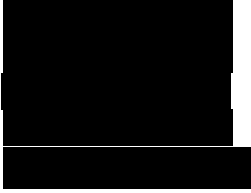




Lord Hill of Oareford

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools

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tel: 0370 0012345 ministers@education.gsi.gov.uk



10th - October 2011

Dear Mike,

UTC in Nottingham City – progression to pre-opening stage

I am pleased to inform you that the Secretary of State has approved your application to establish a UTC in Nottingham City so that it can now progress to the next stage of the process. This marks a significant step on the journey to opening, and demonstrates the confidence we have in your vision.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for the great commitment and energy which you and your colleagues have shown to date. [REDACTED] has been allocated as your project lead from the Department for Education and he will be in touch by the end of the week to confirm what happens next. I understand that you are looking to open in 2013. The Department will work with you to do everything it can to help make this happen. During the pre-opening stage it is important that you work with the Department's project lead on the detail of your proposal and to address in particular the issues set out in the attached annex. This letter should not therefore be read as approving everything set out in your application.

We will make an assessment in due course as to whether these issues have been satisfactorily addressed. On completion of this and the necessary elements of the pre-opening stage, the Secretary of State will consider whether to enter into a Funding Agreement with the Academy Trust for the UTC. It is the Funding Agreement that is the final point of approval. Clearly there is still much work to be done before the Secretary of State will be in a position to consider whether he can enter into such an agreement and before the UTC can open.

UTCs are an integral part of the Government's commitment to provide a high quality education for young people that meets the needs of our country and our economy. I look forward to hearing news of the continued progress of your proposal.

Department for
Education

In addition to this letter, I am writing to your local MPs, Graham Allen, Lilian Greenwood and Christopher Leslie, and local authority to inform them that your proposal has moved forward to the pre-opening stage.

I am copying this letter to Lord Baker at The Baker Dearing Educational Trust.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Hill', written over the printed name.

JONATHAN HILL .

Issues to be addressed in pre-opening

Evidence of demand: we understand that you propose to attract students from a wide catchment area. We think this is appropriate and reflects how UTCs should operate at a sub- regional level providing the opportunity for a technical education to a wide range of children. Given this it will be very important that your marketing arrangements deliver on that ambition and we will be keen to understand how you intend to manage that, and not have a disproportionate or inappropriate affect locally.

Premises: while the application includes a proposal it may well be that a different site might be appropriate and suitable. Therefore, it will be important that you work with Partnerships for Schools to identify and secure the most appropriate site and premises for the UTC which may include refurbishment rather than new build accommodation.

Approval to pre-opening stage does not constitute approval of the financial plans submitted with your application. The template that you completed as part of your application included the 2011-12 per pupil and start-up funding rates to give you an indication of the level of income you might expect when opening a school in your area. Funding rates for 2012-13 and beyond are not yet known, and are subject to work on the wider reform of the school funding system. The grant income shown in the spreadsheet, and used as the basis for your financial plans, does not therefore represent the budget that your UTC will get if opening in 2012. The approval of your application to the pre-opening stage is conditional on you submitting revised financial plans based on the actual 2012-13 funding figures when these become available later this year.

Any pre-opening support for UTCs will be on a case by case basis, strictly depending on need. Pre-opening costs should be kept to an absolute minimum while enabling essential activities to be carried out. The Department will only fund support where we consider that the expenditure is absolutely essential for the success of the project and offers value for the use of public money.

The Secretary of State's decision on whether to enter into a Funding Agreement will be conditional on these revised financial plans showing that the UTC will be financially viable in the long term, sustainable within the per pupil funding it will receive and on the Department deeming ~~that~~ the revenue funding costs associated with establishing and supporting the school in the early years offer value for money in the use of public funding. This may require you to modify your plans for your school and we expect you to cooperate fully with the Department to achieve this.

Early in the pre-opening stage, the Department will publish model legal documentation for the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Funding Agreement. We expect Trusts to review their existing documentation in line with that which we publish, but will be happy to discuss specific issues as they arise. It is, however, our expectation that there will be little deviation.

We will also need to discuss with you the name for your UTC. The word 'University' is specified in Regulations as a 'sensitive word', in order to protect the public from harm as a result of being misled by a name, and to safeguard the reputation of the country's higher education sector. It will be essential that the name you choose respects these rules and it may mean that the name in your application is not what the UTC can be called. We will be able to advise you on the process for requesting the necessary approval in due course.