

RE: LETTERS TO GOVERNORS AND FOLLOWING UP

Marple in Action had some enquiries from members of the public at the Food and Drink Day on Saturday asking what they should do about letters they had written to the Governors. Like many of us, they have received unsatisfactory replies with a copy of the Statement issued by Lawrence Grant, Chair of Governors.

We've now had time to think and take advice and here is what we suggest:

- If the reply you received is from Carole Jeffrey, Clerk to the Corporation (Governors), write to her asking if the Governors did in fact receive and read the letters addressed to them and asking her to ensure that they reply as individuals to any further correspondence. Ask Carole Jeffrey to send you a copy of the Colleges complaints procedure and a complaint form.
- Write again to the individual governors, ask specific questions that they have to answer, and ask for a reply at their earliest convenience.
- If you do not receive a reply from the governors in 10 days then invoke the college's complaints procedure. The grounds for a complaint could be relating to lack of consultation and the nature of the proposed sale, failure of governance, failure to respond to correspondence (if indeed they do fail to reply), failure to answer direct questions or other ideas of your own. Write your complaint in a letter and ask for an external person to adjudicate in the matter (normally the college would appoint someone internally). You could suggest someone (such as a prominent local figure – possibly Andrew Stunell) who would be impartial. At the end of your letter you need to state that you expect the College to adhere to its own timetable for dealing with complaints i.e. acknowledgement in 3 days, complete the process within 8 working days. You must complete the official complaints form to accompany your letter.
- If the College do not respond and adhere to the timescales then take things higher as follows: (i) point out to the YPLA (Young Persons Learning Authority) that the college are not adhering to its internal complaints procedures, and (ii) write to the Minister of Education (details below) saying the same thing. (NOTE: If you write to the YPLA then make sure that you say clearly that you are writing as a private individual. Marple in Action have already established an official MiA line of contact between MiA and YPLA, and we don't want to confuse YPLA officials.)
- In fact we also recommend that you write to Michael Gove, the Minister for Education anyway. The letter should ask him to intervene with the College, as there is no other regulatory body that has the power to do so – the more letters that he gets on this, then the more he is likely to respond. Copy your letters to Andrew Stunell. The minister's address is:

Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Minister of Education
House of Commons,
London SW1A 0AA