



North Trafford College  
of Further Education



South Trafford  
COLLEGE

# CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

FOR A MERGER BETWEEN  
NORTH TRAFFORD COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION  
AND SOUTH TRAFFORD COLLEGE

January 2007



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This consultation document sets out the background and rationale for a proposal from North Trafford College of Further Education (North Trafford College) and South Trafford College that they should merge to form a single institution.

Any merger proposal will require the formal approval of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) before it can be sent to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for a decision.

Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester (LSCGM) will consider the results of this consultation, due diligence studies, and the full merger proposal from the Colleges at a meeting of the LSCGM Board in May 2007. The criteria against which it will judge the proposal are set out in **Appendix B**. LSCGM will then decide whether to forward a merger proposal to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for his determination.

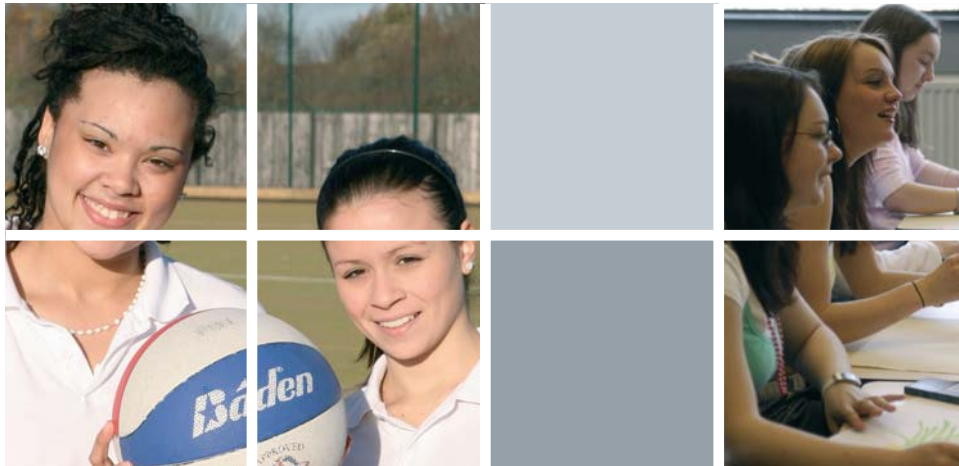
There is a statutory requirement that proposals are subject to a consultation period of at least one month. A list of organisations being consulted is shown in **Appendix A**, and the Statutory Draft Proposal and the Statutory Summary of the Draft Proposal are shown in **Appendix B**.

Your comments on the merger proposal and any information contained in this document are welcomed. It will be helpful if they are made on the pro forma attached at **Appendix E**.

**Responses should be posted to:**

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**The final date for receipt of comments is 9th**  
**March 2007.**



## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 2.1 Introduction

The LSC Greater Manchester have agreed that the Initial Outline Proposal for the merger of North Trafford College and South Trafford College should be subject to formal consultation.

### 2.2 Local Context

The borough of Trafford is a key contributor to the economy of the Manchester city region, due to its physical proximity and its high economic growth (as evidenced by the high density of businesses and rate of business start-ups). The main occupational sector within Trafford is currently financial, professional business services.

### 2.3 Background to the Proposal

This proposal is based on the voluntary commitment of North Trafford College and South Trafford College to merge. Indeed, recognising the potential benefits as highlighted in the Post 16 Trafford Review (July 2006), both Corporations have positively and proactively embraced and facilitated the merger process.

In seeking to develop the merger between North Trafford College and South Trafford College, the colleges are looking to bring together two education providers who currently serve primarily the Trafford Borough as well as drawing students from the surrounding areas of Greater Manchester.

The new merged college will provide learners within this region with enhanced opportunities

at post-14 in both vocational and academic pathways, in "state-of-the-art" premises that are fit for the needs of 21st century learning.

By bringing these two organisations together it is believed that an even stronger organisation can be created, which will retain the best features of the individual institutions, but also bring added value and synergies for the benefits of learners in the region. In addition, merger would minimise existing curriculum overlap between the two colleges and support greater coherence and progression opportunities.

### 2.4 Vision and Objectives for the Merger

The vision for the merged college is:

'To create a single college for Trafford that will provide a range of outstanding provision for adults and young people. A college that will promote social inclusion and support economic prosperity for the stakeholders of Trafford.'

The colleges propose the following objectives for the merged college:

- increase retention of 16-18 year olds in Trafford by 7% (2004/05 combined 75% against a national average of 76%) by 2008/09;
- increase participation rates in adult full level 2 qualifications by 30% by 2008/09;
- increase the participation rates of Skills for Life qualifications that contribute to national targets by 30% by 2009/10;



- improve overall long qualification success rates by 6% (2004/05 combined 65% against a national average of 62%) by 2009/10;
- improve success rates on long qualifications for 16–18 year olds by 8% (2004/05 combined 67% against a national average of 65%) by 2008/09;
- increase the overall provision self assessed as outstanding to over 55% by 2008/09;
- increase the proportion of adult 'demand led' provision to 35% by 2008/09.

The colleges' ambition is to create an infrastructure of provision that is distinctive and meets the needs of individual customers (learners, employers and stakeholders). Hence the vision is centred around the development of four main centres for the merged college:

- Young People's College;
- Centre for Adult Learning and Skills;
- Science and Technology Centre; and
- Contemporary and Popular Music Centre.

For current students at either college, it is proposed that, where possible, students would continue their studies in the same location as that where their studies currently commenced. Where a change in location is deemed necessary, the merged college would endeavour to consult with students so that every effort is made to ensure the needs of its learners are met.

Regardless of where new and existing provision will be located in the merged college, it is proposed that a detailed transport strategy will be developed in collaboration with Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, the merged College and the LSC Greater Manchester to ensure that movement between sites would be as convenient as possible.

### 2.5 Justification for the Reorganisation

The main rationale for the merger of the two colleges is the positive effect on Trafford learners of economies of shared expertise, shared resource and curriculum cohesion and progression.

Both colleges have significant strengths in recruitment of learners, curriculum planning and delivery, quality of provision and financial management. The proposed merger would be of **two equal partners**. In addition, merger presents

a significant opportunity to re-brand and re-position provision across the whole of Trafford.

Both colleges believe that merger is essential to effect the step-change required in Trafford to meet future needs for learners and provide an infrastructure that can respond more flexibly and innovatively to changes in educational policy, such as the joint delivery with schools for the 14–19 age group and the drive towards 'demand led' provision for adults and employers. Combined the two colleges can provide a comprehensive mix of education and training from pre-entry to level 4, with clear pathways and progression routes, delivered through high quality teaching and learning in high quality environments. It would enable comprehensive strategic decisions to be made about geographical delivery throughout the borough.

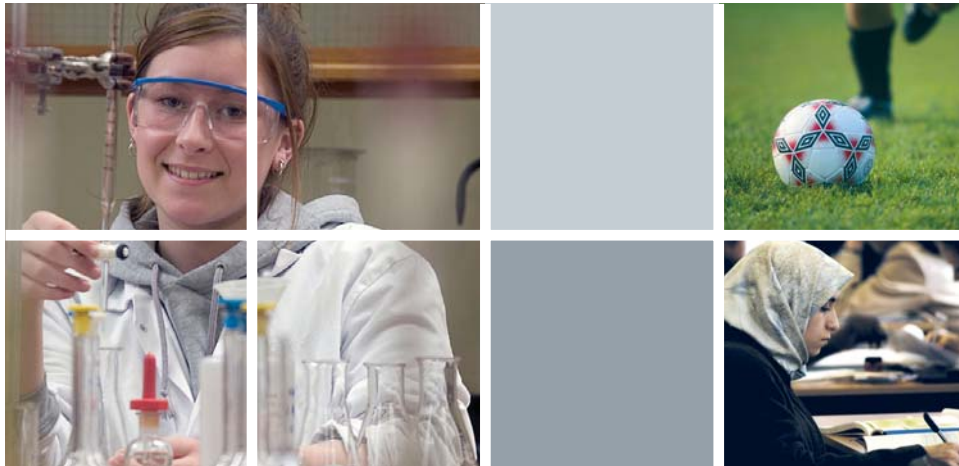
### 2.6 Collaboration and Partnership

The two colleges at present make a significant provision for school based 14–16 year olds. Consequently reorganisation would allow the further development of regional 14–19 Implementation Plans that should continue to develop strong and co-ordinated partnerships with schools and local private training providers. Such partnership arrangements should increase the range of opportunities offered to 14–19 year olds including vocational and occupational oriented qualification provision.

### 2.7 We Welcome Your Views

Formal consultation on the merger proposed between North Trafford College and South Trafford College runs for a period of 6 weeks, with a closing date for comments on **9th March 2007**. All responses will be acknowledged by the LSC Greater Manchester and by the two colleges.

Following this consultation, the LSC Greater Manchester will consider the results alongside the outcomes of the due diligence reports, and the full proposal at their Council meeting in **May 2007**. It will consider the proposal against the nationally determined criteria set out in **Appendix B**. At that stage it may be decided to support the merger and forward the proposal to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Alternatively, they could choose to seek a revised proposal, which may require further formal consultation, or choose not to support the proposed merger.



### 3. CONTEXT

#### 3.1 The National Education and Training Context

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has both a funding and planning responsibility for all publicly funded post-16 education and training, except for prescribed higher education. It is required to carry out strategic reviews of provision and, in particular, to consider structural changes designed to increase participation, achievement and learner choice.

##### 3.1.1 LSC National, Regional and Local Priorities

LSC have published their second Annual Statement of Priorities which are designed to take them forward towards essential transformation which will better enable them to meet challenging Government targets. Their six priorities for 2006/07 are to:

- Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities;
- Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults;

- Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change;
- Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help individuals into jobs;
- Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services; and
- Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally.

#### 3.2 The Local and Regional Economic and Education Context

##### 3.2.1 Skills Priorities

Examination of the North West Skills Priorities (2006/07), Regional Economic Strategy, Greater Manchester Skills Priorities (2006/07) and the LSC Annual Plan identifies skills priorities that are relevant to the development of provision within Trafford.

The following table shows that there are a number of sectors where priorities have been determined for Level 2, Level 3 and Level 4. The Greater Manchester Skills Priorities document for 2006/7 has also listed a number of immediate priorities that include: Retail, Financial and Business Services, Public Services and Food and Drink.

**TABLE 3.1 SECTOR SKILLS MATRIX OF PRIORITIES**

	Regional			Sub Regional				
	NW Annual Statement of Skills Priorities 2006/7*		Draft RES Growth sectors 2006/7	GM Skills Priorities 2006/7			LSC GM Annual plan 2006/7	
	L3	L4		Immediate Priorities	L3	L4	SfL/L2	L3
Engineering	✓ *	✓ ***	✓ ***					✓
Energy and Environmental	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Construction	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓
Digital Industries	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Creative Industries	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Retail	✓		✓	✓**			✓	
Care/Healthcare	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Life Science					✓	✓		
ICT						✓		✓
Tourism	✓		✓					
Financial and Business Professional Services		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Public Services			✓	✓****	✓	✓	✓	✓
Education					✓	✓		✓
Biomedical			✓					
Food and Drink			✓	✓****			✓*****	
Textiles							✓	

\* Automotive, chemicals, aerospace and engineering

\*\* Retail and Wholesale Managers

\*\*\* Chemicals, aerospace and engineering

\*\*\*\* Restaurant Catering Managers and Chefs

\*\*\*\*\* specifically Housing & Welfare Officers

\*\*\*\*\* Manufacture of Food and Drink

In developing the merger proposal, North Trafford College and South Trafford College are looking to develop provision that recognises the changing landscape of post-14 education. They seek to enhance choice and flexibility across a wide range of curriculum areas and occupational sectors and provide pathways from entry level to level 4. These developments would seek to be based around delivery of the core elements of Success for All, the Skills Strategy and the HE Strategy.

'Travel to Learn' is an area that needs careful consideration, however evidence exists from both colleges ILR data that there is a significant overlap in postal code recruitment areas.

Communities with high deprivation indices are particularly recognised as those experiencing difficulty with travelling outside their locality to access learning/training. Within the geographical areas covered by the two colleges are a number of such communities.

Consideration of the issues raised by these hard to reach and disenfranchised learners will be a key part of the merged institution's plans. Travel to learn issues will be considered as part of the development of the Full Merger Proposal.



### 3.3 Trafford: Demographics and Socio Economic Information

In developing the Consultation Document, both colleges were aware of the need to consider the contextual information as outlined in the Trafford Review (July 2006), namely:

- Trafford has a population of around 212,000, of whom 62% are of working age. The overall population is predicted to grow by 3% over the next 10 years, particularly within the 20-29 year old age group (17% growth). Conversely the numbers of children (0-14 years old) and young people (15-19 years old) are predicted to decrease by 4% and 11% respectively. Most of the population are White British (89.7%) – the most significant black and minority ethnic groups are Asian/Asian British (4%) and Black/Black British (1.95%).
- Whilst Trafford as a whole is relatively prosperous, coming 136th most deprived out of 354 local authorities in England, there are areas of deprivation mainly concentrated in the west and north-east of the borough. 22% of Trafford's wards are within the 20% most deprived wards in England (including nine within the 10% most deprived). In the more deprived wards, distance and ease of travel to provision can be as much of an issue as community culture and economy.
- A high proportion of Trafford residents (31%) are qualified at degree level, compared to the North West average (23%), and there is a lower proportion of adults with no qualifications (13% compared to 18%). Within this however there are pockets of low educational achievement – wards characterised by high Skills for Life needs, high proportion of residents without level 2 qualifications and low proportion of residents with degree level qualifications.
- 71% of young people achieve five GCSEs at grades A\*-C. Young people's participation in post-16 education and training is high at 88% but there is a persistent level of young people not in employment, education and training (the NEET group; 9.3% at June 2006). There is also an issue around continuing participation which drops to 76% for 17 year-olds.
- The borough of Trafford is a key contributor to the economy of the Manchester city region, due to its physical proximity and its high economic growth (as evidenced by the high density of businesses and rate of business start-ups). The main occupational sector within Trafford is financial, professional business services (38,000 jobs; 30% of the total), one of those identified in the Greater Manchester Economic Development Plan as a growth sector for the subregional economy. Thanks to Trafford Park, there is also a high concentration of people employed by 1,400 engineering, manufacturing (especially food and drink and printing/paper) and logistics firms. Another 15,000 jobs are within the



retail sector, around half of which are linked to the Trafford Centre and surrounding developments. 48% of Trafford residents are employed in managerial, professional and associate professional occupations (compared with 39% across the North West).

- Employment forecasts up to 2014 predict a net 3.5% growth for Greater Manchester, including replacement demand of 10%. The most significant increase in both terms of net and replacement demand is within 'other business services' (this includes areas like real estate, computing services, professional services) then retail and distribution and then health and social care.
- Future demand for skills levels is projected more within managerial and professional occupations (ie, qualification levels 3 and 4), linked to the predicted growth in the occupational areas cited above, but with replacement demand for skilled technicians (ie, level 2). Employment requiring level 1 or no qualifications is projected to decrease significantly.

## 4. BACKGROUND OF THE INSTITUTIONS

### 4.1 Introduction

In seeking to develop the merger between North Trafford College and South Trafford College, the colleges are looking to bring together two education providers who currently serve primarily the Trafford Borough as well as drawing students from the surrounding areas of Greater Manchester.

The new merged college will provide learners within this region with enhanced opportunities at post-14 in both vocational and academic pathways, in "state-of-the-art" premises that are fit for the needs of 21st century learning.

By bringing these two organisations together it is believed that an even stronger organisation can be created, which will retain the best features of the individual institutions, but also bring added value and synergies for the benefits of learners in the region. In addition, merger

would minimise existing curriculum overlap between the two colleges and support greater coherence and progression opportunities.

### 4.2 North Trafford College

North Trafford College is a medium-sized general FE college. Its main site is on Talbot Road in the north of the Borough of Trafford (about 4.5 miles from South Trafford College's main site) and its Technology Centre is located on Moss Road, a mile and a half away from the main site. Contemporary music provision is offered at the Beehive Mill in the centre of Manchester.

In 2005/06 North Trafford College had 7,249 LSC funded learners enrolled onto its programmes across a range of both full and part-time courses. The majority of these learners (6073) were aged 19+.

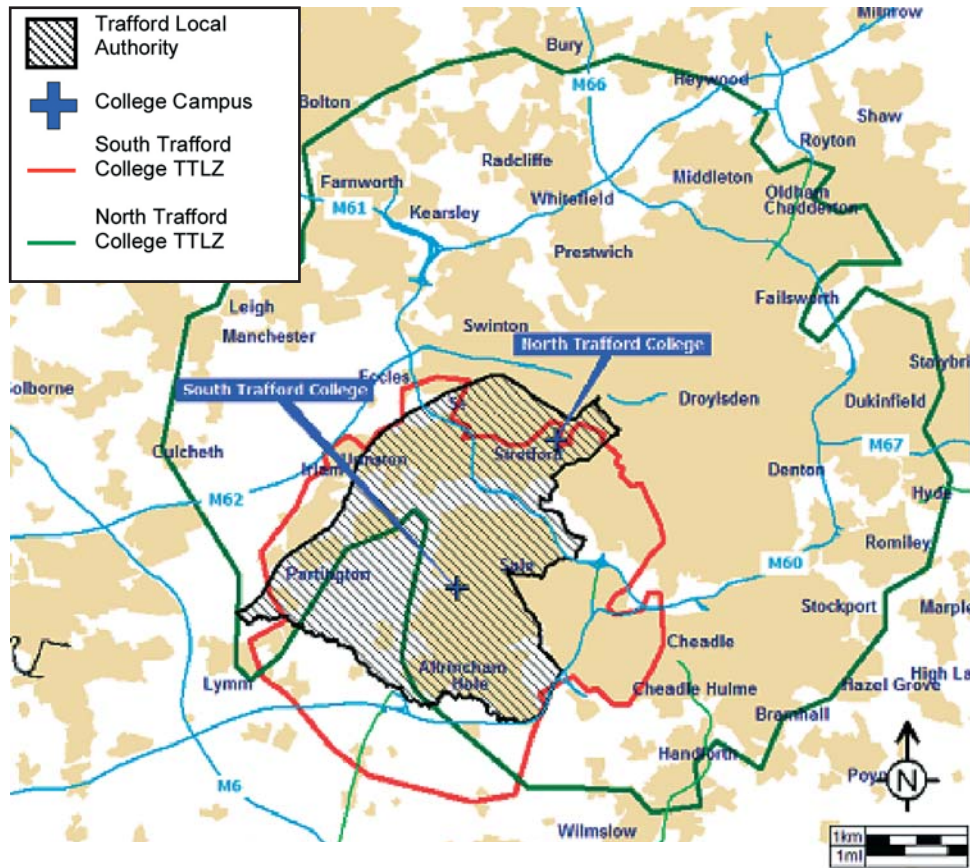
With the exception of some GCSE courses in maths and science and access to higher education courses, the college's provision is almost entirely vocational or general vocational. The college does not provide work-based learning programmes directly but is a significant contributor through its substantial contracts to deliver technical certificates for Economic Solutions, STEGTA, JTL Ltd, and Quantica Training and is now developing apprenticeships in construction on behalf of the energy utility sector. North Trafford College heads a consortium of four Trafford providers for Train to Gain.

North Trafford College is involved in two centres of vocational excellence (CoVEs):

- gas services, installation and maintenance; and
- chemical industry, in partnership with TTE Training Ltd (a private training provider based in Ellesmere Port).

North Trafford College has a wider travel-to-learn zone than South Trafford College. Whilst both colleges draw most of their 16-18 year old students from within Trafford, adult students at North Trafford College are drawn from a much wider geographical area, which extends from Bury in the north to Wilmslow in the south and from Culcheth in the west to Dukinfield in the east.

Map 4.1: NTC and STC travel-to-learn zones



Further details of the college's curriculum offer and quality of provision can be found in sections 7 and 8.

### 4.3 South Trafford College

South Trafford College is a medium sized general FE college. Its main site is in Altrincham in the south of the Borough of Trafford (about 4.5 miles from North Trafford College's main site) and it has an outreach centre, the Learning Gateway, at Broadoak School in Partington.

In 2005/06, South Trafford College had 7,058 LSC funded learners enrolled onto a range of full and part time courses. The majority of these learners (5044) were aged 19+, with 56 of these learners enrolled onto work-based learning programmes.

Most students study on vocational programmes from entry level to level 3. The college also

offers an academic programme, a small work-based learning programme and has reintroduced Entry to Employment provision in 2006/07. South Trafford College is a member of the Trafford consortium for Train to Gain.

South Trafford College is involved in three CoVEs:

- hospitality and catering;
- training for sports and leisure industries, led by Hopwood Hall College (in Rochdale); and
- health care, led by City College, Manchester - this CoVE is in its development year and began in summer 2006.

Further details of the college's curriculum offer and quality of provision can be found in sections 7 and 8.



#### 4.4 Other Post 16 Providers

Apart from the two colleges, post-16 education and training in Trafford is provided by schools with sixth forms, special schools who have students aged 16-19, one work-based learning (WBL) provider, and the local authority as a provider of adult and community learning (ACL).

Of the eight schools with sixth forms, seven are selective grammar schools and one is a high school. Two of the 11-18 grammar schools are boys' schools, two are girls only schools (and one of each is a Catholic school). Around 40% of Trafford's year 11 pupils progress to the grammar schools each year. In 2005 Trafford was the highest performing local authority, based on A level average point scores; the selective grammar school system means that the grammar schools have significantly higher achievement rates than the high schools. The 11-18 schools have around 1,810 students in their sixth forms. Sixth form sizes range between 150 and 300 pupils and offer mostly AS or A levels.

The two special schools have around 50 post-16 students between them. The schools cater for students with moderate or severe learning difficulties. Another 20 students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are funded by the LSC to attend independent specialist colleges outside Trafford because their educational needs cannot be met locally and/or in a day school.

The one work-based learning provider based in Trafford is Quantica Training for whom there were 117 new trainees from Trafford in 2004/05. In addition approx 850 other trainees from Trafford accessed provision offered by 20 other WBL providers outside Trafford. The most popular sector subject areas for apprenticeships or advanced apprenticeships were business, administration and law; engineering and manufacturing technologies; and retail and commercial enterprise.

Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council is the borough's Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provider, with 1,200 learners in 2004/05 mainly enrolled on courses in family learning, family literacy and numeracy and ICT. Significant numbers of Trafford residents also enrol at ACL provision offered by Manchester City Council and Cheshire County Council.

Nearly half of Trafford residents access FE provision outside Trafford (41% in 2004/05). The majority of 16-18 year olds attending colleges outside Trafford go to City College Manchester, Loreto Sixth Form College, and Xaverian Sixth Form College. Adults accessing FE provision outside Trafford mainly attend City College Manchester, Manchester College of Arts and Technology, and Manchester City Council. Since a number of Trafford residents travel outside the borough for work and there are a number of colleges close to Trafford, this cross-border movement is to be expected.

In putting together the full merger proposal both colleges are also aware of the following changes to the education and training infrastructure within Trafford that will need to be considered:

- Ashton-on-Mersey School, an 11-16 foundation high school, is covered by the schools presumption via a second vocational specialism (ie, the school is considered to be high performing by the DFES; if it proposes to expand to establish a sixth form delivering vocational provision, the presumption is that this will be agreed). The school is proposing to establish a sixth form of approx 300 pupils from September 2008. The school has had the LSC's in-principle approval of the capital funding to build the sixth form. The statutory notice to establish a sixth form has been published and the proposal will be considered by Trafford schools' organisation committee shortly;
- Similarly Wellacre Technology School, an 11-16 community high school for boys, is also covered by the schools presumption and is also proposing to establish a sixth form although its proposal is at an earlier stage of development;
- The inclusion of a new work-based learning provider, Blue Training, in 2006/07 and potentially more in the future as the LSC moves increasingly towards contestable approach towards commissioning provision;
- Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council's plans to move to a commissioning model for Adult and Community Learning, rather than continue as a provider itself; and
- Outside Trafford, the possibility of a merger between City College Manchester and Manchester College of Arts and Technology is also being explored.



## 5. THE MERGER PROPOSAL

### 5.1 Origins of the Proposal and Background Work to Date

This proposal is based on the voluntary commitment of both colleges to merge. Indeed, recognising the potential benefits, both Corporations have positively and proactively embraced and facilitated the merger process. It is recognised by both colleges that this implies a particular need to establish, during the development of detailed plans for the merger, appropriate arrangements for providing assurances on the range of provision to be made available across the whole of the Trafford Borough as well as recognising the needs of both staff and students across both colleges.

Between May and July 2006, KPMG carried out a review of post-16 provision in Trafford, on behalf of LSC Greater Manchester. The primary objectives of the review were to:

- ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners of all ages, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice; and
- increase participation of young people in learning within the borough of Trafford and raise achievement at age 16 and 19.

The review was overseen by a steering group comprising representatives from schools and training providers, the college principals, the local authority, and LSC Greater Manchester. A wide range of stakeholders were interviewed for the review.

The resulting report included an overview of the status quo in Trafford, with socio economic information used to illustrate the background and needs of the local communities and employers. It also covered information on the current make-up of post-16 education and training and current levels of collaboration as well as information on local and national educational strategies. Within their report,

KPMG presented LSC Greater Manchester with:

- a summary of current patterns of delivery of post-16 provision in Trafford;
- options for future delivery patterns, taking account of the needs of young people, employers and the community in the context of local, regional and national priorities;
- recommendations on how the options might be implemented and risks associated with them; and
- recommendation of a preferred option for consideration by the LSC Greater Manchester and its strategic partners.

The Trafford post-16 review was considered by both North Trafford College and South Trafford College Corporations separately in September 2006, and presented to LSC Greater Manchester's Local Council for their consideration. The Local Council agreed that the two main recommendations of the review should be implemented, namely:

- the schools, colleges and training providers to work much more closely together on providing education and training for all young people aged 14-19 through 'planning forums' led by the LSC Greater Manchester and Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC); and
- for the two colleges, North Trafford College and South Trafford College, to consider merging.

The latter recommendation was considered in detail by both college Corporations at their respective Board meetings in July 2006 and both Corporations fully supported the recommendation.

A steering group of members from both Corporations (including both Principals) has been established to oversee the proposed merger and began its meetings in November 2006.



## 5.2 How Merger Will Be Achieved

The merger of North Trafford College and South Trafford College will be achieved through a type 'B' merger under the provisions of Section 27 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. A type 'B' merger in this case will involve the dissolution of the Corporation of North Trafford College. It is important to note that the proposed dissolution was voluntarily and unanimously entered in to by the Corporation of North Trafford College.

The property, rights and liabilities of North Trafford College will transfer to South Trafford College. Changes will be made to the governance arrangements of South Trafford College to take into account the more diverse geographical and educational interests of the new enlarged General Further Education College.

The Corporation of South Trafford College will increase its current membership to reflect the geographic, economic and business interests of the two merging colleges. This change in membership will be facilitated by adding a number of members of the Corporation of North Trafford College to an expanded Corporation of

South Trafford College. It has been agreed that those North Trafford Corporation members wishing to transfer will be absorbed into the Corporation of South Trafford College. Simultaneously with the merger proposal, South Trafford College will consult on a change of name.

A Model 'B' merger has been chosen, as these tend to be less complicated than a Model 'A' merger, where both Corporations are dissolved and a new entity created. It is felt that overall this will create fewer feelings of uncertainty for staff and students and it will provide both partners with the opportunity to influence the shape and development of the merged institution.

An indicative merger timetable is shown in **Appendix D**.

As part of the consultation process, the colleges are considering a name change. Further details can be found in section 14 (**Marketing**).



## 6. RATIONALE, OBJECTIVES AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE MERGER PROPOSAL

### 6.1 Rationale

The merger proposal is based on the voluntary commitment to merge, subject to satisfactory completion of the preparatory stages, by both colleges. As a result of the findings from the Trafford Review (July 2006), governors recognised the benefits of pursuing merger with one another.

The main rationale for the merger of the two colleges is the positive effect on Trafford learners of economies of shared expertise, shared resource and curriculum cohesion and progression.

Both colleges have significant strengths in recruitment of learners, curriculum planning and delivery, quality of provision and financial management. The proposed merger would be of **two equal partners**. Merger presents a significant opportunity to re-brand and re-position provision across the whole of Trafford so as to present a joined-up strategy for:

- 14-19 provision, with full progression routes, working in true partnership with

Trafford schools and linking into the LSC's and Local Authority's strategies to engage the NEET (Not Engaged in Education or Employment) group;

- Skills for Life, focusing on adults and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, targeted at specific groups in order to upskill the future workforce. This would also incorporate Personal and Community Development (PCDL) including Learning for Living and Work (LDD);
- Vocational skills, catering for learners from 14 upwards, with a focus towards occupational and vocational curriculum; and
- Adult education – aimed at meeting employers' needs in a professional environment. This would also focus on professional and personal development including Higher Education.

A strategy for the provision based on the merger of the two colleges should be seen as part of a broader 14-19 and adult plan. Both colleges have their own networks and partnerships through which quite extensive collaborative activity already takes place. These relationships provide the colleges with reliable information as to learner and employer demand.

The colleges are both also acutely aware of the priorities of LSC Greater Manchester as well as demographic and socio-economic trends within Trafford. They believe that in taking forward this merger they can assist the LSC in achieving its



overall vision for post-16 education in the Greater Manchester region. In this context it is important that the resources and expertise invested in both colleges are viewed as resources with the potential to contribute to meeting the needs of the local communities which the colleges serve and those who, as yet, they do not reach.

Discussions with LSC Greater Manchester have commenced with regards to securing capital following the merger which will support the development of state-of-the-art facilities and technology for the benefit of current and future learners. This will be developed in parallel with the Full Merger Proposal.

## 6.2 Vision

The vision for the merged college is:

'To create a single college for Trafford that will provide a range of outstanding provision for adults and young people. A college that will promote social inclusion and support economic prosperity for the stakeholders of Trafford.'

In bringing together the two colleges, the Corporations of North Trafford College and South Trafford College aim to:

- create a college that is regarded as one of the finest nationally in the FE system;
- achieve the new standard for responsiveness and vocational education by 2007/08;
- provide inspirational learning environments in support of the changing face of Further Education;
- provide a centre for 14-19 responding to the needs of young people and supporting all learning pathways in anticipation of the specialised diplomas;
- support the development of an informal arrangement to work with the schools in Trafford for 14-19 provision;
- provide a regional centre of excellence for Science and Technology;
- continue to develop areas of vocational specialism in addition to the five Centres of Vocational Excellence (Health, Hospitality, Sport, Chemical Industries, Gas) supporting both young people and adult skills and to meet employer needs;
- use the range of provision to increase

employer engagement as a central theme of the new college;

- develop a portfolio of Higher Education provision that meets both individual and employer need;
- create a centre for adult learning that supports personal and professional development of individuals; and
- provide a learning environment that is accessible to all, that promotes equality of opportunity and values diversity and where appropriate support is provided to ensure all students achieve their maximum potential irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.

## 6.3 Objectives of the Reorganisation

At the core of the newly merged college will be a commitment to recognition of the strengths of both colleges and of the equal value of vocational, academic and a work-based curriculum. A key aim of this merger is not about curriculum rationalisation, it is about growing participation and attainment particularly in the deprived wards within Trafford.

The colleges propose the following objectives for the merged college:

- increase retention of 16-18 year olds in Trafford by 7% (2004/05 combined 75% against a national average of 76%) by 2008/09;
- increase participation rates in adult full level 2 qualifications by 30% by 2008/09;
- increase the participation rates of Skills for Life qualifications that contribute to national targets by 30% by 2009/10;
- improve overall long qualification success rates by 6% (2004/05 combined 65% against a national average of 62%) by 2009/10;
- improve success rates on long qualifications for 16-18 year olds by 8% (2004/05 combined 67% against a national average of 65%) by 2008/09;
- increase the overall provision self assessed as outstanding to over 55% by 2008/09;
- increase the proportion of adult 'demand led' provision to 35% by 2008/09.

The colleges' ambition is to create an



infrastructure of provision that is distinctive and meets the needs of individual customers (learners, employers and stakeholders).

### Young People's College

The development of a Young People's College would aim to:

- provide a purpose built facility to meet the needs of young people in the 21st century and to further engage in the World Class Buildings strategy;
- establish and promote the safe learning environment that meets the needs of all 14-19 legislation and fully endorses the 'Every Child Matters' concept;
- establish a college for young people 14-19 that will offer a broad range of provision from entry to level 3 that will include vocational and traditional pathways of learning;
- provide a portfolio of vocational provision for young people that is complementary to specialised that leads to progression to employment and further/higher education;
- provide an infrastructure to support the delivery of apprenticeship frameworks across a broad range of occupations;
- provide a foundation tier of provision that will support young people with learning difficulties and disabilities or have low levels of attainment (including Entry to Employment);
- provide pure vocational pathways for 14-16 year olds that will include young apprenticeships;
- provide a broad portfolio of A level provision meets the needs of learners and is complementary to school sixth forms;
- centres of excellence for sport and hospitality; and
- lead on a support and integration approach with cluster schools to deliver the specialised diplomas
  - provide all learning pathways from level 1-3 in the cluster
  - provide a support network for schools in the cluster
  - support the development of curriculum content for cluster schools.

### Centre for Adult Learning and Skills

A centre of Adult Learning and Skills would aim to:

- provide a centre for higher education and professional development
  - foundation degrees
  - teacher training
  - management development
  - portfolio of professional qualifications (ACCA, AAT, CIPD, ILM)
- provide a hub for Skills for Life provision delivered in the community and on employers' premises;
- provide a delivery unit for demand led, specialist provision that is both tailored and flexible to employer needs (NVQ/Train to Gain etc);
- provide a hub for personal and community development learning (PCDL) provision in partnership with Trafford MBC delivered across various venues, that will meet the needs of individual learners and provide progression opportunities;
- work with partners in the public sector to support workforce development (health, local authority, care, education);
- provide provision that supports access to employment, further/higher education for individuals that are economically inactive or wish to change their career;
- provide a portfolio of provision to support adults with learning disabilities and /or difficulties that will lead to independent living and/or progression to employment or further education; and
- to establish a centre of excellence for health

### Science and Technology Centre

The Science and Technology Centre would aim to:

- provide a purpose-built science and technology centre of excellence offering opportunities for young people and adults across the region;
- provide and develop a portfolio of provision to support the training needs of employers and apprenticeships;
- provide the qualifications and training for the NVQ in Streets and Highways and Utilities Replacement in support of the government's national renewal of the UK infrastructure up to 2020;



- support work-based learning providers in the delivery of technical certificates and NVQ requirements;
- provide the legislative assessment and testing centres for employer training needs in gas, building services and electrical installation;
- provide and develop training provision to support the challenge to change to alternative energy as defined in the government's agenda;
- provide the training and development needs of the chemical industry to meet the challenges of foreign competition;
- provide the chemical allied industries with quality training in a flexible way to meet the needs of a small/medium enterprise structure;
- provide training for the food industry where they have a growing need to meet legislative criteria; and
- provide foundation degree and higher national certificate study opportunities in a range of subjects with the support of employers and the HE sector.

## Contemporary and Popular Music

A centre of Contemporary and Popular Music would aim to:

- provide a new location as a single occupancy to deliver the range of current provision in contemporary and popular music;
- provide education and training for 16-18 year olds as well as mature students through a range of approved qualifications;
- work with the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) to develop and meet their needs to have qualified status employees in the industry;
- provide opportunity and progression for learners through links with Access To Music (ATM) and the BPI;
- provide expert training opportunities for mature learners already in the industry;
- provide full cost training through initiatives such as summer schools;
- provide an agenda for 14-16 learners to engage in popular music in a professional manner;
- provide opportunities for learners to study popular music at foundation degree and higher national diploma levels; and
- provide progress routes to both the music industry and university.



## 6.4 Justification for the Reorganisation

The colleges share their travel-to-learn zones with a wide range of other colleges and providers. As part of the Trafford Review (July 2006), KPMG interviewed 45 stakeholders and broached the possibility of a merger with them as part of that interview.

Broadly the stakeholders supported the possibility of a merger or did not feel strongly either way. Some were more cautious about possible negative impacts (eg, the merged college having an undue influence on the development of provision in schools). Some considered a federal system would be beneficial instead.

A range of positive comments from other colleges and providers included:

- the financial, logistical and strategic sense of merging the two colleges;
- the benefit from reduced duplication of provision and services;
- the absence of local competition would enable the merged college to focus fully on meeting learners' needs;
- the merged college could and should increase participation through developing a broader range of programmes;
- the strength that would accrue to a merged college stemming from two strong individual colleges;

- whilst some anticipated difficulties in bringing together the distinctive cultures of two existing colleges, stakeholders recognised that both cultures developed in response to each colleges' learners' needs and considered it would be crucial to retain elements of both for the engagement of future learners; and
- a potentially stronger case to attract capital funding than two individual colleges.

Both colleges believe that merger is essential to effect the step-change required in Trafford to meet future needs for learners and provide an infrastructure that can respond more flexibly and innovatively to changes in educational policy, such as the joint delivery with schools for the 14-19 age group and the drive towards 'demand led' provision for adults and employers. Combined the two colleges can provide a comprehensive mix of education and training from pre-entry to level 4, with clear pathways and progression routes, delivered through high quality teaching and learning in high quality environments. It would enable comprehensive strategic decisions to be made about geographical delivery throughout the borough.

The Trafford Review (July 2006) considered a number of options for the future pattern of provision within the Trafford area. The preferred option, which incorporated the recommendation



of merger between the two colleges, was derived at for a number of key reasons:

- Both colleges have strong links with the 11-16 high schools and have developed positive 14-16 links – the proposed merger will build upon those and offer Trafford pupils a wider choice of vocational options pre-16. The introduction of specialised diplomas requires a higher level of collaboration than has previously been necessary. The merged college will be a key player in the successful delivery of the 14-19 agenda in Trafford. Both colleges support the proposal that the merged college and the schools and other providers work in local 'clusters' in a spirit of true partnership with shared responsibility for planning and delivery and aiming to provide high quality provision to meet the needs of learners, rather than the needs of the respective institutions. All of the partners need to be fully involved in delivering the provision that best matches their skills, experience and facilities;
- A partnership approach and the development of an innovative curriculum (and delivery) will be essential for Trafford to address the persistent NEET group. Engaging these young people is vital for their future, given employment trends away from jobs requiring low or no qualifications;
- The number of young people in Trafford is reducing in the next few years. Schools in Trafford are establishing (or have indicated that they wish to establish) sixth forms. Competition from colleges in the surrounding area is increasing. The colleges believe that merger will strengthen their position and, by removing one layer of competition locally, enable it to work more collaboratively with other providers to ensure that 'competition' (by providing choice of curriculum and learning environment) works in the learner's favour;
- A merged college will present a streamlined point of contact and consistent approach to engaging with employers and addressing the borough's Skills for Life needs. The trends for funding adult learning (less public funding and a greater contribution from the individual or the employer; the LSC's move to a commissioning approach) means that planning provision will require greater sensitivity than ever before. A merged college will have greater flexibility to

respond whilst having the strength to bend with the pressures;

- Both colleges are successful in their own right. There is evidently a great deal of good practice in each, which can be more easily shared and embedded in a merged college rather than in a partnership/federation. The perceived differences in culture and environment could be maintained (and further developed) through rebranding for specific target groups of learners;
- Early indications are that colleagues in the education sector either support the merger or see no strong reason against it;
- The colleges' overlapping travel-to-learn zones show that learners travel from throughout Trafford – and beyond – to attend the colleges, and that a merger should not disrupt that. Both colleges consider that their respective main sites need to be retained for continuity and ease of access; and
- Any adjustments required to align the colleges' respective accounting policies will be minimal.

## 6.5 Benefits of the Reorganisation: Summary

### Expectations

- A capability for raising the expectations of learners, trainees, employers and other stakeholders particularly in the more deprived wards within Trafford

### Curriculum and teaching and learning

- The ability to develop a wider range of learning opportunities at all levels within a larger scale operation and to engage in an ongoing and constructive dialogue with other providers.
- The provision of a clearer range of progression opportunities for learners within the merged college, which could facilitate more students progressing to higher education and into occupational sectors with relevant skills, knowledge and understanding already developed, thus ultimately increasing the skills base available to regenerate the local economy.
- The opportunity to re-distribute the 14-19 curriculum offer across the range of college sites to contribute to a more rational, efficient and complementary organisation of



the curriculum, (including specialist programmes that require greater investment of facility and technology).

- The opportunity to provide further improvements for work based learners through effective use of existing resources, continued support for learners both at college and in the workplace, and for the provision of additional support for work based assessment.

#### Widening Participation

- Increased opportunities to widen participation amongst hard to reach groups leading in particular to an increased uptake in basic skills and level one programmes.
- Promoting equality and diversity in terms of participation and attainment.
- Provision of wider opportunities for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

#### Resources

- The ability to manage capital resources and expand the resource base more efficiently and effectively to meet the needs of learners.
- Improved infrastructure and learning/training facilities, resulting from investment in the development of many of the current sites.

#### Quality and Learner Support

- The opportunity to further improve on the already strong provision through the sharing of best practice leading to continued improved levels of participation, retention, achievement, and success. The pooling of skills, expertise, and physical resources available to the newly merged college will make possible the provision of a greater range of staff development opportunities to teaching and support staff which is consistent with one of the main themes of 'Success for All'.
- Effective student advice and guidance, building on the good practice that has been developed by both institutions.
- Growth and development of services to business.

Overall the principal benefit of the merger will be the creation a single cost effective, high quality General Further Education College, which builds on the strengths of the two institutions. The merged college will also meet the changing needs of learners and support the developing

local infrastructures and the regional economy. It will further extend participation in education, learning and training within the area – particularly where there is significant under representation amongst identifiable groups of potential students.

## 7. LEARNERS AND CURRICULUM PROVISION

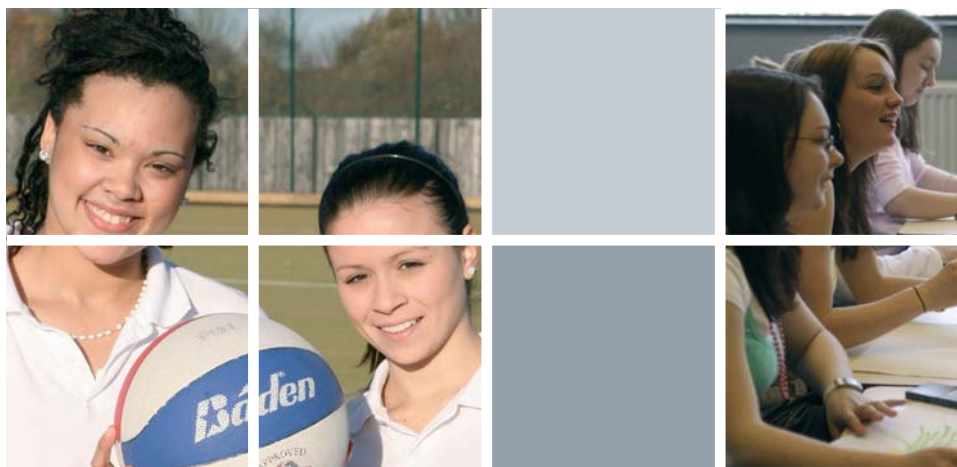
For current students at either college, it is proposed that, where possible, students would continue their studies in the same location as that where their studies currently commenced. Where a change in location is deemed necessary, the merged college would endeavour to consult with students so that that every effort is made to ensure the needs of its learners are met.

Regardless of where new and existing provision will be located in the merged college, it is proposed that a detailed transport strategy will be developed in collaboration with Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, the merged College and the LSC Greater Manchester to ensure that movement between sites would be as convenient as possible.

Although it is difficult at this stage to detail curriculum changes and harmonisation that will be required during and after the merger, this section of the Consultation Document provides an overview of provision at both colleges which will be used as a starting point for planning purposes for the merged college.

Data from the LSC Standard analysis dataset (ILR) for the 2005/06 academic year has been used to analyse provision at the two colleges. Enrolment data is used primarily where the subject of the analysis is linked to the qualifications or courses undertaken by each learner.

The ILR has not been used to analyse 14 – 16 provision as there is a limited amount of information reported in the ILR. The colleges have provided details on the provision offered to this group of learners and this has been reported in **section 12**.



## 7.1 Learner numbers

TABLE 7.1 – LEARNER NUMBERS BY COLLEGE 2005 – 06 ALL AGES		
	Number of learners	% of learners in a merged institute
North Trafford College	6957	52%
South Trafford College	6333	48%
Total	13290	100%

Source: ILR F04 2005-06

Table 7.1 illustrates that North Trafford College currently has in the region of 6857 learners and South Trafford College in the region of 6333 learners. This would mean that the merged institution would have in the region of 13,290 learners, making a merged institute a more significant provider within the Greater Manchester region.

TABLE 7.2 – LEARNER NUMBERS BY AGE BAND						
	North Trafford College of Further Education		South Trafford College		Total	
16-18	1158	16.6%	1911	30.2%	3069	23.1%
19-20	361	5.2%	368	5.8%	729	5.5%
21-24	638	9.2%	553	8.7%	1191	9.0%
25-59	4224	60.7%	3186	50.3%	7410	55.8%
60 and over	570	8.2%	311	4.9%	881	6.6%
Missing age	6	0.1%	4	0.1%	10	0.1%
Total	6957	100.0%	6333	100.0%	13290	100.0%

Source: ILR F04 2005-06

The table above shows that the majority of provision in both colleges is delivered to adult learners aged 25 – 59 (50% for South Trafford College and 60% for North Trafford College of Further Education).



**TABLE 7.3 – LEARNER NUMBERS BY MODE OF ATTENDANCE**

	North Trafford College of Further Education		South Trafford College		Total	
Full-time	1420	20.4%	2236	35.3%	3656	27.5%
Part-time	5537	79.6%	4097	64.7%	9634	72.5%
Total	6957	100.0%	6333	100.0%	13290	100.0%

Source: ILR F04 2005-06

The table above shows that both colleges attract more learners on a part time basis, North Trafford College of Further Education attracts nearly 80% while South Trafford College attracts 65%.

**TABLE 7.4 – LEARNER NUMBERS BY GENDER**

Gender	North Trafford College of Further Education		South Trafford College		Total	
Female	3584	51.5%	4077	64.4%	7661	57.6%
Male	3373	48.5%	2256	35.6%	5629	42.4%
Total	6957	100.0%	6333	100.0%	13290	100.0%

Source: ILR F04 2005-06

The table above shows that South Trafford College attracts almost twice as many female learners than male learners while North Trafford College of Further Education attracts an equal mix of male and female learners. North Trafford College of Further Education attracts over 1,000 more male learners than South Trafford College which is likely to be a result of the curriculum offer provided at North Trafford College.

## 7.2 Enrolment numbers

**TABLE 7. 5 ENROLMENTS BY COLLEGE BY SECTOR SUBJECT AREA**

Sector subject area	North Trafford College of Further Education		South Trafford College		Total	
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	109	0.8%	1	0.0%	110	0.4%
Arts, Media and Publishing	576	4.1%	1451	10.1%	2027	7.1%
Business, Administration and Law	741	5.2%	657	4.6%	1398	4.9%
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	1012	7.1%	174	1.2%	1186	4.1%
Education and Training	272	1.9%	257	1.8%	529	1.8%
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	1976	13.9%	12	0.1%	1988	6.9%
Health, Public Services and Care	2656	18.7%	870	6.0%	3526	12.3%
History, Philosophy and Theology	8	0.1%	91	0.6%	99	0.3%
Information and Communication Technology	928	6.5%	1388	9.6%	2316	8.1%
Languages, Literature and Culture	161	1.1%	902	6.3%	1063	3.7%
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	213	1.5%	1390	9.6%	1603	5.6%
Preparation for Life and Work	5141	36.2%	4983	34.5%	10124	35.3%
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	24	0.2%	1494	10.4%	1518	5.3%
Science and Mathematics	385	2.7%	528	3.7%	913	3.2%
Social Sciences	0	0.0%	180	1.2%	180	0.6%
Unknown	13	0.1%	48	0.3%	61	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14215</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>14426</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>28641</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: ILR F04 2005-06

The table above illustrates enrolments during 2005-06 at both colleges against Sector Subject Area (SSA). This table will be used as a basis for forecasting curriculum provision by SSA for the merged college in the Full Merger Proposal. The largest areas of provision for both colleges are: Preparation for Life and Work; Health, Public Services and Care; and Information and Communication Technology which accounts for approximately 55% of all FE provision in Trafford. It can be seen that there is significant curriculum overlap in these SSA areas, however, such overlap is common. They are SSAs that are relatively 'light' in terms of facility and resources costs and provision is likely to remain viable on both campuses of the merged institute. Indeed further analysis of the qualifications offered at both colleges display a highly complementary offer which is an optimum model when bringing together the curriculum of two merging colleges.

North Trafford College of Further Education attracts significantly more enrolments on Construction, Planning and the Built Environment; Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies sector subject areas, whilst South

Trafford College tends to attract more learners onto the Leisure, Travel and Tourism; and Retail and Commercial Enterprise sector subject areas.

The sector subject areas of Social Sciences; Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care; and History, Philosophy and Theology attract limited numbers of enrolments at the two colleges.

The table indicates that the potential merger of the colleges has the potential to create significant curriculum synergies in that the learners from either college would have access to additional areas of learning, whilst other areas would have sufficient critical mass in order to protect the provision for current and future learners. The merger would also enable the sharing of staff expertise, and the better use of equipment and resources, particularly those for resource expensive SSAs, across the merged organisation.

Where both colleges have relatively small numbers of learners in certain areas of the curriculum, merger will combine these numbers and permit more efficient delivery of the provision.



## Curriculum Summary

The merger will put the needs of the learner first, by providing a curriculum which better meets their needs, with wider choice, improved quality of provision, clearer pathways, and improved facilities. This means that the potential merger of the colleges would create significant curriculum synergies in that the learners from either college would have access to additional areas of learning, whilst other areas would have sufficient critical mass in order to protect the provision for current and future learners.

The merger will also allow more efficient use of resources in terms of the specialisms currently provided within both colleges, and will create pathways for entry level to level 4 in a number of key areas. It will also provide learners with access to the staff and specialist equipment of both colleges, therefore providing them with an improved learner experience.

Any major changes to the curriculum offer would be made in consultation with the LSC Greater Manchester and in the context of a collaborative partnership framework as outlined in section 12.

## 8. QUALITY

The merged institution will be subject to external scrutiny by the Learning and Skills Council through Annual Planning Review and the Office for Standards in Education [OfSTED] for 16-19 provision, the Adult Learning

Inspectorate [ALI] for work-based learning and adult provision, and Quality Assurance Agency [QAA] for HE provision

Currently the two colleges have their own quality systems, which are intended to assure themselves and others of their ability to manage the quality of their academic and training provision and to be responsive to the external agenda for quality and standards. A degree of harmonisation will be required in order to ensure that the systems adopted are efficient and effective in providing the Corporation, senior managers, and course teams with accurate information and evidence about the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

The two colleges endorse a common commitment to a culture of self-assessment for quality improvement. Both institutions now have sound strategic planning and quality assurance systems, teaching effectiveness programmes, and course and programme area reviews that drive the curriculum planning, development and delivery process. It is therefore clear that the merged college can build upon the best features of the existing systems and protocols to ensure harmonisation at the earliest possible time.

Both North Trafford College and South Trafford College were inspected by OfSTED during the past inspection cycle. North Trafford College was last inspected by OfSTED in November 2003 and received grades 2 (good) for eight of 10 curriculum areas and grade 3 (satisfactory) for the other two.

**TABLE 8.1: OFSTED CURRICULUM INSPECTION GRADES FOR NORTH TRAFFORD COLLEGE, NOVEMBER 2003**

Curriculum area	OfSTED grade
Science	Good
Construction	Good
Engineering	Good
Business, management and professional	Good
Information and communications technology	Good
Health and social care	Good
Art, design and performing arts	Satisfactory
Literacy and numeracy	Good
Provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	Satisfactory
English for speakers of other languages	Good



South Trafford College was last inspected by OfSTED in January 2006. It was awarded grade 1 for all five areas inspected (effectiveness of provision, capacity to improve, achievement and standards, quality of provision, leadership and management) - the first college in England to be considering outstanding. It was awarded learning and skills beacon status in July 2006.

North Trafford College's success rates between 2002/03 and 2004/05 are good with 16-18 year olds rates showing an increase of 20+ percentage points across levels 1, 2 and 3. For South Trafford College, OfSTED commented: "Success rates on most courses are higher than the national averages and many of them place the college in the top ten percent of colleges nationally."

It can therefore be concluded that bringing the two institutions together will create an even stronger single organisation that will have the opportunity to create financial surpluses which can be re-invested into the curriculum and ensuring the quality of resources as well as teaching and learning. This should ensure continuous and sustained success in the overall quality of learning and training experience within the new college.

## 9. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

### 9.1 Governance

The Governors of both colleges have approached the merger in a spirit of openness and collaboration. They have formed a Merger Steering Group to manage the merger process. This group aims to meet regularly in order to discuss ongoing issues relating to the merger.

The merged institution will form a single Corporation that will seek to serve the vision and mission of the enlarged Further and Higher Education College. The Corporation of South Trafford College will increase its current membership to reflect the geographic, economic and business interests of the two merging colleges. This change in membership will be facilitated by adding a number of members of the Corporation of North Trafford College to an expanded Corporation of South Trafford College. It has been agreed that those North Trafford Corporation members wishing to transfer will be absorbed into the Corporation of South Trafford College. Simultaneously with the merger proposal, South Trafford College will consult on a change of name.



### 9.2 Management

The newly merged college will have a management structure designed to ensure coherent cross college development whilst at the same time ensuring teaching and learning and student support remain at the core. The management structure will be developed to reflect the wider geographical and community spread of the newly merged college.

The management structure of the new college will need to have as one of main precepts the strong leadership and management of those areas of the college that focus on its main business, i.e. learning and training and quality assurance.

## 10. HUMAN RESOURCES

**The Corporations of both colleges recognise that their staff are the key resource for the new merged college and hence both sets of staff will be crucial to its development.** It is also felt that developing this merger will create greater opportunities for staff career development with a larger institution which offers greater breadth and depth to the curriculum offer.

The commitment and effectiveness of the staff of the merged college will be central to its success. Equally, working within a larger institution provides greater opportunities for staff career and professional development.

There may be a number of contractual issues between the terms and conditions of the two existing organisations. Whilst there may be an opportunity to harmonise some conditions of service when the merged college is established, the requirements of TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employment) rights will apply, and the Governing Body will be mindful of the obligations of the college under the European Acquired Rights Directive.

An early priority will be to promote clarity and certainty for staff through communication and consultation across a range of channels including recognised trade unions. To this end preliminary discussions with the recognised trade unions will begin in early 2007.



## 11. ESTATES AND ASSETS

### 11.1 North Trafford College

The college currently occupies three sites:

- Talbot Road – the main campus;
- The Technology Centre, Moss Road; and
- Beehive Mill.

The Talbot Road building was constructed over two floors in c.1940, and is of traditional brick with a tiled roof. It was extended to the rear in the late 1940s, and the building is now configured around a central courtyard, and covers a floor area of approximately 9,400m<sup>2</sup>. A new reception area, which projects from the original frontage, was built in 1997, and in 2000 the wall forming the rear elevation was replaced. In 2002 a 570m<sup>2</sup> greenhouse complex was erected in the central square to provide space for horticulture provision. There was work to ensure DDA compliance in 2003/04 and 2005/06, and in 2006 the laboratories were refurbished.

The building is generally fit for purpose, and was rated as Category B in terms of functional suitability by the college in its most recent assessment. Inside, the building is well lit, and its circulation areas have a modern feel as a result of new doors, lighting and flooring. Inevitably with a building of this age, even one that has been well maintained, there are a number of maintenance issues. These include the need to replace a number of windows at an estimated cost of £300,000.

There are adequate transport links to the site. Car parking is relatively restricted, with 100 student spaces. However, there are effective reciprocal car parking arrangements with a nearby venue which largely deals with overspill parking.

The Technology Centre at Moss Road is of square configuration, with classroom space serviced by a circulation corridor around a central workshop area which houses provision in respect of motor vehicle / engineering, street works and construction (electrical, gas fitting and plumbing). Of single-skin brick construction over two floors, it provides a floor area of 5,900m<sup>2</sup>. The motor vehicle workshops are housed in a rear extension, built in 1997, which also houses a paint shop.

Although structurally solid, and rewired in 2001, the building has antiquated heating systems and a high proportion of flat roofed areas, which cause problems. Internally the building is not in good condition in some areas, despite upgrade works that were undertaken 2–3 years ago. Despite ongoing maintenance spending the building does not give a good impression. Full compliance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act will be difficult to achieve. In terms of functional suitability, some areas are rated B but others are rated C by the college.

The site is now at the end of a cul-de-sac following the closure of Moss Road just beyond the college site. There is good space for parking provision, but some areas of the car park are in poor condition.

The Technology Centre is in an area of light industrial units, but there is recent, relatively low-cost, housing development immediately across Moss Road from the site. Enquiries have not been made of the relevant planning authority in terms of alternative use, but college staff feel that housing development would be a viable alternative use of the site. The college notes that the travel to learn footprint of the Technology Centre is relatively large because of the specialist nature of the provision, and this might make relocation of the provision a viable alternative to upgrading the current facilities.

The Beehive Mill facility in Jersey Street, Ancoats, Manchester is rented accommodation amounting to approximately 1,000m<sup>2</sup>. The site, with additional rented rooms, is used to teach music related courses. The lease will expire in 2007, and an alternative site providing 1,200m<sup>2</sup> of space has been identified at Newton Street, Manchester. A formal commitment to these new premises had not been made in 2006, but corporation approval has been given to the scheme which involves a 10 year lease with a 5 year break clause and includes fit out costs estimated by the college at £800,000 including VAT. Elements of the scheme were reflected in the college's July 2006 financial forecasts, and the scheme will have to be addressed in forecasts for the possible merged institution. Funding for the work is planned to come from college reserves and the scheme will provide "as new" facilities for teaching and learning in respect of contemporary music. It is the college view that music provision would be impossible in September 2007 without new premises.



## 11.2 South Trafford College

The main college site is at Manchester Road, West Timperley, with a "learning gateway" at Broadoak School, Partington. The main college site is freehold, but the Partington space is leasehold. The site at Manchester Road is serviced by a recently constructed link road into an area of office development, and is close to a new housing development by Redrow Homes on land formerly owned by the college.

The facilities at Manchester Road have been significantly enhanced and expanded over the period since incorporation. Investment has amounted to approximately £14.5M over the last 12 years, which has been supported by £5M of grant funding. The remainder has been funded by the college, partly through a land sale which raised c.£3M, partly from reserves and partly from secured borrowing. Secured loans amounting to c.£3.7M remain outstanding.

With the exception of the main college administration block, which also houses the main reception and learning resource centre, the majority of the campus buildings are relatively new and largely in good condition. The main college administration block and associated areas is the only part of the site likely to be rated at Category C in terms of functional suitability. New build and refurbishment at the site in recent years has included:

- Provision of hair and beauty therapy facilities in the Ray Holden Building (1997);
- Construction of the "Sports Barn" (1998) – since refurbished;
- Refurbishment of the main reception area and IT facilities (2000);
- Construction of the hospitality and tourism building (2003);
- Construction of the creative arts building (2005); and
- Car park remodelling, other external works, astro turf pitch (2006).

The college is in the process of preparing a capital bid to the LSC in respect of the partial demolition and refurbishment of the main administration block. This would result in the re-siting of the reception area, which would then face the link road as well as an internal

courtyard area formed from the existing buildings and into which the current reception area projects substantially, effectively dividing the courtyard. This scheme has a likely cost of c.£12M, and an in principle application for funding in respect of the development is likely to be made to the LSC early in 2007.

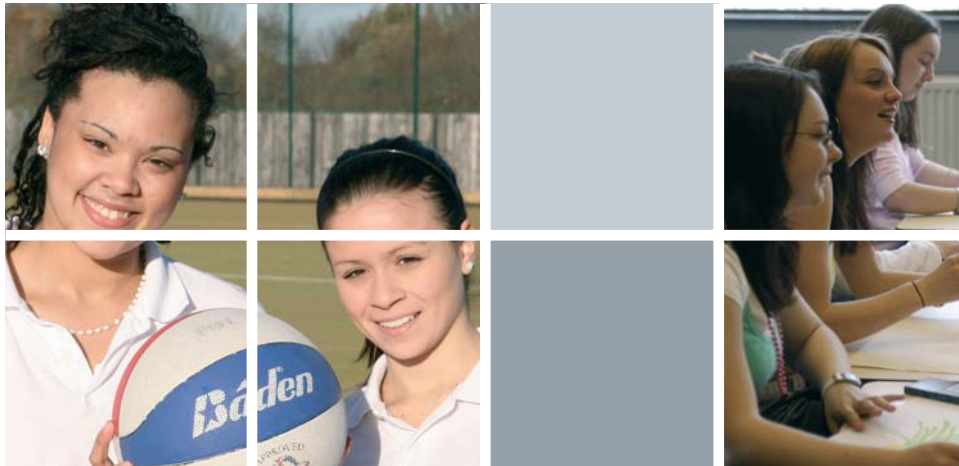
The college also holds an area of freehold land on the other side of the link road at the Manchester Road site. Known as the "White Land" this amounts to c.5.7 acres, although this includes an area of flood plain land. The site is currently subject to planning restrictions.

## 11.3 Summary

The mix of provision at the two institutions is rather different, with South Trafford College being more predominantly a 16-18 institution with more modern facilities than the North Trafford College Talbot Road site and covering a wider range of vocational specialisms. It has been suggested by college managers that the main focus of 16-18 provision in the medium to longer term at a merged institution should therefore be at the Manchester Road site providing analysis of space utilisation demonstrates that this is viable. Regardless of where new and existing provision will be located in the merged college, it is proposed that a detailed transport strategy will be developed in collaboration with Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, the merged College and the LSC Greater Manchester to ensure that movement between sites would be as convenient as possible.

There is a pressing need for the improvement of facilities currently housed at the North Trafford College Technology Centre. Sale of this site for development is a possibility, and it has been suggested that development at South Trafford College's "White Land" site may be a possibility.

For current students at either college, it is proposed that, where possible, students would continue their studies in the same location as that where their studies currently commenced. Where a change in location is deemed necessary, the merged college would endeavour to consult with students so that every effort is made to ensure the needs of its learners are met.



## 12. COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

The two colleges at present make a significant provision for school based 14–16 year olds. Consequently reorganisation would allow the further development of regional 14–19 Implementation Plans that should continue to develop strong and co-ordinated partnerships with schools and local private training providers. Such partnership arrangements should increase the range of opportunities offered to 14–19 year olds including vocational and occupational oriented qualification provision.

### 12.1 Existing Collaborative Arrangements

The 14–16 curriculum provides a variety of vocational courses across a range of levels that enables learners to achieve and progress. This provision has seen marked improvements in performance with South Trafford College achievement rates increasing from 67% to 96% (Cohorts 1&2). Recruitment levels have also increased substantially at South Trafford College from 22(Cohort 1) to 71 (Cohort 4).

Through the recent introduction of Level 2 BTEC 1st Certificates, the Curriculum offer is responsive to the needs of learners and for Cohort 4 (2005–2007) spans Entry to Level 2 as follows:

**TABLE 12.1: 14–16 LINKS**

	Level	Provider
Beauty Therapy	NVQ L1	South Trafford College
Catering	NVQ L1	South Trafford College
Childcare	Cache E/L1	South Trafford College
Hairdressing	NVQ L1	South Trafford College
Media	BTEC 1st Cert	South Trafford College
Sport	BTEC 1st Cert	South Trafford College
Construction	FCA L1	TCC
e-Media	BTEC 1st Cert	North Trafford College
Motor Vehicle Repair	NVQ L1	North Trafford College
Performing Engineering	NVQ L1	North Trafford College
Business Admin	NVQ L1	North Trafford College
Accountancy	ATT L2	North Trafford College
Electrical	OCNW EL 3	North Trafford College
Plumbing	OCNW EL 3	North Trafford College
Sustainable Development	NCFE Level	Groundwork



Strong partnerships with schools and other providers have resulted in better provision for many learners and the Increased Flexibility Programme represents a menu of vocational programmes delivered by a partnership of 4 providers.

Since its inception in 2002, recruitment to the partnership has increased as follows:

TABLE 12.2: 14-16 RECRUITMENT			
Cohort	Year	Number of pupils	Number of courses
Cohort 1	(2002-2004)	57 pupils	8 courses
Cohort 2	(2003-2005)	106 pupils	9 courses
Cohort 3	(2004-2006)	132 pupils	10 courses
Cohort 4	(2005-2007)	175 pupils	13 courses
Cohort 5	(2006-2008)	193 pupils	14 courses

These pupils are drawn from 10 partner schools as follows:

Altrincham College of Arts, Blessed Thomas Holford, Wellacre Technology College, Ashton on Mersey, Broadoak High School, Stretford High School, Lostock College, Flixton Girls High School, Sale High School, St Antony's Business and Enterprise College

## 12.2 14-16 Bespoke links at South Trafford College

The College has built on the success of the IFP programme and has developed a number of innovative individual partnerships with schools whereby delivery of BTEC 1st Diplomas is shared, with the College delivering the vocational specialisms for 3hrs/wk and schools delivering underpinning knowledge for 2-2.5hrs/wk.

Programmes are as follows:

TABLE 12.3: 14-16 BESPOKE LINKS AT SOUTH TRAFFORD COLLEGE			
School	Qualification 05/06	Number of pupils	Yr
Ashton on Mersey	BTEC 1st Diploma Business	15	Yr 11
Ashton on Mersey	BTEC Nat Cert Business	6	Yr 12
Mereside Trust	BTEC 1st Cert	2	Yr 11
Mereside Trust	BTEC Nat Cert Business	15	Yr 12
Wellacre	BTEC 1st Diploma Sport	15	Yr 11
Wellacre	BTEC 1st Diploma Media	32	Yr 10
Wellacre	BTEC 1st Diploma Media	15	Yr 11
BTH	BTEC 1st Diploma Sport	15	Yr 11
Lostock College	BTEC 1st Diploma Media	15	Yr 10
Lostock College	BTEC 1st Diploma Media	12	Yr 11
ACA	BTEC 1st Diploma Media	15	Yr 10
<b>Total</b>		<b>157</b>	



### 12.3 14-16 Bespoke links at North Trafford College

Likewise at North Trafford College there is a vast range of 14-16 provision currently being provided for a number of local schools.

**TABLE 12.4: 14-16 BESPOKE LINKS AT NORTH TRAFFORD COLLEGE**

School	Qualification 05/06	Number of pupils	Yr
Wellacre BHS	GCSE Dual Award Engineering	33	10
Wellacre BHS	GCSE Dual Award Engineering	27	11
St Antony's	GCSE Dual Award Engineering	15	10
St Antony's	GCSE Dual Award Engineering	28	11
Jeff Joseph	GCSE Dual Award Engineering	20	10
Ashton on Mersey	GCSE Single Award Construction	16	10
Ashton on Mersey	GCSE Dual Award Construction	12	10
Wellacre BHS	GCSE Dual Award Construction	16	10
St Antony's	GCSE Single Award Construction	11	10
St Antony's	NVQ Administration Level 1	8	10
St Antony's	NVQ Administration Level 1	10	11
Manor School	Unit Award Scheme Horticulture	14	10&11
Manor School	Engineering Skills	11	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>221</b>	

### 12.4 Future collaboration and partnerships

Both colleges have a rich tradition of working in partnership and collaboration with education and training organisations and other institutes that have a stake in seeing these remain strong and active. The merged college represents an opportunity to build upon the good work which is currently being undertaken to ensure that the new organisation further develops collaborative approaches and works in partnership with the key stakeholders in the Trafford and surrounding area.

Strong employer links already exist at both colleges. Robust and productive working relationships with a wide range of employers working in the region will ensure the development of a wider and richer range of work-based learning and training programmes for the new institute. Focused 'branded' activity will engage employers in a broader range of learning and business support initiatives.



## 13 FINANCIAL INDICATORS

This section shows the actual and projected finances of the two colleges between 2004/05 and 2008/09.

### 13.1 North Trafford College

North Trafford College is a highly successful general further education college with a vocational emphasis. Over recent years the college has invested substantially in the resources and the environment for learners. It is intended to extend this during 2006-07 through the development of a new music and performance facility as well continuing the investment in equipment particularly IT assets.

In November 2003 in conjunction with an OfSTED inspection the college achieved grade 2 – full assurance – for the effectiveness of the college's financial management and governance

frameworks for the provider financial assurance (PFA) review. The PFA team commented on the college's robust financial position, maintained excellent financial health, and good internal audit reports and financial statements management letters. This situation has continued to date.

The college's current financial health assessment is category A and this is expected to be maintained into the foreseeable future.

The college has used the approved financial statements for 2004/05 (as restated for FRS 17) and draft financial statements for 2005/06, together with the three year financial forecast 2006/07 to 2008/09 as approved by the corporation in July 2006 in order to populate the tables below.

**Table 13.1: Financial Statements, North Trafford College**

	2004/05 actual £000s	2005/06 actual £000s	2006/07 forecast £000s	2007/08 forecast £000s	2008/09 forecast £000s
LSC/HEFCE income	10,459	10,061	10,342	10,486	<b>10,745</b>
Other income	2,381	2,658	2,563	2,780	<b>2,922</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>12,840</b>	<b>12,719</b>	<b>12,905</b>	<b>13,266</b>	13,667
Pay expenditure	8,726	9,058	9,398	9,693	<b>9,999</b>
Non pay expenditure	3,172	2,719	2,809	2,820	<b>2,898</b>
Depreciation	771	786	780	820	<b>820</b>
Interest payable	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>12,669</b>	<b>12,563</b>	<b>12,987</b>	<b>13,333</b>	13,717
Loss on asset disposal	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Trading surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>(82)</b>	<b>(67)</b>	(50)
Impact of FRS 17	21	82	78	78	<b>78</b>
Staff restructuring costs	60	27	50	50	<b>50</b>
Loss on asset disposal	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Underlying operating surplus / (deficit)	252	265	46	61	78

**Table 13.2: Key financial ratio, North Trafford College**

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cash generated from operations	0.02	0.09	0.04	0.04	0.04
Cash Days	74.61	94.81	70.76	76.15	81.51
Current ratio	4.04	3.87	3.89	4.18	4.49
General reserve as a percentage of income	43.36%	46.52%	46.33%	45.87%	45.40%
Operating surplus as a percentage of income	1.5%	1.93%	-0.03%	0.08%	0.21%
<b>Borrowing as percentage of income</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>



### 13.2 South Trafford College

South Trafford College is a highly successful general further education college. Over recent years the college has invested substantially in resources for learners. This was acknowledged in the recent OfSTED visit when the college was awarded grade 1s in all five areas of the inspection. In addition the college achieved grade 1 (full assurance) for the effectiveness of its financial management and governance frameworks for the PFA review. The PFA team commented on key strengths which included:

- action and information used to improve efficiency and economy;
- effective delivery of capital projects to date, time and cost with improved quality and with post project evaluations enabling the college to apply lessons learned; and
- a good range of financial information, options and risk evaluations including accurate financial forecasts flowing from senior management to governors on committee and at the board of the corporation.

However the impact of the capital programme is evident in the financial position of the college as at 31 July 2006, where the cash position of the college is weak. This was anticipated by the college and plans are in place to improve the college's financial health prior to embarking on the next phase of the capital programme. The college's financial health self assessment was grade B as at 31 July 2006. The management accounts for October 2006 indicate that the college is on target to achieve the 2006/07 budget position and that the college's cash position will continue to improve. The college will factor in the final phase of the capital programme when the outline costs and the LSC indicative contribution have been agreed.

The college has used the approved financial statements for 2004/05 (as restated for FRS 17) and draft financial statements for 2005/06, together with information in the three year financial forecast 2006/07 to 2008/09, as approved by the corporation in July 2006 in order to populate the table below:

**Table 13.3: Financial Statements, South Trafford College**

	2004/05 actual £000s	2005/06 actual £000s	2006/07 forecast £000s	2007/08 forecast £000s	2008/09 forecast £000s
LSC income	12,671	12,455	12,546	13,061	<b>13,314</b>
Other income	2,595	2,140	2,138	2,015	<b>2,034</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>15,266</b>	<b>14,595</b>	<b>14,684</b>	<b>15,076</b>	15,348
Pay expenditure	10,468	10,269	9,762	9,945	<b>10,191</b>
Non pay expenditure	4,003	3,867	3,708	3,896	<b>3,899</b>
Depreciation	638	749	698	698	<b>698</b>
Interest payable	167	132	216	216	<b>216</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>15,276</b>	<b>15,017</b>	<b>14,384</b>	<b>14,755</b>	15,004
Loss on asset disposal	8	98			
<b>Trading surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>(422)</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>321</b>	344
Impact of FRS 17	32	185	32	32	<b>32</b>
Staff restructuring costs	126	145		50	
Loss on asset disposal	8	98			
<b>Underlying operating surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>376</b>

**Table 13.4: Key Financial Ratios, South Trafford College**

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cash generated from operations	0.07	0.02	0.06	0.07	<b>0.07</b>
Cash Days	10.47	14.32	28.04	42.11	<b>56.90</b>
Current ratio	0.93	0.79	1.23	1.74	<b>2.17</b>
General reserve as a percentage of income	40.01%	40.15%	41.54%	42.82%	<b>44.54%</b>
Operating surplus as a percentage of income	0.15%	-0.97%	2.30%	2.38%	<b>2.49%</b>
<b>Borrowing as percentage of income</b>	<b>16.13%</b>	<b>17.81%</b>	<b>23.86%</b>	<b>23.23%</b>	<b>22.81%</b>



### 13.3 Summary

The merged institution would bring together two financially strong colleges, which would have a potential combined turnover of approximately £29 million by the end of 2008/09, and would generate a trading surplus of approximately £294,000 even before any benefits from merger were considered. This would result in a financially strong and healthy college able to make efficient use of all resources and invest in the future.

It is anticipated that cost savings will accrue from rationalisation in some curriculum areas, cross college functions and space utilisation, and in the more efficient use of available resources and estates.

The development of a merged college would precipitate the creation of a flagship college across all college sites which would provide state of the art facilities to meet the needs of learners in the surrounding areas, and would provide vocational, further and higher education opportunities in the Trafford area.

The FE sector is facing significant funding challenges in the short to medium term. In bringing together these two organisations, it is anticipated that a more future-proofed combined institution will be created. This

financially robust institution will have the opportunity to create greater surpluses on the income and expenditure account, which can then be re-invested in curriculum resources for the benefits of current and future learners.

## 14. MARKETING

In order to improve and enhance participation levels in the area, which is a major element of the proposal, it is essential that a well-structured marketing strategy be adopted. Consequently a clearly defined marketing strategy is proposed which will be developed and deployed for the newly merged organisation, taking into account relevant catchment areas, different community needs, and associated local, sub regional and national agendas. Clearly identified stakeholder and focus groups will be widely consulted in the development of new marketing strategies. There will also be initiatives aimed at improving working relationships with existing partners. The establishment of new stakeholder relationships will at the same time add to the potential for new market opportunities. Labour market intelligence, demographic trends and patterns and the current market share of the existing separate organisations will be utilised fully to develop these strategies further.



## Re-Branding and Re-Positioning

Market research could be undertaken to agree a branding strategy that will maintain and further develop local pride, as well as properly and appropriately reflect the specific geographical areas covered by each main site of the merged college.

In bringing forward the merger proposal the Governing Bodies of both Colleges have agreed to consult on a change of name for the merged College. It is proposed that the name for the new merged organisation would be **Trafford College**.

Major consideration will be given to the re-branding and re-positioning of the proposed merged organisation. Image and perceptions will be researched, challenged and addressed in relation to customer confidence. The new college experience, building upon existing good practice, will be a major focus for post merger communications to potential stakeholders.

It is recognised that this is a unique opportunity to promote the new college and consequently a comprehensive re-launch programme will involve strategic publicity with carefully structured PR opportunities sensitive to the formation of new values and the image perception of potential learners and stakeholders in the wider community covering those areas that the merged college will serve.

The positioning of the new merged college within the 14-19 schools' agenda will be undertaken in a collaborative and supportive manner to build closer working relationships with partners that should lead to effective progression routes and increased recruitment. This will be particularly important in the light of the likely development of Academies and Building Schools for the Future within the Greater Manchester region.

## Product Portfolio Development

A major consideration for the newly merged organisation will be re-defining the product portfolio to ensure the development of growth opportunities including courses suitable for new and existing students. It will be important to ensure that a suitably wide range of programmes is offered which positions the newly merged organisation effectively in targeted and niche markets for developed growth. Focused curriculum development will be based on gaps in progression routes both internally and externally, and a complete offer will be constructed to provide an attractive whole college experience for potential learners. The product portfolio will be clearly segmented to meet the needs of a variety of learners'.

Key segments to be addressed include:

- The regional employment growth areas.
- 14-16 year olds, through school links, joint curriculum development, re-engagement initiatives and specialised diplomas.
- 16-19 school leavers and potential college progression routes.
- Adults on 'return to learn' programmes, widening participation initiatives in the community.
- Direct support to employers involved in work-based learning programmes - thus increasing employer and employee engagement.
- Businesses training and support.
- Under represented groups within the community.
- Higher education learners with progression links through levels 3 -5.
- Learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

These target markets can be more effectively reached through the resource base of an enlarged, merged institution.



## 15. CONSULTATION AND THE MERGER PROCESS

The Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester are now formally consulting on the merger proposed between North Trafford College and South Trafford College. Consultation is for a period of six weeks with a closing date for comments on **9th March 2007**. All responses will be acknowledged by LSC Greater Manchester and copied to the two colleges.

LSC Greater Manchester will consider the results of the consultation alongside the outcomes of the due diligence report and the full proposal at their Council meeting in **May 2007**. They will consider the proposal against the nationally determined criteria set out in **Appendix B**. At

that stage it may be decided to support the merger and forward a proposal to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills. Alternatively they could choose to seek a revised proposal, which may require further formal consultation, or choose not to support the proposed merger.

On receipt the Secretary of State for Education and Skills may approve the formal submission, or reject the proposal. If accepted, the proposal will be laid before Parliament with a view to the merged institution becoming incorporated from **1 September 2007**.

All consultation responses will be included in the file sent with the proposal to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.



## Appendix A

### CIRCULATION LIST

A summary of the circulation list can be seen below:

Members of Parliament and MEPs  
Emergency Services  
Higher Education Funding Council for England  
Other Colleges  
Work Based Training Providers  
Association of Colleges  
National Union of Students  
Trade Unions  
Local Learning Partnerships  
Chambers of Commerce  
Employers  
Local Authorities  
Local Education Authorities  
University Partners  
Schools with Post-16 provision  
11-18, 11-16 Schools  
Voluntary Organisations  
Connexions Service  
Sector Organisations  
The Sector Skills Development Agency  
Sector Skills Councils  
Exam Boards  
North West Development Agency  
Job Centre Plus



## Appendix B (i) Statutory Draft Proposal

### **DRAFT PROPOSAL UNDER SECTION 51 (1) (c) OF THE FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION ACT 1992 (THE ACT) FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION OF NORTH TRAFFORD COLLEGE UNDER SECTION 27 OF THE ACT**

#### **NAME OF THE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION AND INSTITUTION: NORTH TRAFFORD COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION**

**ADDRESS:** Talbot Road  
Stretford  
Manchester  
M32 0XH

#### **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATION PROVIDED AND THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS AT THE INSTITUTION:**

North Trafford College of Further Education is located in the Trafford Local Authority area and in the area of the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester. Its main campus at Talbot Road is located in Stretford.

In 2005/06 North Trafford College of Further Education had **1,300** full-time and **5,620** part-time students, a total of **6,920** students. The majority of enrolments at the College were in the 19+ age band.

The college provides a wide range of provision principally in Engineering, Health, Public Services and Care, Information and Communication Technology, Preparation for Life and Work, and Construction, Planning and the Built Environment. The college offers these and other courses at a number of levels, from entry level to level 4. The provision is primarily vocationally related and occupational in focus.

#### **REASON FOR PROPOSING DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION:**

The governing body of North Trafford College of Further Education has agreed to merge with South Trafford College. This would be achieved by the dissolution of the existing Further Education Corporation of North Trafford College of Further Education and the transfer of its property, rights and liabilities to the Further Education Corporation of South Trafford College.

The principal reasons advanced by the governors of the colleges in support of the proposal are: to create a single cost effective, high quality General Further Education College, which builds on the strengths of the two institutions in order to further serve the community throughout their lives and careers, meet their changing needs, and support the developing local infrastructure and the regional economy; and to further extend participation in education, learning and training within the area – particularly where there is significant under representation amongst identifiable groups of potential students, therefore addressing the key themes of 'Success for All'.



#### **CRITERIA**

The Local Learning and Skills Council will consider the proposal in the light of criteria shown below:

- the proposal is likely to extend participation, learning and training;
- the proposal is likely to result in raised learner achievement;
- the proposal is likely to result in raised standards of education and training delivered;
- the proposal is likely to address any issues of over- and under-provision in an area;
- adequate consultation has been undertaken and proper consideration has been given to alternative options;
- the proposal is likely to be financially viable, affordable, cost-effective and successfully managed; and
- the proposal is consistent with any area-wide inspection report published.

#### **DATE PROPOSED FOR THE DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION:**

**1 September 2007**

#### **EDUCATIONAL PROVISION TO BE MADE FOR THOSE STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT COMPLETED THEIR COURSES ON THAT DATE:**

Provision will be made for those students at North Trafford College of Further Education who have not completed their courses by the date of the dissolution to complete their courses under the auspices of the joint institution.



## Appendix B (ii) Statutory Summary of the Draft Proposal (NOTICE)

# FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION ACT 1992 THE LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL

North Trafford College of Further Education, Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester, M32 0XH

The Learning and Skills Council (the Council) hereby gives notice in accordance with the provisions of section 51 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (the Act) of the draft proposal that the Secretary of State under section 27 of that Act should by order provide for the dissolution of the further education corporation of **North Trafford College of Further Education** and the transfer of the property, rights and liabilities of that corporation.

Dissolution of the corporation is proposed, at the request of the corporation of **North Trafford College of Further Education**, in order that the college may form a joint institution with South Trafford College. It is proposed that the property, rights and liabilities of the corporation be transferred to the corporation of **South Trafford College**.

The date proposed for the dissolution is **1 September 2007**.

The governing body of **South Trafford College** is separately proposing to the Secretary of State that the name of that college be changed to reflect the changed nature of the institution.

Provision will be made for all students at **North Trafford College of Further Education** who have not completed their courses of study by the date of the proposed dissolution to complete their studies under the auspices of the joint institution.

A copy of the draft proposal is available free of charge from the Council and will be sent to any person who requests it.

In accordance with the provisions of section 51 of the Act, representations may be made to the Council by **9 March 2007**. Representations should be made in writing to:

Ian Pursglove  
Partnership Director: Trafford  
Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester  
Arndale House  
Arndale Centre  
Manchester M4 3AQ

Date: 22nd January 2007

Signed:

Jane Bracewell, Director of Greater Manchester South

## Appendix C

### Financial Health Category Descriptors

#### Group A

These colleges will normally have:

- a positive cash flow from operations each year
- more than 25 cash days in hand
- a current ratio above 1.5:1
- a positive balance on their general reserve (income and expenditure account) excluding FRS 17 pension reserve
- an operating surplus year-on-year
- total borrowing of less than 15 per cent of their total annual income.

#### Group B

These colleges will normally have:

- a positive cash flow from operations each year
- more than 15 cash days in hand
- a current ratio between 1.0:1 and 1.5:1
- a positive balance on their general reserve (income and expenditure account) excluding FRS 17 pension reserve
- an operating position at break-even
- total borrowing between 15 per cent and 40 per cent of their total annual income.

#### Group C

Colleges in this position are likely to have:

- a negative cash flow from operations in one or more years
- less than 15 cash days in hand
- net current liabilities (current ratio less than 1.0:1) in one or more years
- an accumulated deficit on their general reserve (income and expenditure account) excluding FRS 17 pension reserve
- an operating deficit
- total borrowing in excess of 40 per cent of their total annual income.



## Appendix D

### North Trafford College and South Trafford College Indicative Merger Timetable

DATE	ACTION
October 2006	Formal resolution to explore merger agreed by North Trafford College and South Trafford College. Matter considered by Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester.
November 2006	Project Steering Group established and project manager appointed. Outline proposal produced.
December 2006	Detailed full proposal commenced and consultation document finalised.
January 2007	Formal consultation commences.
March 2007	Due diligence completed.
March 2007	Formal consultation ends – outcome considered by Corporations and Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester.
April 2007	Detailed full proposal completed and agreed by College Corporations and submitted to Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester.
Late April 2007	Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester prepare report/assessment of full proposal
May 2007	If supported – "White File" sent by Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester to the Secretary of State
September 2007	Merger takes effect



## Appendix E

# CONSULTATION RESPONSE PROFORMA

Responses are invited by **9th March 2007** to the following attached documents:

- a. Consultation document on the proposed reorganisation of **North Trafford College and South Trafford College**.
- b. Statutory Draft Proposal for the reorganisation of **North Trafford College**.

Please provide your comments in the appropriate space below and append additional sheets as necessary. **Please indicate whether your comments are directed to the colleges involved, to the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester or to all parties in order that the appropriate party may respond where necessary.** Please note, all responses will be considered both by the colleges and by the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester.

1. Comments on the objectives of the merger proposal.

2. Comments on any potential impact on learners arising from the merger proposal.

3. Comments on any curriculum issues arising from the merger proposal.



4. Comments on any governance, management or staffing issues arising from the merger proposal.

5. Comments on any accommodation, resources or finance issues arising from the merger proposal.

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6. Proposed name change. Please indicate your support for the proposed name or suggest another:

1. Trafford College



Other suggestions \_\_\_\_\_

7. Any other relevant comments

The above comments are directed to **(please tick one box only)**:

- The Colleges
- Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester
- The Colleges and the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester



Name

---

Organisation (if applicable)

---

Address

---

---

Signed

Date

---

Please return this pro-forma to:

**Ian Pursglove**  
**Partnership Director: Trafford**  
**Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester**  
**Arndale House**  
**Arndale Centre**  
**Manchester M4 3AQ**

by 9th March 2007.



South Trafford College  
Manchester Road  
Altrincham  
West Timperley  
Cheshire  
WA14 5PQ

Tel. 0161 952 4600  
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