

WH/RNM

5th March 2018

Dear Community User

This is another important letter about the future of Boston Spa Academy

We now need your help again - Leeds City Council (LCC) have issued a survey and we ask that you respond to it by 25 March 2018. There is more detail below.

UPDATE ON OUR APPLICATION TO JOIN TGAT

- Leeds City Council (LCC) continue to object to our application to convert to an academy and join The GORSE Academies Trust (TGAT).
- We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received from both parents and the wider community.
- Your response to our first letter was spectacular and is a brilliant demonstration to all concerned of the strength of feeling about LCC's intentions.
- Despite this, LCC is sticking to what can only be described as an irrational plan. That is, a plan to close an Ofsted-rated "Good" school with a clear strategy to become "Outstanding". Then the land will be sold in order to fund facilities elsewhere.

LEEDS CITY COUNCIL SURVEY

- Lord Agnew, the government Minister who will make the decision, has asked LCC to hold a short consultation.
- We believe that there are serious flaws with both documents presented by LCC. There is bias, misleading data and important information that has been omitted. For example:
 - LCC does not even present our school joining TGAT as an option, despite that being the only application which the governors have made.
 - Although LCC refer to this as a survey, it consists of just 3 questions.
- I have written to Steve Walker, Director of Children & Families at LCC setting out my concerns about both documents, I share these concerns [here](#). **Please note that in responding to the survey you do not have to answer question 1.**

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The consultation window closes on 25 March 2018 and we are now asking everyone, staff, parents, students and community to complete the survey. There is both [background information](#) and an [online survey](#). We cannot stress how important we believe it is that as many people as possible in our wider school community respond to the survey.

SUPPORT FROM ALEC SHELBRooke MP

Mr Shelbrooke, our local MP, is now clear that he believes we should be permitted to convert to an academy and join TGAT. This puts him at variance with LCC, stating:

“It is quite clear that LCC has no formal plan for education in the Outer North East and the only thing driving this is a desire to have only one school and an ideological political opposition to academies. This is something the Minister is very much aware of... I will be urging all my constituents to write in to the consultation to express their views... To be clear, I will be responding to the consultation setting out how I believe we can retain two schools and why, as part of that, Boston Spa should convert with Gorse.”

The full text of his email is [here](#).

Welcome as it is, we should not rely solely on Mr Shelbrooke’s support, because together we can prevent LCC from believing that there is support for the closure of our school and the sale of the land.

If everybody in our community engages with this consultation we are confident that the Minister will grant the academy order. We will then join TGAT, the land will not be sold and our sports facilities can continue to be used by the community, and crucially we can continue with our strategy to provide an outstanding education for our children.

Thank you for your support; please do not hesitate to get in touch if you need further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CWALSH', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

CHRISTOPHER WALSH
Principal