



Department
for Education

Mr Jonathan Brash
Hartlepool Sixth Form College
Brinkburn
Blakelock Road
Hartlepool
TS25 5PF

Rt. Hon. Robert Halfon MP
Minister for State for Apprenticeships
and Skills

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith St,
London
SW1P 3BT
T +44 (0) 370 000 2288
E enquiries@education.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/education

5th April 2017

Dear Mr Brash,

I am writing to let you know about the government's view of Hartlepool Sixth Form College's position in light of the Sixth Form College Commissioner's review, and to invite you to confirm the actions your college will now take in response to the significant concerns raised.

As you are aware, in light of the college's financial plan forecasting an 'inadequate' financial health grade, a financial notice to improve was issued on 13 February 2017. I asked Peter Mucklow as Sixth Form College Commissioner to review the position of your college in line with the intervention policy set out in 'Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills' (April 2013). He has completed his assessment.

I have now received his assessment, a summary of which is attached, which includes a set of recommendations. I have accepted all of these recommendations.

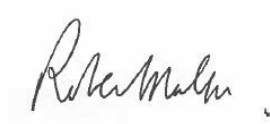
As you will see, the assessment identifies the college is not viable to continue as a stand-alone college and recommends the college proceed with a merger with Sunderland College. The assessment identifies the need for governors to act quickly and effectively to ensure that the merger completes within the proposed timeframe. You should also act to reduce costs to ensure the college's offer in Hartlepool remains financially sustainable in 2017 to 2018.

The funding agency will be regularly monitoring progress at the college, and will be looking for evidence that the college has responded to the recommendations and is delivering the changes necessary.

Please can you confirm, in writing by **Wednesday 26 April** what actions you are taking to address all of the recommendations and your timetable for doing so?

In the interests of transparency, after I have received your response, I intend to ask Education Funding Agency to publish this letter, the summary report and recommendations on the government's website.

If you have any questions about the Sixth Form College Commissioner's assessment or this letter, my officials will be happy to meet with you to discuss. Please contact John Taylor at the Education Funding Agency (john1.taylor@education.gov.uk) in the first instance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Halfon', is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP

Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills