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## **SOUTH HOLLAND POST-16 CENTRE OPENS ITS DOORS**

Local youngsters are set to benefit from a brand new £3 million educational facility which has now officially opened its doors in Spalding.

The South Holland Post-16 Centre, built in the grounds of the Gleed Boys' School, was officially opened by the chief executive officer of the Lincolnshire Co-operative Ltd, Ursula Lidbetter on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October.

Guests were treated to a tour of the facilities and students showed off their dance skills in a piece specially developed for the occasion by Helen Field, a tutor of the Backstage Academy of Performing Arts who is delivering a BTEC National Diploma in Performing Arts.

The centre has been established in order to support local 16-19 year-olds wanting to pursue vocational training. Funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), it will provide places for 280 students who will have access to a range of new courses including diplomas in IT, health and social care, travel and tourism, retail, sport and performing arts.

The Lincolnshire Co-operative Ltd has provided materials for the retail course and the travel and tourism course and will be taking students on work experience as part of their training.

Ursula said: “It’s wonderful to be instrumental in giving these students the chance to learn about our business and give them a broad knowledge of the industry in order to make them ‘work-ready’ when they have completed their studies. Who knows, the Post-16 Centre may produce a future chief executive officer of the Lincolnshire Co-operative Ltd – I certainly hope so!”

Head teacher at Gleed Girls' Technology College, Liz Shawhulme, who opened the proceedings, thanked Lincolnshire Co-operative for its support, saying: “We are very grateful for the belief that the company has shown in the future of the centre and its contribution to the local community. We very much hope that other local companies will be inspired to come on board and get involved with our courses and help to give our hard working students the chance they deserve.”

Councillor Mrs Christine Talbot, executive councillor for secondary education and healthier communities, said: “I am delighted to see this new facility for 16-19 year olds in the Spalding area. It is essential that young people have access to courses which can develop their skills and objectives and lead towards the jobs they really want. I look forward to seeing many students benefit from the new centre with the qualifications to help them push ahead with successful careers. I also hope that they find employment here in Lincolnshire. For too long we have been educating our young people and then they leave us to find careers elsewhere.”

Other partners involved in the development and delivery of courses at the centre include Spalding-based Smedley’s Foods, who will be linking with the courses and providing work experience places for young people; Nottingham Trent University and Lincolnshire Museum Services who will be delivering an NVQ in Heritage.

Ends

Photo captions:

### **South Holland Post-16 Centre is Officially Open**

L-R: Joy Hancock, Chair of governors; Liz Shawhulme, Head teacher at Gleed Girls; Ursula Lidbetter, chief executive officer, Lincolnshire Co-operative Ltd and Roger Begy, chair LSC East Midlands

### **Learning with the Support of Lincolnshire Co-operative**

L-R – Sixth Form Students Emma Hagger and Sarah Trinder develop their retail skills (16 years old)

### **Performing Arts Students**

Learning and Skills Council **East Midlands**

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# News Release



Leading learning and skills

L-R – Codie Austin (16); Luke Emery (17) and Laura Pearl (18) get ready to entertain guests at the official opening

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## Notes for Editors:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. It is responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. It has a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. The vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. The LSC works nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

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