

## CONSULTATION BEGINS

**Date of issue** 1 December 2009

A consultation has begun to give employers, learners and local residents the opportunity to have their say on the proposed merger of Exeter College and Bicton College.

The colleges are proposing the merger to safeguard the land based curriculum for Devon and the South West and the two colleges have a commitment to working with their partners at a local, regional and national level for the benefit of learners, employers and their communities.

The colleges are working towards a merger to take effect 1 April 2010. All sites will be retained in the merged institution and existing learners will not be affected.

The final determination of the merger will be made by the Secretary of State for the Department for Business Innovation and Skills.

It is proposed the new organisation will be called Exeter College. The consultation takes place between 27 November and 4 January 2010.

Malcolm Gillespie LSC South West Regional Director said: "The LSC is today announcing the start of a four week consultation period for people to submit their comments on the proposed merger between Bicton and Exeter Colleges. The proposal aims to strengthen the services currently offered by the colleges for students and enhance existing facilities and opportunities for future students.

Richard Atkins, Principal of Exeter College and David Henley, Principal of Bicton College said "This strategic federation between Exeter and Bicton colleges will build on the strengths of both Colleges and secure the future of land based provision for Devon. Our vision is to become outstanding, embracing ambition,

innovation and enterprise whilst providing excellent teaching and learning for young people, adults and employers across the South West. We strongly believe that this reorganisation will lead to an expansion in the range and types of opportunity offered to learners and responds to the needs of key stakeholders across Devon. This new and innovative federation will retain the brand and integrity of Bicton College whilst securing its future.”

To access the public consultation document, please visit

<http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/SouthWest/swr-pcdebc-con-dec2009-v1-1.pdf>.

Responses must be submitted in writing to: John Peart, Partnership Director, Learning and Skills Council, Ground Floor, Richmond Court, Emperor Way, Exeter Business Park, Exeter, EX1 3QS.

## **Ends**

### **Note to Editors:**

#### **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. For more information visit: [www.lsc.gov.uk/southwest](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/southwest)

### **All media enquiries, please contact:**

Chris Lorimer, Director of Marketing and External Relations, Exeter College 01392 205677 or 07723 018562

Liz Waugh 07966 388921