

STATE OF THE ART SIXTH-FORM GETS THE GO-AHEAD IN ROCHDALE

Young learners in Rochdale can look forward to studying in a new state of the art sixth form centre from September 2010.

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The new centre is part of ambitious proposals to transform learning across the borough and comes as the result of a competition held by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) that enabled local partnerships to set out a vision for how young people aged 16 to 19 would receive the best possible education to meet their needs and aspirations.

Following the competition which began in September 2006 the LSC, which is responsible for education and training throughout England, has given the go-ahead to proposals to transform education for 16 to 19-year-olds in the Rochdale borough, including the building of the new centre close to the centre of Rochdale.

The competition encouraged a review of how best to meet the needs of learners across the whole borough. It focused on how new ways of working together could improve the experience of learners and encourage more individuals to continue in learning and achieve success which will help to equip them for future study or the world of work.

Plans for the centre were put forward by the Rochdale Education Partnership, comprising Rochdale Council and Hopwood Hall College. The partnership will now work with the Learning and Skills Council to turn the plans into reality, with the new centre expected to be open by 2010.

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Elaine Bowker, LSC Director of Area for Greater Manchester, said: “The reform of post-16 education and training is critical to the success and prosperity of Rochdale borough. We are committed to ensuring that Rochdale has sufficient and high quality education and training in place to be able to meet the needs of all young learners in the borough, and the approval of this bid will provide significant impetus to allow the Partnership to achieve the same.”

Councillor Alan Taylor, Leader of Rochdale Council, said: “This is fantastic news for Rochdale. The new sixth-form centre will provide state of the art facilities for the borough’s teenagers and help give them the best possible education and training opportunities and therefore the best chances in life.

“The new centre will complement our major investment in new primary, secondary and special schools through the *Building Schools for the Future* programme and the Private Finance Initiative. It will take education in Rochdale from strength to strength.”

The Partnership expects to increase the number of students staying in the borough for their post-16 education.

Ends

Learning and Skills Council:

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

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