

WH/RNM

21<sup>st</sup> February 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to update you on the progress of our application to join the GORSE Academies Trust (TGAT), and to once again thank you for your outstanding support for our school over these last few weeks. Staff have been enormously encouraged and we remain very grateful to you all.

### **THE MINISTER'S DECISION**

Last week the file on our application to convert with TGAT went to Lord Agnew, and on Thursday he led a discussion including Vicky Beer, (the Regional Schools' Commissioner), Sir David Carter (the National Schools' Commissioner) and Alec Shelbrooke MP.

Of the three options before the minister, to accept or reject our application to join TGAT or to delay the decision, he has chosen to delay. This is following a request from Leeds City Council to allow further time for consultation on their own plans for this locality.

### **RESPONSE FROM THE OFFICE OF THE RSC**

In a telephone call yesterday morning with the office of the Regional School's Commissioner I was given more clarity as to the parameters the minister has set for the Leeds City Council consultation, which should:

1. Be launched and complete before the pre-local election period begins on Monday 26th March 2018.
2. Detail the local authority's rationale and context for suggesting a reorganisation of secondary provision in outer north east of Leeds.
3. Set out the full range of options available to deliver outstanding secondary provision, including the option for one or both local schools to become academies.

The RSC is expecting notification by the end of today from Leeds City Council as to whether they are able to meet these expectations. If so they will be given an additional four weeks after 26<sup>th</sup> March in which to prepare a summary of their consultation for presentation to the Minister

### **A LETTER FROM ALEC SHELBRooke MP**

In my last [letter](#) I was pleased to highlight constructive comments made by our MP Alec Shelbrooke. On Monday he sent another very helpful email to people who have contacted him explaining his role in the discussions with the ministers saying:

*I informed the Minister that Boston Spa High School enjoys strong support for academisation from parents, staff and pupils. I added that it is my belief that there is a desire among my constituents to have two great schools/academies in the area, both with a different ethos and crucially, providing parental choice.*

*The Minister informed me that he remains committed to supporting Good schools to become academies and fully recognises that Boston Spa is dedicated to providing outstanding education and is working with Gorse's leadership to achieve this. I view this as a positive position. I informed the Minister that Boston Spa High School enjoys strong support for academisation from parents, staff and pupils.*

### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

The delay caused by Leeds City Council does not distract Governors who remain resolute that the partnership with TGAT is absolutely the right direction for Boston Spa and will continue to exhaust every possible avenue to achieve that goal. We have, as a 'Good' school, already followed expected practice, having held a legal, open and comprehensive consultation, in which families overwhelmingly supported the Governors' proposal to join TGAT, a path from which we will not be deterred.

Thank you again for your continuing support; it has meant so much to us all. I will of course keep you updated as soon as we have any further detail.

For your information I attach both the letter from the [Lord Agnew](#) and that from [Alec Shelbrooke](#).

Yours sincerely



CHRISTOPHER WALSH  
Principal

