

## **Progress Update February 2013**

### **Overview of the Application**

The aim of the application is to establish a University Technical College based in Salisbury but serving a 20-mile radius from the City. Young people aged 14-18 would attend the UTC and study a comprehensive technical and academic education with a special focus on Science and Engineering skills in the context of the Defence Industries. UTCs operate from 8.30am to 5.00pm for 40 weeks a year, allowing students to gain advanced technical skills in addition to a broad-based education. University and employer support and involvement are central.

### **Support for the Application**

The bid has been welcomed by local MPs and a number of key employers including QinetiQ, Dstl, Chemring Countermeasures, Tetricus, Aspire and Serco. There is an information site at [www.wiltshire-utc.co.uk](http://www.wiltshire-utc.co.uk) where parents, potential students, employers and local residents can comment on the proposal and express an interest. The more local people who sign up to support the bid the greater chance it will have of securing funding, which could be worth £40m to Wiltshire over a ten-year period.

### **Application Shortlisted**

The Department for Education confirmed at the end of December that the application to establish the South Wiltshire Defence Industries UTC had been shortlisted for potential approval. A team representing the UTC attended an interview in London on 31 January 2013. If successful, the UTC will enter a pre-opening phase and receive £300,000 of development funding prior to a potential opening in September 2014. The Government only shortlisted the strongest bids and all those shortlisted can potentially be approved, subject to satisfying the panel that they meet the criteria for support. The outcome of the interview will be known by the end of March.

### **The Interview**

The team for the interview was selected based on a pre-interview session attended at the Baker Dearing Trust on 9<sup>th</sup> January and advice given during the day. The interview team comprised Gordon Aitkin, Project Manager, Dr Tina Pagett, Education and Skills, Wiltshire Council (Education), Robert Rees, Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality, Wiltshire College (Education and Curriculum), Dr Stephen Prior, University of Southampton (Higher Education, Engineering and Science), Bill Dowling, Military Civilian Integration Partnership, 43 Wessex Brigade (Military employer), Professor Miles Carroll, Health Protection Agency (Engineering and Science employer).

A rigorous process of preparation was led by Gordon Aitkin focused on questions raised by the Baker Dearing Trust on education, employer/higher education support and financial arrangements. The interview lasted for 90 minutes with questions from a panel including DfE education adviser, DfE schools adviser, EFA finance lead, EFA capital finance lead and Baker Dearing Trust adviser. The presentation and responses to questions raised were well received by the panel and advice given to continue with the preparatory work until the final announcement at the end of March.

### **Further Information**

If you wish any further information, please contact the Project Manager Gordon Aitken at [gordonraitken@gmail.com](mailto:gordonraitken@gmail.com) or 07891 585898.