

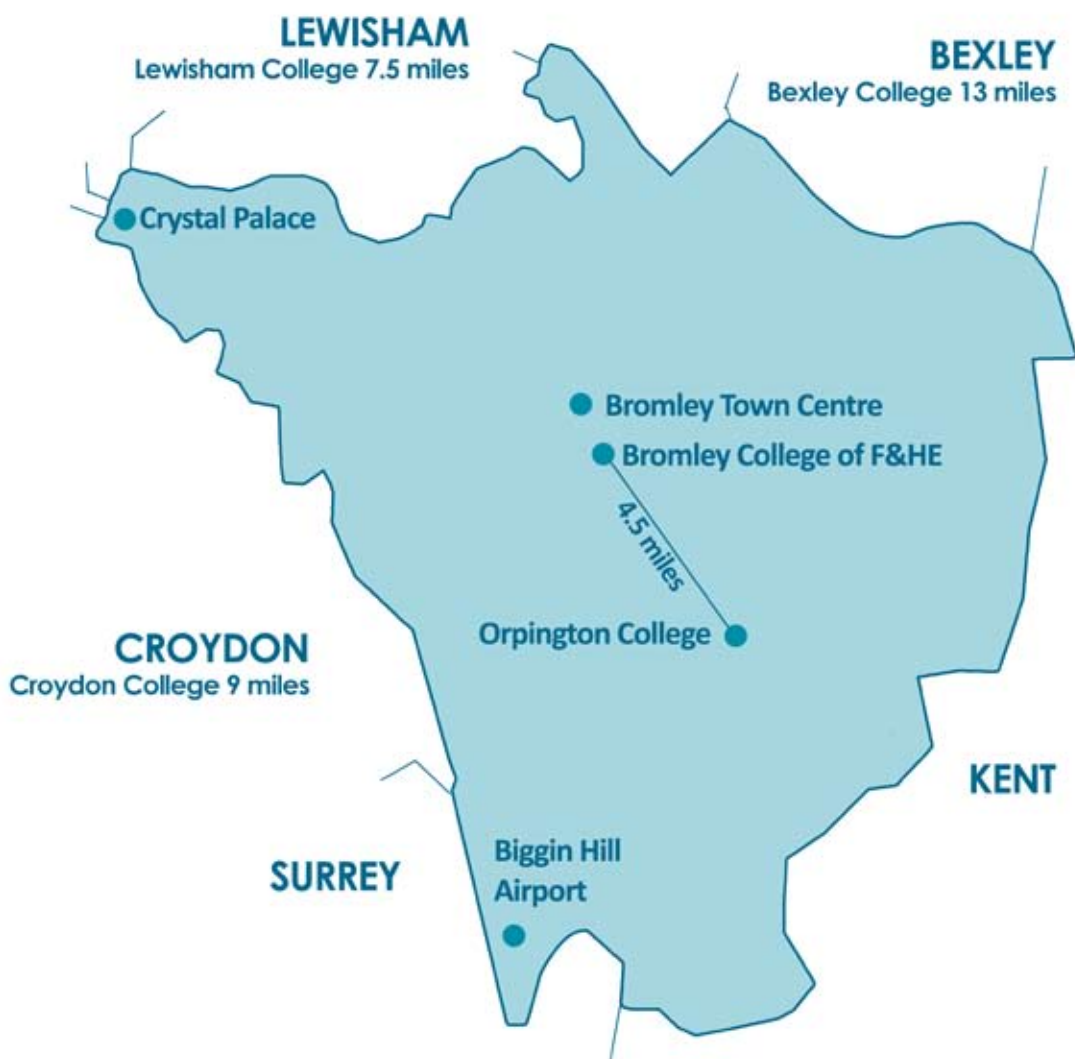
Consultation Document

The formal public consultation by the Skills Funding Agency on the Proposed Merger of Bromley College of Further and Higher Education and Orpington College of Further Education

Consultation commences on: 26th January 2011

Consultation ends on: 4th March 2011

CENTRAL LONDON
Croydon College 12 miles



Foreword



Orpington College and Bromley College of Further and Higher Education are two further education colleges, based some four miles apart within the London Borough of Bromley, which wish to merge. This proposed merger is central to realising our shared ambition for what we want to achieve for our learners and communities in Bromley and beyond.



Our colleges have recognised that there are major benefits to be gained by joining together. This is a merger with a strong emphasis on meeting local learner and employer needs which also addresses the value for money agenda. It is the view of our Governing Bodies that the combined organisation will be better placed to meet the future challenges facing our communities.



As two governing bodies, we are committed to providing the best possible environment for learners and learning. Future learners, employers and local communities in Bromley will see a single merged college, building on the strengths of our two existing colleges and delivering complementary learning programmes from both the Bromley and Orpington campuses which have been extensively upgraded.

John Charles
Chair of Corporation
Bromley College of Further & Higher Education

We would encourage you to comment on the proposal in this document. We believe this supports a vision for learning in our communities for the future, which is shared by a wide range of key stakeholders.

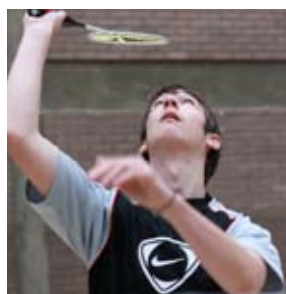
Angela Hands
Chair of Corporation
Orpington College of Further Education

Contents

Section	Page
1 Introduction	5
2 Executive Summary	6
3 Our Vision	7
4 The Need for Merger	8
5 Benefits of Merger	9
6 The Merged College Proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addressing the needs of learners and employers• Increasing the opportunity for learner choice• Increasing participation and success rates• Developing innovation and improve access to learning• Embedding of all aspects of equality and diversity• Promoting effective community cohesion• Providing better value for money	10
7 Governance, Management, Staffing and Students	14
8 Risks and Risk Management	16
Annex A Stakeholders Consulted	17
Annex B Statutory Notice	18
Annex C Criteria against which merger is assessed	19
Annex D Indicative Merger Timeline	20
Annex E Background of the Colleges	21



1. Introduction



This consultation document sets out the proposal from Orpington College of Further Education and Bromley College of Further and Higher Education for a merger of the two colleges to create a single college of Further Education for Bromley.

The colleges propose a Type B merger which would be achieved by the dissolution of the Corporation of Orpington College and a transfer of its property rights and liabilities to the Corporation of Bromley College of Further and Higher Education. The date proposed for the establishment of a merged college is 1st August 2011.

The merged college will retain the current name of Bromley College of Further and Higher Education, with Orpington and Bromley retained as campus names. Appropriate provision will be made available to all students in learning at the time of the merger to enable them to complete their current programme of learning.

Comments on the merger proposal are invited through a consultation being managed by the Skills Funding Agency as part of its statutory role in college mergers. There is a statutory requirement that reorganisation proposals are subject to a consultation period of at least one month. This consultation starts on **26th January 2011** and the deadline for responding is **4th March 2011**. A list of the stakeholders being consulted is shown in **Annex A** and the Statutory Notice is shown in **Annex B**.

The Skills Funding Agency will consider the results of this consultation, due diligence studies, and the final merger proposal from the colleges before forwarding the merger proposal to the Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills for his decision. The criteria against which the final merger proposal will be considered are set out in **Annex C**.



The full indicative timeline for the proposed merger is outlined in **Annex D**.

Your comments on the proposed merger are welcomed.

How to Respond

- All the consultation information and links are available at the Skills Funding Agency website at: www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/providers/allthelatest/consultations.
- You can also access this document on the following College websites together with a link to information on how to respond: www.bromley.ac.uk or www.orpington.ac.uk
- Or, if you prefer, responses can be made in writing or by email to:
Geoff Russell - Chief Executive
Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
- Email: providerreorganisations@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk

2. Executive Summary

This merger proposal is being made jointly by Bromley and Orpington Colleges. It has been initiated by the two College Corporations to deliver strategic benefits for the learners, employers and communities they serve and thus falls within the Skills Funding Agency's definition of a strategic merger.

The Corporations objectives of the merged college are to:

- deliver their shared vision of a stronger, more responsive College for the whole of the London Borough of Bromley and for its neighbouring communities
- improve the quality and relevance of the Further Education offer to learners and employers in all parts of the Borough and sustain this in the face of financial pressures impacting upon the education system by reducing overheads and improving efficiency
- maximise community use of its two main sites at Rookery Lane, Bromley and The Walnuts, Orpington – taking full advantage of their extensive recent upgrading
- further develop the provision of accessible Higher Education for local people; and
- build upon the considerable community support for such a development and ensure that it serves all its local learners and employers to the highest standards.

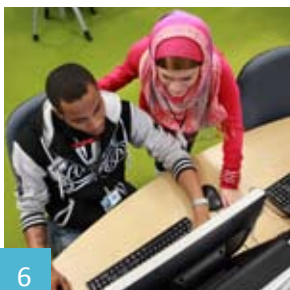
To achieve these objectives the Corporations propose that Orpington College dissolves and becomes part of the existing Bromley College of Further & Higher Education. The merger would take effect on the 1st August 2011, allowing the merged College to be in operation for the full 2011/12 academic year. The current main sites of the Colleges would be retained by the merged institution.

In developing these new arrangements a true merger will be achieved by drawing on best practice and talent from both Colleges. The governance arrangements reflect these proposals by; achieving an appropriate balance of members on the merged College's governing body, the current Chair of Bromley College Corporation standing down at the point of merger and the current Principal of Bromley College continuing as Principal of the merged College.

This merger proposal draws upon significant joint work by the Colleges between 2007 and 2009, when the two Corporations developed a proposal for merger. From this productive work we know that the underlying strategic case for merging our two Colleges is strong. Merger offers us the opportunity to develop a more coherent and forward-looking curriculum to learners, employers and the local community generally. It will enable us to reduce management and administrative overhead costs, rationalise provision, better utilise facilities and achieve other economies of scale, maximising resources for delivering this improved curriculum.

Together these benefits will make the new College more resilient in the challenging years ahead. We also know from our previous work and more recent consultations that there is widespread support for such a move from local stakeholders. This merger proposal has the support of the two College Corporations, local MPS, the Local Authority including the 14-19 Bromley Collaborative, local employer groups, local adult learning providers and its University partners.

We believe our strategic case for merger will meet the published criteria for college mergers as set in Annex C and assessed by us in section six of this document but we welcome your views on this throughout the consultation.



3. Our Vision



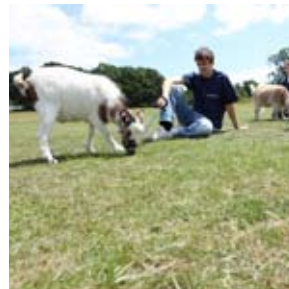
Future learners, employers and the local communities in Bromley will see a single merged college combining the strengths of the two existing colleges and delivering complementary learning programmes from both the Bromley and Orpington campuses.

The successfully completed building programmes on both campuses will create comprehensive first class facilities for the benefit of the local community, employers and partners, including the successful Bromley 14-19 Collaborative.

A comprehensive range of provision will be on offer, with vocational, academic and higher education programmes. Learners will have access to a wide curriculum, with clear progression routes into employment or higher education.

The merged college will consolidate its clear, high quality 'Further Education' brand, offering:

- a distinctive alternative to school based provision for 14-19 year old learners;
- the maximum availability of flexible training and development programmes for adult learners and employers seeking new skills; and
- A Higher Education centre for Bromley, specialising in high quality work-related qualifications.



There will be a "one stop shop" for employers, offering business training and consultancy, and providing a flexible service responding rapidly to employer needs and offering a wide range of business support and training services through a single point of contact. The merged college will act as a major player in meeting employer demand for skills.

In all of these areas the merged college will make a significant contribution towards the quality of life and economy of its local communities. The merged college will create greater choice, higher quality education and training, better progression opportunities, increases in participation and enhanced employer engagement.

4. The Need for Merger

This merger proposal is the outcome from a period of discussion started initially three years ago, between the colleges and other institutions looking at various models, both jointly and separately, for the future of their colleges. The decision by the governing bodies to seek merger now is a considered response to changes in government policy and funding priorities, in particular the financial pressures impacting upon the education system. It is not a merger driven by negative factors, nor is it being forced by one of the partners.

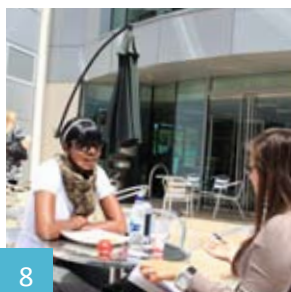
The Corporations consider that the case for merger is now even more compelling in light of the increased pressures on Further Education funding from the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review. They also believe that two Colleges are in a stronger position to merge having successfully completed major rebuilding and change programmes. They also firmly believe that the shared vision of a merged college achieving benefit for its communities in relation to young people, adults, employers and Higher Education is a powerful one.

By bringing Bromley and Orpington colleges together a stronger organisation can be created, which will not only retain the best features of the individual colleges, but will also bring added value and increased opportunities for learners and employers through the consolidation and development of services and the curriculum.

Both colleges are located within the Bromley borough and predominantly serve the same local community. The background to both colleges can be found in **Annex E**. As stand alone institutions, both Bromley and Orpington College face significant challenges within the current funding climate and the pending public sector and education funding reductions. Both colleges have adjusted to some degree to recent financial pressures with past and ongoing improvements to efficiency, but without merger the colleges' vision of providing a range of programmes and services to learners, employers and the community will be diminished significantly.

Bromley College has financial strengths but still needs to implement a programme of re-structuring to accommodate the impending funding reductions. As a small college, Orpington College would need to undertake further major reductions in its overheads, which would put at risk the quality of the learner experience and its services to the local community, making a merger with another institution highly likely.

The new organisation created through the merger will be a stronger college more able to address the future challenges within the current environment. Together, building on work already undertaken and current plans, the merged college would become financially sound and consequently it will provide the communities it serves with better education and training than would be achievable without the merger.

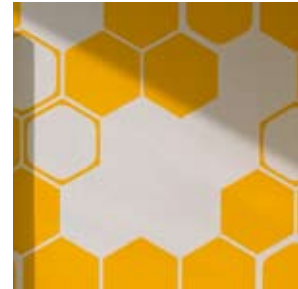
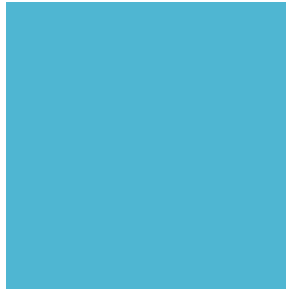


5. Benefits of Merger



The benefits of the proposed merged college to learners, employers, the local community and college staff will be the creation of a stronger and more responsive college for Bromley that will:

- Increase learner choice with a focus on vocational courses and enhance progression opportunities for all learners
- Increase local participation rates by developing services and curriculum that respond to need and are accessible to all
- Enable stronger collaborations and partnerships with the local authority, employers, schools, academies and other providers to develop a broader offer to meet the needs of the local community
- Enhance the service and range of offer to employers and work with employer groups and other partners to respond to the sector skills requirements in the borough
- Provide a highly supportive learning environment with improved Information Advice and Guidance to all learners and a whole college commitment to learner involvement
- Contribute significantly to meeting local skills needs with a strong emphasis on employability and preparation for work and regenerating areas in the local community
- Provide a major Higher Education centre for Bromley offering a range of work related courses to meet the needs of the local workforce
- Provide high quality teaching from a wide range of teachers with both academic and professional backgrounds within new state of the art learning facilities at both colleges
- Provide new opportunities for staff of both colleges in terms of career progression and staff development
- Combine and build on the best of both colleges, remove duplication and wasteful competition to create a stronger and more sustainable and responsive college for the future



6. The Merged College Proposal

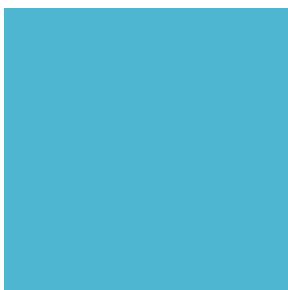
The colleges believe that merger will create greater opportunities to increase learner choice and progression opportunities, respond to employer needs, enhance higher education provision and develop innovative initiatives with schools and other providers through their continued strong partnership working with the local authority.

The colleges are confident that their merger proposal corresponds with the published criteria for college mergers and have assessed their merger proposal against each of the seven criteria as follows.

Criterion 1: The proposal is likely to address the needs of learners and employers

The merged college will:

- Play a full and proactive role in the development of local opportunities through continued membership of the 14-19 Bromley Collaborative
- Build on the existing good practice with schools to provide vocational opportunities for 14-16 year olds and improve pathways from schools to colleges. Merger strengthens the possibility of enhanced progression routes and gives a stronger vocational alternative to A Levels in the borough
- Offer a comprehensive range of courses with a wide range of options to allow each learner to be matched to an appropriate course and at the right level
- Enable clear and improved progression routes from Foundation Learning programmes through to Level 3 qualifications and to Higher Education provision or Apprenticeship programmes
- Continue to build on the accessible learning opportunities for young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and to build capacity and broaden the offer for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)
- Contribute to the economic development of the Bromley borough by improving skills and preparing people for work
- Allow the development of a single 'Bromley Brand' for employers to deliver comprehensive business support and training services to the local workforce and respond to the sector skills requirements in the borough





Criterion 2: The proposal is likely to increase opportunity for the learner to exercise choice and encourage diversity in the education and training available

The merged college will:

- Remove unnecessary curriculum duplication and release resources to extend the range of courses on offer to respond to unmet demand and gaps in provision
- Have the capacity to respond to the areas of need identified by the Bromley 14-19 Collaborative including unmet demand in construction, hairdressing, and engineering
- Continue to offer occupationally specific qualifications and expand its apprenticeship programme
- Protect the continuance of provision where low learner numbers in a single institution may make the provision unviable in the future e.g. Travel & Tourism.
- Communicate a distinctive 'Further Education' brand for Bromley in a coherent and less confusing way to learners
- Work in partnership with other local providers to ensure that choice is not restricted and other institutions are not undermined
- Offer flexible learning modes of delivery including full-time, part-time, in the work place as well as interactive e-learning
- Ensure there is no requirement for student travel between sites as part of their course of study

Criterion 3: The proposal is likely to increase local participation rates and result in improved quality and success

The merged college will:

- Support the Local Authority in working towards full participation by providing improved pathways and progression routes for school leavers
- Map each college's key strengths and areas for improvement and producing a detailed action plan to remove or improve poor provision
- Produce a quality improvement strategy that would include systematic observation programmes and curriculum audit processes, a comprehensive approach to self assessment and curriculum-based working groups and peer support schemes
- Develop the 'best practice' currently within each college in all aspects of teaching and learning and student support and extend this across all provision
- Achieve the new Training Quality Standard to accredit the delivery of training and development solutions to employers
- Build on the 'learner voice' as a driver of quality improvement, through initiatives like Orpington's class representative system and Bromley's student council

Criterion 4: The proposal is likely to develop innovation and improve access to learning for the community

The merged college will:

- Continue to deliver from the present sites in Orpington and Bromley to provide for each local community. Both sites are well linked in to the local transport infrastructures and serve learners from a wide catchment area
- Continue to focus on serving the needs of learners. The Bromley campus will serve the vocational needs of learners particularly in the areas of construction, engineering and hair and beauty whilst the Orpington campus will continue to serve the service sector skills learning profile
- Be in the position to focus provision on one site where specialist resource is required or to protect provision by delivery on one site rather than two, where the viability of a subject may be in question due to low learner numbers
- Have a single voice for Further Education in the borough with a greater capacity to develop provision to meet local learner and employer needs

- Achieve coherent strategic planning to respond to needs identified by the borough and increasing demand from learners. A single organisation, with economies of scale and pooling of expertise, will be better placed to develop proposals to support curriculum developments and innovative ways of working with learners
- Be large enough to have more capacity to respond to changing needs and maximize funding streams where possible

Criterion 5: The proposal ensures the embedding of all aspects of equality and diversity

The merged college will:

- Actively seeking contributions from a wide range of stakeholders to develop the new organisation
- Promote the voice of the learner through continued student representation at all levels
- Ensure no substantive reductions to the range of programmes or locations that could adversely impact equality and diversity
- Ensure appropriate programmes are available and accessible at suitable locations and sites
- Complete an Equality Impact Assessment to assess the impact of the merger in respect of ethnicity, gender, disability and social deprivation
- Capture and build on the good practice at each college to provide a firm base for the merged college. Both colleges were awarded a Grade 2 from Ofsted for equality and diversity at their last inspections and the merged college will be well positioned to work towards Grade 1 (Outstanding)





Criterion 6: The proposal is likely to promote effective community cohesion through community presence and representation within governance structures

The merged college will:

- Continue to operate from the current delivery sites in Bromley and Orpington to ensure strong local links are maintained and the college continues to identify with the surrounding local communities within the Borough and beyond
- Provide a single point in the borough for Further Education planning to respond to local need more effectively whilst preserving the individual college's strong community links
- Continue to work with the Adult College in the borough, through the Bromley Colleges Group, to maximise the effectiveness of adult and community provision in the borough
- Continue to be proactive members of the Bromley Lifelong Learning Partnership and the Skills and Employment sub-group to further support the development of the local economy
- Draw on the mix of Governors skills and experience existing within both Colleges (including strong community representation) to create a highly effective, diverse and representative Board of Governors

Criterion 7: The proposal is likely to provide better value for money

The merged college will:

- Achieve efficiency gains by taking advantage of the close proximity of the two sites to simplify structures and reduce posts by combining management roles and administrative services
- Streamline management lines to improve timely decision-making and communication
- Enable greater efficiency in the delivery of the curriculum where duplicated provision will be rationalised and gaps will be filled
- Effectively utilise teaching staff through sharing of best practice and increased scale of operations
- Achieve savings through effective use of shared assets such as ICT infrastructure and improved procurement
- Use the funds released by the above efficiency gains to help support further premises and equipment upgrades, thereby enhancing the learning environment with consequential gain in curriculum innovation and the overall learner experience
- Overall, create a more sustainable organisation for the future

7. Governance, Management, Staffing and Students

Governance arrangements

Both existing Corporations recognise the need to create a Corporation for the merged college that has an appropriate balance of governors and planning is already well developed to achieve a governing body fairly representing the interests of the two existing colleges.

Bromley College Corporation will have four vacancies for independent governors arising with effect from January 2011 and it is proposed that three of these vacancies will be filled at that time by members who are serving on the current Orpington College Corporation. Three additional vacancies will arise on the Corporation of Bromley College at the proposed merger date and these, together with the remaining vacancy, will be available to be filled by further current Orpington governors. The current Chair of Bromley will be one of the Bromley governors standing down at the point of merger, allowing the members of the merged College’s Governing Body to select a new Chair.

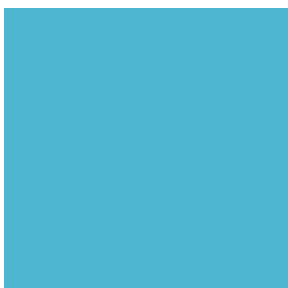
The committee structure of the Corporation in each of the two existing colleges is broadly similar. Bromley has Staffing and General Purposes, Quality and Standards, Finance and Property, Audit and Remuneration. Orpington has Curriculum, Quality and Standards, Finance (includes Property), HR and Remuneration, and Audit. A common committee structure will be developed out of this for the merged college.

Planning for Management

The management structure for the merged college will address amongst other things the new and significant organisational dimension that is created by a multi-site operation. One post, of Vice Principal (Curriculum), has been shared in the recent past in anticipation of merger and effective joint working across the whole senior management team has built up knowledge of both site’s operations.

A management structure will be planned that supports the “one college” ethos rather than one which simply bolts together the existing management arrangements within each of the two existing colleges. Senior management has undertaken in the recent past high level planning towards merger. This involved senior post holders in the two colleges heading up small planning groups to look at specific areas that will be affected by the merger (e.g. Curriculum, Finance, MIS, Human Resources, and Estates). These plans have been returned to recently and arrangements are already in place to begin to move forward with coherence on planning matters with a senior postholder group meeting regularly again.

The college corporations have agreed that at merger the current Principal of Bromley College will continue as Principal. The current Principal at Orpington College has made clear that he is prepared to stand down at the point of merger. Therefore, the arrangements for leadership of the newly merged college are clear.



Planning For Staffing

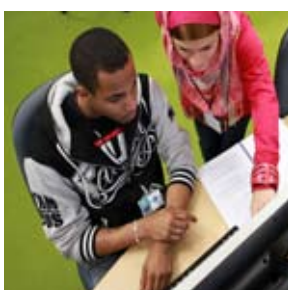
The complementary nature of the two colleges' provision and the plan to continue to deliver from both campuses in Orpington and Bromley will help minimise staffing changes. However, merger will allow the two Colleges to achieve major efficiency gains where management roles and administrative services would be combined, taking advantage of the close proximity of the two main sites to simplify structures and reduce posts delivering substantial savings in overheads.

It would be premature to set out any specific staffing proposals at this stage because these require further development and consultation but it is the strong intention of the merged college to move forward with minimum disruption, maintaining current expertise and rewarding existing high calibre staff through increasing development and career opportunities.

The human resource implications of establishing a merged college are not underestimated. Both colleges have their own terms and conditions of service and have implemented their own pay scales for staff. Newly recruited staff will join the merged college on agreed terms and conditions for the new college and Orpington staff will TUPE over to Bromley College. The college intention is to approach harmonisation as a staged process over a period of time and is planning on that basis.

Staff meetings and briefings are being held in both colleges and a plan of communication with staff in addition to formal consultation is being developed.

Both colleges are firmly committed to consulting staff and their trade unions in line with best employment practice.



Planning for Students

It is particularly important that the Colleges are fully aware of the interests of learners during the merger process and take effective steps to protect them. Merger is designed to serve the longer term interests of learners, but it is also crucial that learners are not disadvantaged by the merger's transitional impacts. In the first year course changes will be kept to a minimum. If any are considered for rationalisation or relocation, the needs of existing learners will be taken into account carefully and wherever possible they will complete their courses at a location and in a form which suits them. Learners at both Colleges will be kept informed as the proposal proceeds and be consulted over any planned changes.

A student recruitment strategy will be developed which draws upon the best practice of the two existing colleges whilst seeking ways to further improve recruitment processes. The two existing colleges have already worked on marketing strategies which bring the colleges closer in style. Administration and enrolment arrangements, relating to student admissions, will be harmonised as far as possible in order to ensure that a "one college" approach to the recruitment process is being delivered. Planning for a unified student records system across the merged college is taking place. Enrolment arrangements for learners in 2011/2012 will aim to introduce a common entitlement to a student experience.

The senior management of both existing colleges recognise that total unification in all of these areas by the date of the merger may be difficult to achieve and that during the first year of operation of the merged college there may still be some differences in practices at the Bromley and Orpington campuses. However, the minimisation of these differences during the transition period is an important aim of the planning process with complete elimination of any differences being achieved by the end of the first year of operation of the merged college.

8. Risks and Risk Management



If this merger does not go ahead it is likely that Orpington may still need to merge with another institution to secure its viability. The position of Orpington as a relatively small stand alone college will become increasingly difficult. If the merger is not with Bromley College there is a risk that it will be detrimental to the Bromley community and to the range of education, training and skills delivered being significantly reduced.



Without bringing the two colleges together in a formal reorganisation the efficiencies and cost savings cannot be realised and reinvested back into teaching and learning. On their own the colleges will not be able to invest in the necessary curriculum, teaching resources and further site developments to provide the best possible learning experiences for the community and to deliver the significant contribution to the Bromley 14-19 collaborative and employer based provision that is needed in the area. The creation of a combined college would also provide the basis for increased capacity to respond appropriately to local needs.

In proceeding with the merger there will be risks that need to be managed. It is important that learner recruitment is maintained over the period of transition. Learners will continue to be supported throughout the transition by maintaining and developing student programmes, student support services and the quality and standards of the existing curriculum.

A significant factor in making the merger a success is retaining the commitment and support of staff. The creation of a merged college will provide opportunities for a wide range of teaching and support staff to work together. Sharing of good practice will enable a thriving culture for the merged college, with the prospect of an improved working environment as the resources are updated.

The process of creating a merged college is a long one and the colleges are very aware of the need to keep local residents informed of developments and to ensure that all views are taken into account throughout the process.

These risks will be actively managed through a shared risk register, assessments and action plans by the combined senior leadership team and the joint Corporation.

Annex A - Stakeholders consulted

- College Students
- National Union of Students
- College Staff
- National Union of Teachers
- University and College Union
- UNISON
- Association of Teachers and Lecturers
- Association for College Management
- Association of National Specialist Colleges
- Higher Education Funding Council
- Ofsted
- Sixth Form College Forum
- Secondary Schools
- Adult and Community Education College
- Work Based Learning Providers
- Specialist Providers
- University Partners
- Association of Colleges
- Association of Learning Providers
- Local Councillors
- Local Authorities
- Local Learning Partnerships
- Learning and Skills Improvement Service
- Lifelong learning UK
- Voluntary Organisations and Community Groups
- Employer Representative Groups
- Members of Parliament
- Job Centre Plus
- Connexions Service
- Sector Skills Councils
- Department for Education
- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
- UK Commission for Employment and Skills
- Young People's Learning Agency
- National Apprenticeship Service



Annex B - Statutory Notice



Statutory Notice - Further and Higher Education Act 1992

The Chief Executive of Skills Funding hereby gives notice in accordance with the provisions of section 51 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (the Act) as amended by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, 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 **Orpington College of Further Education (Orpington College)** 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 **Orpington College** in order that the college may merge with **Bromley College of Further and Higher Education (Bromley College)**. It is proposed that the property, rights and liabilities of the corporation to be transferred to the corporation of **Bromley College**.

The date proposed for the dissolution is **1st August 2011**.

Provision will be made for all students at **Orpington College** who have not yet completed their courses of study by the date of the proposed dissolution to complete their studies at **Bromley College** and the campus at The Walnuts, Orpington will be retained.

A copy of the draft proposal is available free of charge from me 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 me by **4th March 2011**. Representations can be made at

<http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/providers/allthelatest/consultations> or in writing to providerreorganisations@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk or to:

Geoff Russell, Chief Executive of Skills Funding
Cheylesmore House, Quinton Road, Coventry CV1 2WT

Date: 26th January 2011

Signed:

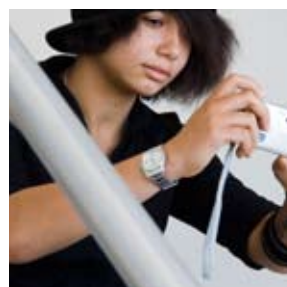
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Annex C - Criteria against which merger is assessed

Criteria

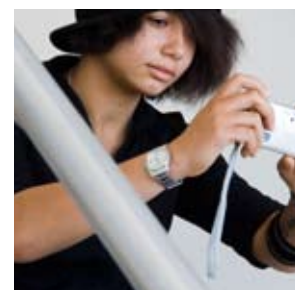
The Skills Funding Agency will consider the proposal in light of the below criteria as set out in the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) Summer 2008 document: Further Education Colleges - Models for Success.

1. The proposal is likely to address **the needs of learners and employers**
2. The proposal is likely to **increase opportunity for the learner to exercise choice** and encourage diversity in the education and training available
3. The proposal is likely to **increase local participation rates and result in improved quality and success**
4. The proposal is likely to **develop innovation and improve access to learning for the community**
5. The proposal ensures **the embedding of all aspects of equality and diversity**
6. The proposal is likely to **promote effective community cohesion** through community presence and representation within governance structures
7. The proposal is likely to **provide better value for money**



Annex D - Indicative merger timeline

November 2010	Draft Proposal agreed by each College Corporation
December 2010	Skills Funding Agency considers Draft Merger Proposal
26 January 2011	Statutory Notices Published: Consultation begins
January 2011	Due Diligence studies commences
January 2011	Development of Final Merger Proposal begins
4 March 2011	Consultation ends
March 2011	Skills Funding Agency send Consultation Report to Colleges
March 2011	College Corporations consider Due Diligence studies and outcomes of Consultation
April 2011	College Corporations formally agree Final Merger Proposal and submit to Skills Funding Agency
May 2011	Skills Funding Agency consideration of Final Merger Proposal and recommendation to Secretary of State
May 2011	Decision by Secretary of State
June 2011	Laying of orders before Parliament (if approved)
1 August 2011	Dissolution of Orpington College and Merger Operational



Annex E - Background of the Colleges

Bromley College of Further and Higher Education

Bromley College of Further and Higher Education is a medium sized general further education (FE) College located on a green belt site just south of Bromley Town Centre in the London Borough of Bromley.

Just under half of full time learners are Bromley residents, with the rest travelling mainly from other London boroughs, notably Lewisham, Southwark, Greenwich, Croydon and Bexley, and from Kent and Surrey postcodes. Only 54% of learners classify themselves as White British, compared to 92% of the population of the London Borough of Bromley.

The College provides further education in almost all vocational areas of learning, with courses ranging from entry level to higher education. Enrolments are highest in Preparation for Life and Work; ICT; Health, Public Services & Care; Business; and Engineering. The College provides work-based learning programmes in hairdressing, beauty therapy, motor vehicle engineering, early years, business administration, and accounting.

The college has a successful partnership with the University of Greenwich with nearly 700 enrolments on higher education courses. It also has a significant work-based learning programme with over 450 Apprentices in 2009/10, almost 300 of whom were aged 16-1 and works closely with the Local Authority and schools delivering provision for over 150 learners aged 14-16 on vocational programmes.

The college fully completed its capital programme in June 2010, giving new and improved facilities for learners with a new Business and Professional Centre, Learning Resource Centre, Technology Centre with motor vehicle, engineering, construction and electro-technical workshops and a completely remodelled Hair and Beauty salon complex.



Orpington College

Orpington College is a small/medium sized general further education college also in the London Borough of Bromley, situated near the Kent border just over 4 miles from Bromley College. The main college buildings are located in the heart of the shopping centre in Orpington.

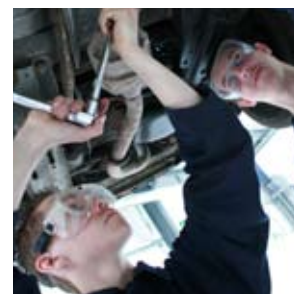
The College mainly recruits learners from London postcodes, with only 33% of 16-18 year old learners in 2009/10 being drawn from the London Borough of Bromley, the majority of others travelling from Lewisham, Greenwich and Bexley. Around half of the College's 16-18 learners classify themselves as White British compared to 92% of the population in the London Borough of Bromley. The other half are made up largely from Black Caribbean and African backgrounds.

The College provides vocational learning programmes for around 75 14-16 year old learners. Over 180 learners were following HE programmes during 2009/10 including courses delivered in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Greenwich.

The College focuses on academic and service sector vocational provision. Courses range from entry Level to higher education, with the majority in Level 2 and 3. Enrolments are highest in Humanities, Business Administration and Law, Science and Maths and Health and Social Care.

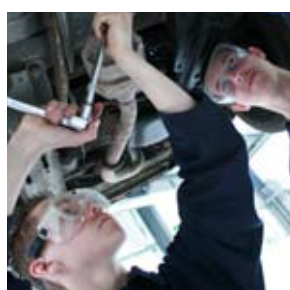
Employer funding has shown substantial growth, achieving 1204 learners enrolled on Apprenticeship Frameworks and NVQs in Business Administration, Accountancy, Customer Service, IT Services and Retail Financial Services.

The main college campus has been completely redeveloped to provide excellent facilities. The £26m new build and refurbishments were completed in December 2009.



Key Information on the Two Colleges

	Bromley College of Further & Higher Education	Orpington College of Further Education
Address	Rookery Lane, Bromley, Kent BR2 8HE	The Walnuts, Orpington, Kent BR6 0TE
Provision types	Learner Responsive: 16-18 19+ Employer Responsive HE (University of Greenwich) 14-16 (LBB)	Learner Responsive: 16-18 19+ Employer Responsive HE (University of Greenwich & Canterbury Christ Church University) 14-16 (LBB)
Total FE Students (09/10)	6699	3000
Of which Full Time (09/10)	2549	1015
Of which Part Time (09/10)	4150	1985
Total HE Students (09/10)	780	182
Total Turnover (£M) (09/10)	21.7	10.7
Overall Learner Success Rate (08/09)	75% (76% - 09/10)	79% (77% - 09/10)
OfSTED Overall Effectiveness Inspection Grade	Satisfactory (December 2009)	Satisfactory (May 2010)



Consultation Document

Bromley College

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020 8295 7000
www.bromley.ac.uk

Orpington College

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