Dear Mark

**Support by …….. company for the opening of The University School of Computing and Creative Design in Stoke-on-Trent**

Having been engaged in the initial stages with the Potteries Education Trust and its partners in discussing and contributing to shaping a vision for a 16-19 School of Digital Technology and Design, I am now writing to formally confirm our strong and enthusiastic support for the Trust’s application to open a Free School in Stoke on Trent.

We acknowledge that the Potteries Education Trust has a proven track record in the delivery of first-class education in its schools and in City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College. Its key partner in this venture, Staffordshire University, has world class recognition and facilities in the fields of digital, AI, technology and all aspects of design. Support from the universities of Keele and Derby bringing their own specialist expertise in these areas is also welcome. When this is coupled with the Silicon Stoke Initiative and rooted in businesses such as ours, which critically depend on a digital and technologically able workforce, the positive benefits for the city and the region make the proposal persuasive.

We believe that the opportunity to develop a new school focusing on digital technologies and design will significantly impact the life chances of young people in the area. It will substantially improve their technical and design skills and enhance their employability. Additionally, it positively impacts our current business success, encouraging new businesses and start-ups and increasing competitive economic activity and prosperity in a priority area.

We know that as the City grows over the next few years, there will be an increased need for new post 16 places. But, to facilitate growth in the local economy, we need to develop and encourage digital technology and design mind-set to help secure the development of existing businesses and encourage new sectors to see Stoke on Trent and its surrounding region as their natural home.

We are excited by this proposal and the opportunity to help shape a way forward in the best interests of our community, our young people and our businesses, addressing the skills shortage in this region.

We are particularly interested in developing a long term relationship between business and education, which is beneficial to all.

Please insert a paragraph on your businesses needs/experiences, which will be helped/mitigated by this project.

We are delighted to strongly support this application and look forward to playing our part in ensuring the success of this project.

Yours sincerely