



Lord Agnew Kt DL

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the School System
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Alison Hewitt
Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College
Cheadle Road
Cheadle Hulme
Cheshire
SK8 5HA

28th October 2019

Dear *Ms Hewitt,*

I am writing following the assessment of Cheadle and Marple Sixth Form College by the Further Education (FE) Commissioner. The FEC Team visited the college on 20 to 21 June 2019 to undertake a formal intervention triggered by the college's request for emergency funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in June 2019, and an Ofsted grade of 'requires improvement' (RI) in March 2019.

From the FE Commissioner's report, it is clear that there has been a serious failure of leadership, with wholly inadequate financial management. The governing body has also failed in its fiduciary duty to monitor the college's financial position and to effectively challenge leaders and hold them to account. In light of the college's present situation, and the governing body's lack of recent financial training, I fully support the FE Commissioner's recommendation that all governors obtain immediate training on the insolvency regime for colleges.

While some efforts have been made by the college to respond to the financial challenges, the current recovery plan is inadequate, and it is unlikely that the college will be able to continue on a stand-alone basis without risking insolvency. It is imperative that structural change is achieved in the shorter term. I am encouraged by your acceptance of the FE Commissioner's view that a Structural Prospects Appraisal (SPA), now underway, is necessary to prevent the college's position becoming untenable. I have asked my officials to keep me updated on the progress of the appraisal which I understand is working to identify an effective structural solution by the end of October 2019. In the

meantime, I must urge the board to continue to work with the FE Commissioner and the ESFA to secure short term stability for the college.

With respect to improvements in the quality of the college curriculum, it is encouraging to note the substantial progress that has been made in nearly all areas of college provision. It is unfortunate that the outcome for apprenticeships has not reflected this same success, however, I support the recent decision to cease offering new courses.

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

Please confirm within three weeks to the FE Commissioner, FE.Commissioner@education.gov.uk what actions you are taking to address all of the recommendations and your timetable for doing so.

I have written separately to the following local MPs who may have learners attending the college from their constituency to inform them of the FE Commissioner's findings:

Ann Coffey MP

Andrew Gwynne MP

Mary Robinson MP

William Wragg MP

Mike Kane MP

✓ Jeff Smith MP

Ruth George MP

Stockport

Denton and Reddish

Cheadle

Hazel Grove

Wythenshawe & Sale East

Withington

High Peak



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