



Department for Education

Lady Jane Scott
Leader of the Council
The Wiltshire Council
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge

Rt. Hon. Robert Halfon MP
Minister of 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

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I am writing to inform you of the Government's view of the position of Wiltshire Council's Adult and Community Learning service, following the recent review by the Further Education (FE) Commissioner's team and the steps that need to be taken to secure the necessary improvements.

The FE Commissioner assessment was triggered by an 'Inadequate' Ofsted grading in October 2016. The assessment took place between 21st and 23rd February 2017.

Having read the FE Commissioner's report, I am pleased to note the Council and its elected members' willingness and commitment to addressing the areas of concern identified by Ofsted and the recommendations made by the FE Commissioner.

I understand that following the Ofsted grading, Council leaders undertook a comprehensive review of the future options for apprenticeship provision and have now decided to terminate the contract with the Skills Funding Agency for the delivery of apprenticeship provision with effect from 31st March 2017. Having made this decision, it is imperative that you continue to work with the Skills Funding Agency to ensure the smooth transition of affected learners into appropriate, alternative high-quality provision.

I welcome the Council's decision to continue to deliver adult education (community learning) provision. It is essential that leadership of this service improve, and with the responsibility of adult education moving to the Directorate for Commissioning, Performance and School Effectiveness, it should enable the service to draw on the existing educational support already available within this Directorate. This support will assist the service to put in place measures to both improve the quality of provision and align it to the skills agenda and employability objectives.

I am pleased to note the formation of a new Governing Body. The new Governing Body should comprise a suitable balance of internal and external stakeholders and partners. Appropriate monitoring arrangements should be put in place to hold managers and staff to account for the performance of the service, as well as supporting and advising them.

I have accepted all of the FE Commissioner's recommendations and a summary of the initial assessment is provided with this letter. This document and my letter will be published on www.gov.uk in approximately two weeks.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the factual accuracy of the FE Commissioner's assessment, please contact the FE Commissioner (fe.commissioner@education.gov.uk) in the first instance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Halfon'.

ROBERT HALFON MP