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Dave Rooney
Executive Principal
Lowbrook Academy
The Fairway
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Maidenhead
SL6 3AR

08 March 2017

Dear Dave,

Thank you for your letter to Cllr Dudley dated 27 February 2017, I have been asked to respond on behalf of the council. I have been investigating the issues you raise.

We are pleased to hear of your progress to date on the project to expand the Academy although we understood that you were operating a three phase project: phase 1 to convert an internal space which is now hosting a class which joined the Academy in September 2016; phase 2 to build a new room in the existing building which is underway on site and is planned to support 60 pupils in September 2017; and phase 3 which is the block you describe in your letter.

The Council committed £1.6m for this additional project in May 2016 after negotiations with you to meet the needs of local residents who could not access your very popular Academy, in part because of the priority given to out of catchment siblings. We note the positive change the Academy has made to the oversubscription criteria to remove that unfairness following the judgement of the Office of the School Adjudicator in late 2016.

As you rightly state in your letter the Council, like the Academy, wish to see Lowbrook Academy take 60 pupils in 2017 and each year beyond. With about £400,000 of the Council's capital investment spent on the first two phases, we believe that the Academy should recognise that they will be equipped with sufficient space for 60 pupils in September 2017 and confirm the 2017 intake at 60 places without delay. The admissions officers set the deadline for agreement of capacity at 6 March to enable the sharing of initial data with other local authority areas, however with national offer day not being until 18 April 2017, we can accommodate an increase in the Academy's PAN from 30 to 60 at any time before Monday 10 April 2017. I look forward to receiving the Academy's commitment to 60 places in September 2017 in the coming days.

Turning to the matter of further finance for the phase 3 building which is progressing to planning and tender, the decision to provide a further £0.75m of capital funding from local resources is one that has to be taken by the full council. The members are considering the issues at their meeting on 30 March 2017. They will be aware of the costs, the pupil numbers you set out in your letter and the outline design of the block to support them in making their decision. During the budget setting process which took place in February, the

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call on resources was noted in the capital section of the reports so the requirement is well known.

The Council understands the Academy's need for certainty before letting a contract however the timing of the Council meeting fits within the tender timescale you are working towards for the phase 3 building and therefore does not present a timing risk. Once there is certainty about the financing then we look forward to receiving confirmation from the Academy that it will and has acted to increase the PAN to 60 on a permanent basis from September 2018.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. McDaniel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'K' and 'M'.

Kevin McDaniel
Head of Schools and Educational Services

Cc Cllr N Airey,
Cllr Dudley,
Cllr Brimacombe,
Cllr McWilliams,
Cllr Bullock,
Cllr Saunders,
Alison Alexander, Managing Director & Strategic Director of Adult, Children and Health Services,
Rob Stubbs, Head of Finance, RBWM.