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I am writing to inform you of the of the Government's view of the position of Telford College of Arts and Technology following the recent review by the Further Education (FE) Commissioner's team, and the steps that will need to be taken to secure improvement.

As you know, the college was issued with a Financial Notice of Concern in November 2015 and I therefore asked the FE Commissioner, Sir David Collins, to carry out an assessment of the college. This was conducted between 7 and 11 December 2015.

The key finding of the assessment is that the college faces significant financial problems having not successfully reprioritised its provision nor sufficiently reduced its cost base following the end of the Train to Gain programme. The financial recovery plan is incomplete and there are still serious concerns over financial planning and forecasting. Concerns about the long term sustainability of the college, taken together with doubts about, and the lack of confidence in, the capacity of the existing leadership to deliver the necessary improvements in a timely manner, has led the FE Commissioner to recommend that the college should be placed in Administered College Status. The implications of this are set out in the document 'The Strengthened Intervention Process'
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/further-education-commissioner-intervention-process>.

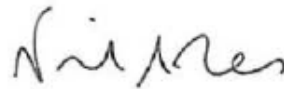
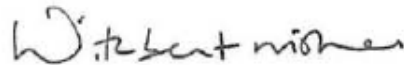
I note the Board recognises that the long term prospects of the college would best be served by some form of structural change that is likely to be derived from a merger or other form of relationship with another FE provider and has begun to explore alternative options for the future. However, the FE Commissioner recommends this should be part of the forthcoming area based review (due to commence this month in January) rather than on a purely bilateral basis.

The FE Commissioner also makes a number of detailed recommendations for action that the college should take, placing particular emphasis on improving governance mechanisms and performance; and on rapidly improving the quality of provision for students currently attending the college.

I have carefully considered the assessment, and accept all the recommendations the FE Commissioner makes. I am therefore placing Telford College of Arts and Technology into Administered College Status with immediate effect.

This will be a challenging time for the college and its students. I shall be looking to you, the other members of the Board and the college's senior management team to provide the appropriate leadership in these difficult times.

A summary of the assessment report and recommendations are provided with this letter. This summary and my letter to you will be published on www.gov.uk two weeks following the date on which this letter was sent. If you have any questions about the assessment or this letter, please contact Karen Riley in the Skills Funding Agency; karen.riley@sfa.bis.gov.uk in the first instance.



NICK BOLES MP