiential learning)	Depends on learning route – NVQ, short courses, local delivery – see above Sampling depending on learning route	Depends on learning route e.g. if NVQ externally verified.	Standardisation by AVES management	Learner evaluation Feedback from Managers	Depends on learning route
12. The Opportunity to engage in Learning Focussed on Personal Interests	Depends on learning route – accredited/assessed or non accredited/assessed Sampling depending on learning route	Depends on learning route	Standardisation by AVES mgt	Learner evaluation Tutor evaluation	Learner evaluation Observation/assessment of tutors, depending on learning route
Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Training Needs Analysis (TNA) will inform curriculum content Successfully completed portfolios of work will result in Certificate of Achievement AVES Task Group to monitor curriculum on an annual basis in conjunction with SHG Strategic Objectives and TNA 					

Table 19: Proposed Quality Assurance Framework (Part 4 of 4)

A Quality Assurance framework, aligned to the suggested curricular framework is shown in Table 19. This framework offers suggestions in respect of assessment and monitoring across all of the twelve curricular areas that emerged from the data. This framework makes recommendations on how learning opportunities on offer in each curricular category should – or could – be assessed or whether, as in some cases, they should be assessed at all. The framework distinguishes between the processes and need for both internal and external assessment. It also incorporates the need for learners to have a voice in the assessment and monitoring process. The framework also aims to lay down clear criteria so as to inform how relevant and useful the curriculum on offer is in serving the needs of the island. Further to The framework also ensures that tutors and the quality of tutoring are monitored by learners and peers.

It is important to keep in mind that this framework is a starting point – the contents should be adapted and updated as required. In the first instance a lot of responsibility for quality in learning will rest with the AVES Manager and the AVES Co-ordinators as the AVES management team. As the process of quality assurance becomes embedded over time, the AVES needs to work towards establishing a quality assurance body on the island that will monitor the quality issues that relate to learning under the Service. This will need to involve working across the public and private sectors and will also require the engagement of highly skilled and suitably experienced personnel. This might be a function of the AVES Task which will be discussed in 4.1.6.

4.1.6. Leading the AVES Strategy

The success of the AVES will depend on the full spectrum of stakeholders – both those formally and those informally involved with the AVES. The AVES Council that was proposed as part of the original Strategy has never come into being and this would seem to be as a result of there not being a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of the council and those of the Education Committee. A formal body that brings together leaders from both the government and the private sector needs to be established. Such a body might be named the AVES Task Team with the function of steering the development of lifelong

learning on Cascara Island. The Team should comprise members of both the public and private sectors.

The AVES Task Team should have as its remit the function of briefing and advising AVES stakeholders regarding the continued development of the AVES Curriculum – with policy issues remaining the responsibility of the Education Committee. The AVES Task Team should also work closely with the Cascarian Government, the Education Committee, the AID and other key stakeholders to ensure that recommendations are acceptable to all parties. See Appendix 26 for draft Terms of Reference that suggest what the Purpose; Scope of Work; Main Tasks; and Composition of the proposed AVES Task Team might comprise.

The membership of the AVES Task Team should be reviewed at the end of its first year of operation to see if there is a continuing need for it. If there is, stakeholders should assess how it might best be developed to suit the economic and personal needs of the island and its people so as to ensure sustainable growth.

The support of the proposed AVES Task Team, along with other support structures such as the AID, local government, the Education Committee, the Education Senior Management Team and the AVES Management Team will ensure improved learning provision under the Service. Such support also has the potential to aid the Service in reaching many of the recommendations that have emerged from my study.

4.1.7. AVES Charging Policy and Funding

The AVES is critical to the economic and social development of Cascara Island and has the potential to positively contribute to the economic and social fabric of the island. With or without an airport the AVES has the potential to make a significant difference.

The recurrent and project funding made available through the AID since the establishment of the AVES in 2006 has enabled the AVES to make a promising start. The foundations have been laid for an expanded and improved Service that

will benefit the people of Cascara. To continue this good work the Cascarian Government and the AID should be ready to continually support the expansion of learning provision under the AVES by considering the following:

4.1.7.1. Centralising Training and Budgets

To meet the immediate and dire shortage of people with trades and technical skills, funding streams needs to be available to support the establishment of a local 'fit for Cascara' apprenticeship scheme. The young people who could participate in these programmes would otherwise have been entitled to take part in youth training schemes, so funding for such programmes should already exist. Such activity would support the suggestions to redeploy an officer and the associated budgets from the Employment and Social Security Department to facilitate the new AVES post of Work Placement and Youth Trainee Co-ordinator. This should, in principle, be sufficient to cover much of the training that needs to be done. To further support this, there should be offsetting savings from the accredited apprenticeship scheme that has not been successfully introduced under the AVES AID Development Aid Project.

By setting an example as the island's leading entry-to-employment employer, funding can be more effectively used under the AVES. This might, for example, involve each government department and each of the larger private sector companies offering at least one place for a Cascarian apprentice. The economic benefits of such an arrangement would be immeasurable and would aid in shifting some of the responsibility of training and development from the AVES to island employers. Improvements in efficiency could also be achieved if there were reductions in bureaucracy and paper work processes. A single control regime and a set of targets and key performance indicators for the AVES should be agreed upon. These should include the AVES's core funding in respect of the recurrent monies it receives from the Cascara Government as well as the funding currently set aside under the AVES AID Development Aid Project.

4.1.7.2. Charging for Participation in Learning

One of the biggest frustrations of the private sector relates to the fact that they have to pay for participation in AVES learning activities, while the public sector does not. The revenue collected by the AVES in the last financial year amounted to less than 1% of the Service's total recurrent budget and the administrative functions associated with fee collection are not an effective use of resource – both human and physical. To this end, there was overwhelming support that the AVES should abolish charging for all advertised courses. Obviously budget constraints would not allow for free training in any area so requested by AVES learners.

The AVES Charging Policy should state that learning provision in advertised courses will be offered at no charge but that penalty charges would apply if learners reserve spaces and fail to take them up; or if learners register for a course and drop out during the course of the programme. The latter of these two penalty charges can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in exceptional circumstances. A no charge approach will regain the confidence of the private sector and it will also address the issue of equality of access to learning opportunities for both individuals and organisations. A move away from a fees-based charging approach to a penalty-based policy, should:

- improve relations between the AVES and the private sector;
- increase take-up of programmes;
- promote retention and completion;
- reduce early withdrawal; and
- encourage learner motivation.

The cost of administering an auditable system far outweighs the anticipated income generation – which has not been substantial (or supportive of sustainability) by any accounts since the introduction of the original AVES Charging Policy in 2007. See Appendix 27 for draft recommendations in respect of the structure and contents of a revised Charging Policy for the AVES. This should be seen as a draft document for further development.

4.1.8. Information, Advice and Guidance

Developing and delivering programmes to match learner needs and aspirations is at the core of an effective and appropriate learning system. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that learners do not become disaffected while undertaking learning because of the inappropriateness of the learning opportunities on offer as this can hinder learning progress and it can also have negative implications on the economy that the upskilled learners are intended to serve. Consequently, it is imperative that learners have the opportunity to enter programmes that match their hopes, desires and ambitions. These programmes need to be relevant in terms of content and should be pitched at the correct level of learning. It is important to remember that many potential learners will not be totally aware of their needs and they will have limited understanding of the proffered curriculum. This might result in them selecting programmes of learning that are unsuitable to them.

In order to overcome these difficulties in respect of learning choices; and to ensure that learners do not become disaffected with learning, the AVES should set up a system that offers Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) to prospective AVES learners. A service such as this could also be extended to offer careers advice or incorporate a means by which present learning opportunities and activities are made known to potential learners. The current 'Job Shop' that falls under the Employment and Social Security Department (ESSD) has the potential to grow into an IAG Centre. This supports the recommendation for a *Work Placement and Youth Trainee Co-ordinator* to be redeployed from the ESSD to the AVES. This co-ordinator could also have, as part of his/her remit, the responsibility of providing IAG to aspirant AVES learners. This service should be face-to-face, user friendly and consistent in terms of approach and availability, i.e. prospective learners should be able to make appointments which are timetabled over a period of time. Although this proposed IAG service would be permanently located at the Adult and Vocational Education Centre, occasional outreach delivery at Cascara Community High School and within the community should be included wherever practicable and possible.

4.1.9. Next Steps for the AVES

I now present what should be the next steps for the AVES on Cascara. As with any change, development and growth opportunity there needs to be a staggered and incremental approach to the implementation of these recommendations. This is particularly pertinent within the context of the AVES on Cascara where there has already been so much change and activity to date. Therefore, as a starting point the AVES – with the support and agreement of the Cascarian Government and the AID – should in the short-term aim to achieve the following:

- redesign the AVES AID Development AID Project;
- develop a marketing plan; and
- relaunch the AVES Strategy to bring fresh confidence and rigour to the AVES Curriculum.

4.1.9.1. Redesign the AVES AID Development Aid Project

The AVES decision-makers and the AVES Management, in consultation with clients of the AVES, need to work towards redesigning the contents and outputs of the current AVES AID Development Aid Project:

Component 1: The introduction of accredited training programmes equivalent to Apprenticeship Awards through City & Guilds (C & G)

As they currently stand, some of the outputs of the project are not achievable given current available resource on the island. In respect of apprenticeships, there is insufficient infrastructure in the form of assessors and verifiers to meet the requirements of the awarding bodies and full metropole awarded apprenticeships will not be implementable on the island in the foreseeable future. The resources allocated to this model, could be used to implement locally accredited apprenticeships. This would, in turn, aid in building local capacity so that, in time, accredited apprenticeships become viable for the AVES and Cascara. At present, valuable funding is being spent on visiting external verifiers who sanction the centre because it cannot meet quality requirements of the awarding body. In essence, the AVES is paying service providers to be told that

they are falling short of the necessary awarding body requirements. The difficulty lies in the fact that the AVES is not able to address these issues due to human resource limitations.

Component 2: The establishment of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) or an international equivalent and the introduction of a NVQ in Construction

The area of Construction and Health and Safety is the component of the AVES AID Development Aid Project where the least progress has been made to date. There are two alternatives available to the AVES: firstly, working with the Municipal Services Department – a local equivalent of the Health and Safety Card Scheme could be implemented. This is something that has effectively been achieved on the Falkland Islands. The second option would be to channel the allocated funding into a different curricular area such as fishing, conservation, agriculture or any of the other new curricular areas proposed in the curricular framework. What is important is that funding is used to make a meaningful and tangible difference to the people and economy of Cascara Island.

Component 3: The development of a bank of part-time, trained work skills and craft skills instructors through the delivery of a series of instructional technique programmes

The approach used in respect of this component of the AVES AID Development AID Project is complimentary to the mission of the AVES in that it offers the AVES flexibility in meeting training and skills needs of varying sectors on the island. Ensuring that all training interventions conducted under this component comprise a rigorous train-the-trainer component will aid the sustainability of the interventions. This approach also provides a good vehicle for cascading skills, even after visiting trainers have left the island. This component of the project should remain as it is.

Component 4: The introduction of an NVQ in Business and Administration at Level 4

Funding allocated to the NVQ in Business Administration at Level 4 would be best channelled into a different curricular area of the proposed curricular framework. There is insufficient capacity on island to assess or verify this award internally. This component, as it currently stands, needs to be written out of the AVES AID Development Aid Project. This funding could be better utilised in aiming to improve the lives of Cascarians and the economy of Cascara Island.

Once AVES decision-makers and AVES Management have agreed new project contents for the AVES AID Development Aid Project, these need to be written into the Logical Model format provided by the AID and submitted to the AID through the Executive Development Officer for approval.

4.1.9.2. Develop a Promotional and Marketing Plan

Another key area for immediate action by the AVES is the development of a promotional and marketing plan that communicates the AVES Curriculum and the Strategy to the people of Cascara. Such a plan will aid the AVES in achieving the following marketing aims:

- raising the profile of the AVES and adult and vocational education throughout Cascara Island;
- highlighting the successes of the AVES to date;
- achieving the targets for the recruitment of learners; and
- attracting stakeholders who will aid in determining the future direction of the AVES

It should also be remembered that the promotion of AVES is not solely the responsibility of senior management, but of every staff member – management, administrative staff, tutors and trainers. The efforts of everybody are equally important in how the Service is perceived by the people of Cascara.

Stakeholders of the AVES must note that good communication will determine the success of the promotion. Whether it is communication between staff and

students; between colleagues; or with a visitor to the Adult and Vocational Education Centre – the impression given is as important a promotional message as any professionally produced marketing literature.

By keeping all stakeholders informed, duplication of effort can be removed; help can be given when required and the promotion of the Service enhanced through the combined effort of all involved in the process. This is particularly important in the Cascarian context where resources are limited. The AVES should embark on a promotions strategy that will:

- generate product and image awareness in the general market places on the island;
- raise awareness to the local business and government sectors of the training opportunities offered by the AVES; and
- develop a multimedia approach to promotion by developing appropriate messages and selecting relevant media for identified target markets.

In striving to achieve this, the AVES should continue to produce corporate promotional materials such as course leaflets; posters and continually update the website of the Service. The AVES prospectus listing and detailing all learning programmes has not been updated since 2007 and this should be updated as soon as possible. The same applies to the student handbook, which was also last updated in September 2007.

While the AVES does on a weekly basis advertise learning opportunities and courses in the two local media, these media could be further utilised to the benefit of the AVES. By using radio for advertising and local television to air short television programmes that advertise available AVES learning opportunities, the Service could share more of its successes with the general public. The impact of radio advertising could be far reaching as Cascarians living abroad are now able to audio stream local radio stations via the Internet. Finally, there is a great need for effective monitoring to be in place for virtually any management process that the AVES develops and implements. The outcomes of every promotion activity carried out by AVES should be monitored and analysed so as to inform future campaigns.

4.1.9.3. Relaunch the AVES Strategy

The public perceptions of the AVES are varied – some stakeholders are very complimentary of the AVES, while others are critical. Keeping all stakeholders happy is not easily achieved. It is therefore of vital importance that the successes and progress of the AVES are documented and made public.

As part of an initial promotional and marketing plan, the AVES should co-ordinate arrangements to relaunch its Strategy and introduce a new and updated curriculum. This should not constitute a rebranding of the AVES as the name, the logo and the supporting strap lines are well entrenched on Cascara.

As part of the relaunch, the AVES mission which focuses mostly on the training and upskilling of Cascarians to support the economy of the island should be revisited. The AVES should adopt the mission and vision statements of the Education Department under which it falls as these are broader in scope; consider the needs of individuals; and support the notion of lifelong learning. The mission of the Education Department is to: “To inspire generations to undertake a life long voyage of learning and discovery by providing an effective and efficient education programme”; while the vision states: “We will inspire, motivate and develop individuals as we deliver quality, lifelong learning experiences that will enable learners to achieve their full potential and hence make a valuable contribution to our island”. A relaunch of the AVES Strategy might also highlight the following values that underpin the notion of lifelong learning:

- learning is a life-long process;
- it is important to recognise the value of teaching and learning at all levels and from all sources: elders, families, youth, schools, workplaces, community learning centres; and apprenticeship, college and university programmes;
- equal opportunity and equal access across the island is fundamental to the success of the Strategy;
- every individual has a right to learn; and

- learning opportunities should be of an appropriate and acceptable quality.

Should a relaunch be planned for the Service, this would be best timed to coincide with the new academic year in September³⁹.

I now offer my suggestions for future research.

4.2. SUGGESTED AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this study I have endeavoured to understand the challenges associated with implementing and sustaining an adult and vocational education curriculum on an isolated island. There are various other areas that I deem pertinent to broadening our understanding of the sustainable delivery of an adult and vocational curriculum in places that are isolated or that share similar colonial histories to that of Cascara. I recommend the topics that follow as possible areas for further research.

In the area of curriculum provision, the process that I undertook, highlighted that there was a literature gap in the area of quality assurance and how this can effectively be implemented and monitored to ensure credible learning in the framework of adult and vocational learning in an isolated context. My data also guided me to ponder on how the workplace can be effectively used as a learning environment to promote curriculum sustainability.

In considering the relationship of curriculum in respect of the workforce and the economy, the literature would benefit from a study that explored the best method of shifting the balance in economic power from the public sector towards the private sector in small aid dependent territories such as Cascara. As I became immersed in my study, I thought more about how strategies and models might be developed to aid the improvement of the 'economic motivation' of learners who enrol for adult learning classes. Further research in this area could benefit adult learning initiatives the world over.

³⁹ It is at this point that the stand-alone report for circulation to AVES stakeholders will end.

In deliberating over the relationships that exist between curriculum sustainability and change, I realised that change factors are very diverse in different change contexts. The Cascarian context proved to be very unique and I can only surmise that this would be the case in other contexts. I would therefore suggest that the literature could be enhanced by an exploration into what factors impact on curriculum sustainability in any given change context. My research findings in relation to human capacity development on Cascara also perplexed me. I was particularly interested in how human capacity could be developed given the scarcity of human resource and also in how training of a good quality could be provided in niche areas. I would therefore suggest that further research into how capacity is best developed to support sustainability in small island contexts would be very useful.

With regards to the notion of islands, insularity and isolation – I found the literature quite limited in this area. To further explore my main research question, I would recommend that studies of how relevant and meaningful learning opportunities can be implemented and sustained in remote island communities would robustly add to the body of literature. My study has provided some insights in this area, but the successes and challenges faced by other island contexts would benefit curriculum implementation in similar change contexts. In respect of curriculum delivery in an isolated context, an investigation into what modes of curriculum delivery are most suitable in insular and isolated contexts would be very useful at a practical and implementation level. Such an investigation might also specifically explore if computer-based distance learning is an effective means of providing learning opportunity in remote contexts.

Whilst much literature exists on the effects of colonialism, I was not able to source too much literature on the legacy of colonialism and dependency in isolated island contexts. Therefore, with regards to the colonial effects of learning and education, I would suggest that there is a need for further investigation into what the implications of a colonial legacy are on the uptake of adult and vocational learning opportunities in aid dependent territories. Another area that perplexed me was that of the extent to which the culture of the metropole was a hindrance to the learning experience in isolated and dependent territories. I was

unable to locate much literature in this area and feel that this would be a very worthwhile contribution.

Finally, in reflecting on the AVES and Cascara, there are still many questions that remain unanswered. Research in the following areas might prove to be useful to the Cascarian context:

- How will air access impact on the economy and the people of Cascara Island?
- How do Cascarians perceive the metropole, the AID and visiting expatriate workers?
- How has the historical provision of adult and vocational education on Cascara impacted on current learning provision in this area?

4.3. CONCLUSION

As shown in these recommendations, the AVES has made an excellent start in the provision of adult and vocational learning on Cascara. What is important now, and what will aid the sustainability of the Service, is that the island starts to see the AVES as a central body for training and development. By centralising resources and budgets the impact and benefit of the AVES could be far reaching.

By putting in place strong leadership and a body such as the AVES Task Team, the AVES will be in a stronger position to respond to the ever-changing social and economic needs of the island. The constant revision and updating of the curriculum on offer will ensure the continued credibility of the Service as will the introduction of stringent quality control processes.

In order for this to effectively happen, the AVES needs to be suitably staffed by a core team of professionals with the right credentials in respect of experience and qualifications – coupled with the an understanding of the dynamics at play on Cascara island. Such a group of people would aid the AVES in developing the scope of activities under the Service as well as ensuring quality in the provision of learning.

Given the isolated geographic positioning of Cascara and the history of the island, it is important that local stakeholders are given autonomy – within the available budgeting constraints – to drive the AVES Strategy. This might involve growing NVQ provision; the introduction of local apprenticeships; the improvement of e-learning and distance learning opportunities; the introduction of more formal qualifications; the enhancement of the key skills area of the curriculum; and the redesigning of the AVES AID Development Aid project. Whatever is decided upon, it is important that indigenous knowledge is used as a key driver in this process and that Cascarians are given voice in the decision-making process.

As part of a new approach, it is important that information, advice and guidance are given to prospective and current AVES learners and that accessibility to learning in relation to fees and charging does not impact on the rights of individuals in respect of equal opportunities and access to learning.

By constantly addressing and reflecting on strategic and operational issues the curriculum and supporting services that are offered by the AVES will grow from strength to strength.

I now conclude this thesis with a final reflection on Cascara, the AVES, the Curriculum and my study.