

MERGER CONSULTATION

Cadbury College with Sandwell College



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A LETTER FROM COLLEGE GOVERNORS

Dear Stakeholder

Thank you for your interest in the proposed merger between Sandwell College and Cadbury Sixth Form College. The Governing Bodies of both colleges are excited to bring forward this proposal which sets out our intentions to ensure that the merged college will be stronger combined than the existing colleges have been individually.

Each site will retain the unique atmosphere, ethos and culture that visitors, partners, new employees and prospective students feel when they first enter those sites, and which serves as a valuable asset to those sites.

We will develop a single team approach covering all sites which will engender an ethos of togetherness, desire to support and caring professionalism. Staff in each college location will have a great pride of place and take real ownership for the College's students and its activities. Staff will be highly motivated to create a safe environment, where students and staff can feel confident, safe and secure.

The college will develop structures with the student experience and the importance of culture as key considerations, and embrace the cultures of each of its sites. It will provide opportunities to staff across the college to work with a wider group of colleagues, to develop their skills and resources, to benefit from dedicated academic leadership and to have clear opportunities to develop and progress their careers.

The college will provide dedicated leadership in the Cadbury Sixth Form College site, in the form of a Senior Manager and sufficient other leaders, able to commit sufficient time to ensuring that this vision is achieved for the College, its staff, its students and the local community. These Leaders will be proactive in engaging with the wider community in order to promote the opportunities within the College along with the benefit for residents and the business community. Leadership and management at the Cadbury Sixth Form site will work in a similar way to 'Central Sixth', Sandwell College's own specialist Sixth Form Centre.

The governing body of the College will reflect, understand and embrace the unique character of each of the communities served by the College. It will have a clear vision and plan for investment and will seek to use these assets to enhance partnerships which seek to further the economic prosperity of the local and regional communities.

What is our vision for the merged college?

- maintaining and further improving the already outstanding track record of each college supporting its students into successful outcomes, and by using its wider geographical base, assets and network of contacts it will continue to enhance the overall student experience
- ensuring excellence in teaching and learning by disseminating best practice to achieve high quality and to retain and attract the best talent
- developing the curriculum offer at all of its sites to respond to student demand as well as addressing employer demand and the changing economic and political landscape, including the Skills Plan and the Industrial Strategy
- providing a significant contribution to the local economy and the up-skilling and re-skilling of the workforce
- creating a strong and stable financial infrastructure which will permit investment in the fabric, facilities, equipment and staff at each of its sites, with an early focus on the Cadbury Sixth Form site

We firmly believe this proposal will ensure and enhance the continuing provision of high quality education for our learners. We would therefore welcome your comments and views on our proposals before we finalise our plans. Please reply to the address at Appendix 6 by 9th July 2018.

Thank you for your participation



Ken Ellis
Chair
Sandwell College



David Cragg CBE
Chair
Cadbury Sixth Form College

WHY MERGE?

In recent years, given the relatively modest size of the institution and tightening financial constraints in the further education sector, it has become clear that our locally important offer can only be sustained in the long-term by partnering with a financially strong and high quality college.

We believe it is imperative that the communities in Birmingham be served by a resilient, ambitious and successful college, specialising in advanced level learning.

Having accepted the recommendation from the [Further Education Commissioner](#) that it should merge before the end of 2018, Cadbury Sixth Form College chose Sandwell College as its partner following an open and transparent competition. The competition was led by the FE Commissioner's team and was supported by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Proposals were assessed against criteria which were developed from the "[New Challenges, New Chances](#)" document, [published by the Government in 2011](#), and the [College's own Vision Document](#) which was created in partnership with staff, students and local stakeholders.

HOW DID CADBURY SIXTH FORM COLLEGE ARRIVE AT ITS CHOSEN PARTNER?

Three organisations submitted strong proposals to partner Cadbury Sixth Form College. Supported by advisers from the Further Education Commissioner and the Education and Skills Funding Agency, Governors reviewed these proposals against these agreed criteria and considered the risks inherent in each proposal to achieve the merger in the set timescales.

In this review, Sandwell College clearly emerged as the potential partner who would most effectively meet the published criteria and who offered the highest degree of confidence that the merger would be completed in the recommended timescales. Whilst Sandwell is a Further Education College, their success in establishing and growing "Central Sixth", essentially a Sixth Form College, gave great comfort. Each assessor, whether from the college, the ESFA or the FE Commissioner judged Sandwell College the best of all the bids.

Sandwell stood out from other bidders by making strong commitments to:

- Recognise and build on the existing strengths of Cadbury Sixth Form College
- Support the development of professional communities across the merged college, especially between Central Sixth and Cadbury
- Retain the special status of Cadbury Sixth Form College as part of the merged structure
- Retaining substantial dedicated leadership and a range of services in Cadbury
- Understand what makes the ethos and atmosphere in Cadbury Sixth Form College so special
- Develop a new shared vision, values and strategy; engaging staff students and stakeholders from both Colleges
- Absorb the costs of some staffing capacity in order to create the opportunity to grow
- Invest quickly in the estate, equipment and staff in order to enhance opportunities for students and employers.

They also put forward a proposal which was free from reliance on third parties (either for financial support or ministerial approval) for the timely achievement of the merger.

Sandwell identified a number of opportunities to work together to enhance the curriculum and student experience in both Colleges through the sharing of expertise, equipment and external links, to benefit students, communities in both areas and provide new opportunities for staff. As a result, opportunities for Cadbury students will increase over the coming years.

The Governors of Cadbury Sixth Form College are convinced that they have made the very best choice of merger partner in order to provide a thriving Sixth Form College in the south of Birmingham.

Sandwell College are aware that much work needs to be done to make the merger a success, including building relationships with stakeholders in south Birmingham and improving outcomes for learners, both of which will help strengthen Cadbury's reputation, but they have the capacity to undertake this work and significant experience to draw upon from their success in the Greater Birmingham and Sandwell areas.

WHY DOES SANDWELL COLLEGE WISH TO MERGE WITH CADBURY SIXTH FORM COLLEGE?

Sandwell College has had ambitions to expand since 2013 and had identified Cadbury Sixth Form College as an ideal partner due a similar socio economic demography and the complementary curriculum offer, particularly when compared to Central Sixth. The Colleges are located geographically close enough together to benefit from shared services, economies of scale and combined networks, but far enough apart to avoid the temptations of narrowing the curriculum offer or losing local identity.

Sandwell College is therefore delighted to have been chosen as the preferred merger partner and to have the opportunity to bring financial and curriculum stability through its own experiences and successes. Sandwell College has had another successful year in terms of income generation, increasing 16- to 18-year old student numbers and overall Achievement Rates. Sandwell College was Inspected in November 2017 and maintained its overall 'Good' rating. It was praised for its relentless focus on improving quality and ensuring every effort is made to improve teaching and learning. Merger with Cadbury Sixth Form College will provide a further opportunity to strengthen quality, build local education partnerships and provide opportunities linked to the development of T levels and work placements for students.

WHAT ARE WE PROPOSING?

We are proposing the dissolution of the Cadbury Sixth Form College Corporation and the transfer of its property, rights and liabilities to the Sandwell College Corporation.

All students at Cadbury Sixth Form College who have not completed their courses of study by the date of the proposed dissolution will continue with and complete their studies in their current location as part of the merged college.

This proposal will deliver a bright future for our learners, staff, employers and wider community.



WHAT WILL BE THE NAME OF THE NEW COLLEGE?

It is proposed that the College will retain the official name of Sandwell College but will continue to operate both existing college brands post-merger. The individual campuses in Sandwell, Central Campus and Central Sixth will retain their identity and the current Cadbury Sixth Form College site will continue to operate under that name and will use this brand to the fullest possible extent.

The merged college will retain and develop a high quality offer on each of its sites, with sufficient autonomy to respond to the needs of local people and businesses and to engage with partners in the communities served by those sites, particularly those who make them really special. At the Cadbury College site, this offer will focus on A Levels across an extensive range of subjects. It will be complemented at Level 3 by a small range of vocational options in areas where the college has a proven track record and relevant expertise.

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THIS PROPOSED MERGER?



STUDENTS

The merger will benefit students by:

- Having a financially stable, robust College, well placed for a bright future
- Preserving and strengthening key educational services to the young people of Birmingham. Bringing economies of scale, we will be able to direct the vast majority of resources to teaching and learning, and other front line services
- Combining complementary strengths, which will increase the range of education and training opportunities, progression routes and professional accreditation
- Sharing of current best-practices which will build on the combined expertise and specialisms of staff in both colleges
- Retaining, developing and attracting the specialist staff that are essential in the provision of high quality, relevant and vital learning services
- Providing greater access to existing and new specialist learning resources
- Increasing investment in estates and equipment
- Increasing focus on learner outcomes and improving destinations into higher study and employment
- Greater access to employers through a stronger, larger, post-16 learning provider providing training, work experience, apprenticeships and employment opportunities
 - Providing a consistently high quality experience for all learners starting with good quality initial information, advice and guidance
 - Promoting a strong and influential learner voice
 - Providing seamless progression routes into Higher Education, and opportunities to continue learning within College

COMMUNITIES

The Sandwell and Cadbury communities will benefit from the merger by:

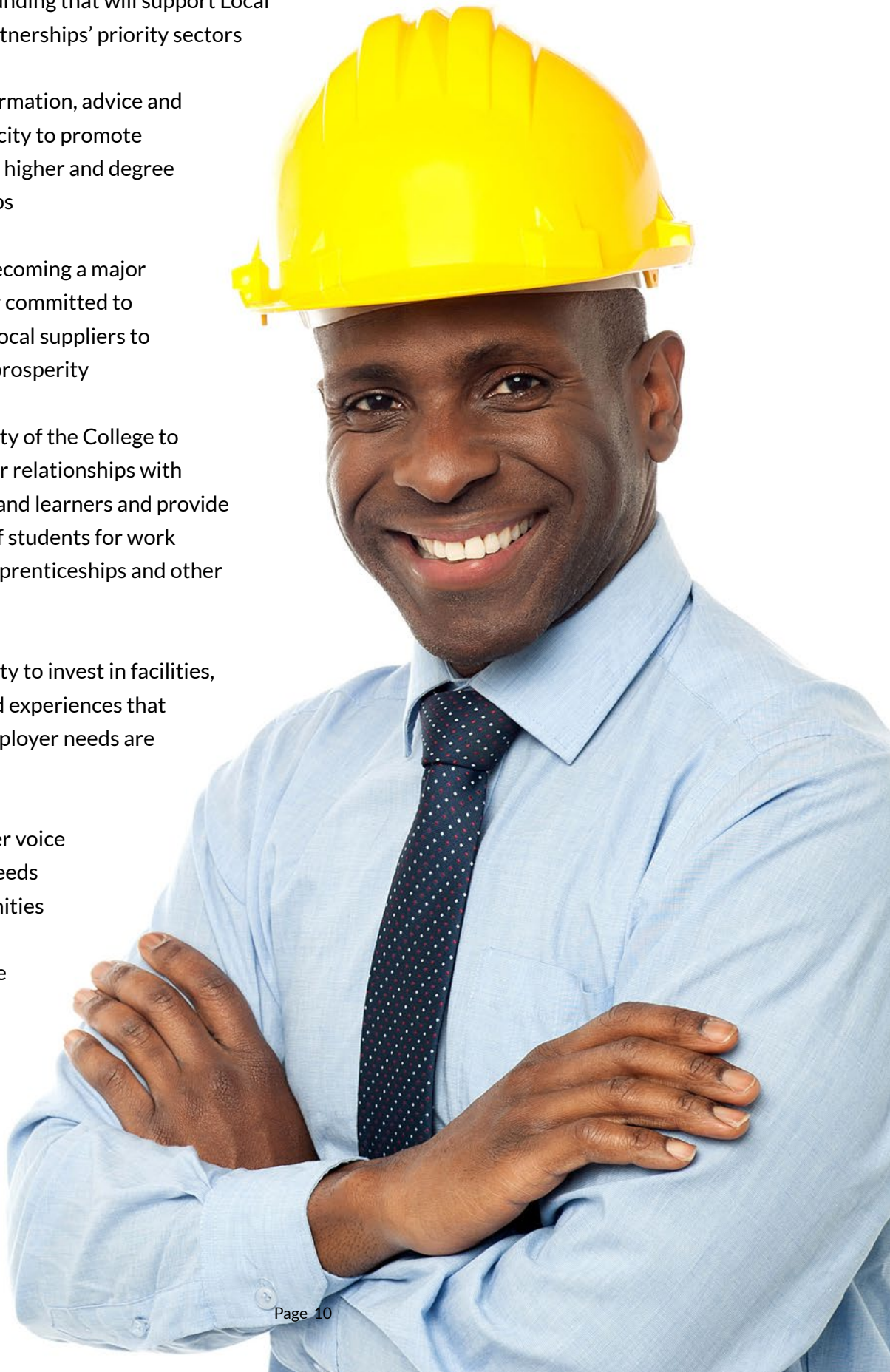
- A greater capacity to connect to community groups leading to a sustained delivery and presence across Sandwell, Cadbury and beyond
- Access to enhanced virtual and physical learning and social resources, which will enable local residents to engage more effectively with one another, with businesses and with key enabling agencies
- Becoming a hub for community groups and local residents
- A college with the ability to say “yes” more often when asked to support community initiatives
- A pro-active College, engaged in local issues and meeting local needs, in particular we will engage directly with schools, providing dedicated liaison and avenues for joint-delivery, support engagement and inclusion initiatives more effectively and provide enhanced opportunities for high quality careers education.



EMPLOYERS

The merger will benefit employers by:

- Increased ability to compete for national capital and revenue funding that will support Local Enterprise Partnerships' priority sectors
- Enhanced information, advice and guidance capacity to promote progression to higher and degree apprenticeships
- The College becoming a major local employer committed to working with local suppliers to support local prosperity
- Increased ability of the College to support deeper relationships with organisations and learners and provide a talent pool of students for work experience, apprenticeships and other opportunities
- Increased ability to invest in facilities, equipment and experiences that will ensure employer needs are well met
- Having a louder voice for the skills needs of the communities served by the merged college



STAFF

The merger will benefit staff by providing:

- The ability to specialise further and to develop wider curriculum interests
- More specialist resource and scope for staff development
- Opportunities for wider professional development and sharing practices and successes between Central Sixth and the Cadbury Sixth Form Campus
- A greater capacity to support strong core staffing teams across all main subject areas
- Exposure to greater job enhancement and enrichment opportunities that will support development for future career progression within the learning sector
- Improved access to enabling technologies that will enhance our ability to provide a better service to learners
- Improved job security that will come with a stronger financial base, the opportunities to attract more funds and the ability to mitigate more effectively the risks associated with curriculum innovation
- Improved access to business partners that will support regular industrial updating opportunities for teaching and business support colleagues



WHAT WILL BE THE GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT?

The merged College's board will increase in strength and depth through the addition of members from the current Cadbury College Corporation. New appointments will be made subsequently that reflect the geographic reach and diversity of the community served by the new College. In addition a local board will be established for Cadbury College with a formal scheme of delegation and clear lines of communication both to the local management team and the Corporation Board.

Sandwell College has an experienced senior team and outstanding financial health which will help to restore financial stability to Cadbury Sixth Form College and invest for the future. Sandwell College recognises that reducing any uncertainty for staff and students is another significant factor in making the merger a success. The Corporation and Management Team will work with key stakeholders to develop a high quality, A Level focused curriculum at Cadbury, based on growth achieved through meeting student, community and employer need.

How to Respond

We welcome feedback and input from our stakeholders - if you have any questions, comments or suggestions on the merger, please let us know. There are a variety of ways to respond, by letter, questionnaire, email or online as detailed at Appendix 6

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Both Colleges have a long tradition of valuing and promoting equality and celebrating diversity, not only in response to relevant legislation but in upholding the spirit of the law, reducing discrimination and raising participation, ensuring that under-represented groups are attracted to courses offered.

Both Colleges have an Equality Policy and an Equality Action Plan which are used to review existing practice and to develop approaches to Teaching, Learning and Assessment to further improve the learner experience. The merged College will continue to analyse all aspects of its provision to ensure that equality and diversity are embedded within its structures and build upon the already excellent achievements. The College will expand its use of innovative approaches, utilizing the latest technologies to motivate its students.

Equality and Diversity will be key facets of the College's vision and mission and the College will always endeavor to:

- Ensure that equality and social inclusion is embedded into the curriculum and all aspects of the learner experience
- Promote equality and diversity amongst and within the staffing resource
- Consult with all communities and stakeholders to ensure representation and respond to those consultations in the spirit of equality and valuing diversity
- Ensure that equality and diversity is embedded through its strategy and operations and include a range of impact analyses on College operation.

The merged college will be in a stronger position to contribute to the achievement of government targets for participation and success as the greater critical mass of provision would allow for a stronger focus on the needs of under-represented groups, building on the sound platform already in place.

A full Equality Impact Assessment of the proposed merger will be conducted by the Colleges prior to merger. Both Governing Bodies are determined that the merger will bring significantly positive outcomes across equality indicators. Mitigating actions will be developed and set out in the Equality Impact Assessment, wherever any less positive outcomes are identified. It is anticipated that there will be more learning opportunities and enhanced learner progression routes, particularly for those

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - Chronology and Proposed Time-scales for Merger

Chronology and Proposed Time-scales for Merger

November 2017

FE Commissioner intervention at Cadbury Sixth Form College. Recommendation that the College should seek a merger partner and merge by 31 December 2018

January 2018

Merger Partner Selection Process agreed, Vision Document developed with stakeholders and Assessment Criteria established

February 2018

Selection process undertaken to identify preferred merger partner

March 2018

Sandwell College selected as preferred merger partner

May 2018

Due Diligence (legal and financial phase 1)

June 2018

Statutory notice and proposal published and public consultation commenced

July 2018

Public consultation completes business plan for merged college completed and agreed

August 2018

All aspects of due diligence, consideration of public consultation results and feedback to be completed. A summary of the consultation and its outcome will be published

September 2018

Governing Bodies of both colleges formally vote on resolutions to merge

October 2018

Subject to decision of the Governing Bodies, Cadbury Sixth Form College dissolves and its assets and liabilities pass to Sandwell College. The proposed date for the merged college to be operational is 1st November.

APPENDIX 2 - LOCATION OF COLLEGE SITES AND COLLEGE ADDRESS

College and Campus Addresses

Proposed merged college 'registered office' address:

Sandwell College

Central Campus 1 Spon Lane West Bromwich B70 6AW

Sandwell College

Central Campus

Central Campus

1 Spon Lane

West Bromwich

B70 6AW

0121 667 5000

Sandwell College

Central Sixth

New Square

New Street

West Bromwich

B70 7PG

0121 667 5000

Cadbury Sixth Form College

Downland Close

Kings Norton

Birmingham

West Midlands

B38 8QT

0121 458 3898

APPENDIX 3 – NOTICE OF THE PROPOSAL

Statutory Notice - Further and Higher Education Act 1992

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN by the Corporation of Cadbury Sixth Form College, Downland Close, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8QT, in accordance with the Further Education Corporations (Publication of Proposals) (England) Regulations 2012, SI 2012 No. 1157, of the proposal for the transfer of its property, rights and liabilities to the Corporation of Sandwell College, Central Campus, 1 Spon Lane, West Bromwich, B70 6AW, and the subsequent dissolution of the Corporation of Cadbury Sixth Form College.

Sandwell College will continue to operate both existing college brands post-merger.

The date proposed for the dissolution of the Corporation of Cadbury Sixth Form College is 1st November 2018.

All students at Cadbury Sixth Form College who have not completed their courses of study by the date of the proposed dissolution will continue with and complete their studies in their current locations under the auspices of Sandwell College. A copy of the proposal is available free of charge via email consultation@cadcol.ac.uk and will be sent to any person who requests it. Hard copies of the proposal will be available at reception in each of the colleges.

The consultation period runs from 4th June 2018 – 9th July 2018. All responses and representations must be received by the closing date. Cadbury Sixth Form College will publish a summary of the feedback and its outcome within two months of the closing date. The summary will be available on both college websites as follows: www.cadcol.ac.uk www.sandwell.ac.uk Responses to the consultation may be made by email to consultation@cadcol.ac.uk or in writing to:

Consultation, c/o Elise Scotford,
Clerk to the Corporation,
Cadbury Sixth Form College,
Downland Close,
Kings Norton,
Birmingham,
B38 8QT.

APPENDIX 4 – THE PROPOSAL

Information to be provided in accordance with The Further Education (Publication of Proposals) (England) Regulations 2012

The name of the Further Education Corporation and the name of the institution concerned:

The Corporation of Cadbury Sixth Form College

The address of the institution:

Downland Close, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8QT

A general description of the education provided by the institution:

Cadbury Sixth Form College is a Sixth Form College, which delivers vocational education and skills training in Kings Norton, Birmingham. The current curriculum encompasses a sizable creative arts and performing arts provision, which has an excellent reputation, a significant hospitality and catering provision and a range of other vocational offers. It also includes an A Level offer a range of apprenticeships and a small Higher Education provision. At the end of the 2016/17 academic year the College had 1219 full-time students, 590 part-time students and 326 apprentices giving a total of 2135 students.

The reason for proposing the dissolution of the Corporation:

The Further Education Commissioner recommended that Cadbury Sixth Form College merges, following his intervention in November 2017, after the college had experienced financial difficulties. Dissolution of the Corporation of Cadbury Sixth Form College is proposed in order that it may merge with Sandwell College. This will allow the combined organisation to harness the strengths of both institutions, their resources, expertise and quality, and their equally strong reputations and standing with employers, stakeholders and their communities. Utilising these, it will be strongly placed to offer an increased range of outstanding educational and training opportunities to individuals and employers, and serve as a contributor to the local economy, and to do so in an efficient way that provides good value to paying students and clients, to funding organisations and to tax payers.

The merger will be effected by Cadbury Sixth Form College transferring its property, rights and liabilities to the Corporation of Sandwell College, before dissolving itself.

The date proposed for the dissolution of the Corporation of Cadbury Sixth Form College is 1st November 2018.

APPENDIX 5 - LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS TO BE CONSULTED

Indicative List of Stakeholders to be consulted

The following is an indicative list of stakeholders to whom a copy of this consultation document has been sent. It does not preclude any person or organisation not listed below from submitting comments or replies.

Colleges:

Birmingham Metropolitan College
Halesowen College
Joseph Chamberlain Sixth Form College
King Edward VI Sixth Form College Nuneaton
King Edward VI Sixth Form College Stourbridge
Solihull Sixth Form College
South and City College Birmingham

Education and Skills:

Association of Colleges
Association of Employment and Learning Providers
Education and Training Foundation
National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
National Union of Students
Ofsted
Sixth Form Colleges' Association

Employer Bodies:

GBS Chamber of Commerce
Confederation of British Industry
Institute of Directors
Federation of Small Businesses

Government Departments, Agencies and Funding Bodies:

The Secretary of State for Education
Department for Education
Education and Skills Funding Agency/ Chief Executive of Skills Funding
Higher Education Funding Council for England
Companies House
Emergency services
Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise
Partnership

Local Authorities:

Birmingham City Council
Redditch Borough Council
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
West Midlands Combined Authority

Members of Parliament for the constituencies of:

Birmingham Edgbaston	Birmingham Northfield
Birmingham Erdington	Birmingham Perry Barr
Birmingham Hall Green	Birmingham Selly Oak
Birmingham Hodge Hill	Birmingham Yardley
Birmingham Ladywood	Redditch
West Bromwich West	West Bromwich East
Warley	Halesowen & Rowley Regis

Head Teachers:

Head Teachers of all schools where students regularly progress to either college. Head Teachers of any other maintained school or Academy in Birmingham and Sandwell which provides full-time education suitable to the requirements of persons over compulsory school age.

Staff and Students of both colleges**Employer partners of each College****Trades Unions:**

Association of Teachers and Lecturers Association for College Management NASUWT
National Union of Teachers Trade Union Congress University and College Union UNISON

Universities:

Aston University
Birmingham City University
Coventry University
University College Birmingham
University of Birmingham

Other Partners:

Sub-contractors

APPENDIX 6 - HOW TO RESPOND TO THE CONSULTATION

How to Respond to the Consultation

A copy of the proposal is available free of charge via email consultation@cadcol.ac.uk and will be sent to any person who requests it. Hard copies of the proposal will be available at reception in each of the colleges.

The formal consultation period runs from 4th June 2018 – 9th July 2018. The formal Statutory Notice can be found at Appendix 3. You can respond by completing and returning the questionnaire overleaf or online on the Colleges' websites (see below). www.Cadcol.ac.uk www.Sandwell.ac.uk

You can also give a longer response in writing. All responses and representations must be received by the closing date, 9th July 2018.

If you have any questions relating to this consultation you can make them in writing or by email. In order to give us time to respond, these should be submitted by 18th June 2018.

Responses to the consultation may be made by email to: consultation@cadcol.ac.uk

or in writing to:

Consultation, c/o Elise Scotford, Clerk to the Corporation, Cadbury Sixth Form College, Downland Close, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B38 8QT.

The Corporations of Cadbury Sixth Form College and Sandwell College will publish a summary of the feedback and its outcome within two months of the closing date. The summary will be available on both college websites as above.

QUESTIONNAIRE – WE WANT YOUR VIEWS

Proposed Merger of Sandwell College and Cadbury Sixth Form College

The above colleges are proposing to merge in order to further the ambitions we both have for the communities we serve. Details of the proposed merger are outlined in the Merger Consultation Document which is available online on both Colleges' websites. Once you have read the proposal, please answer the following questions:

ABOUT YOU

Title

Name

Postcode

Email Address

Which of the following best describes you or your organisation?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cadbury Sixth Form College Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sandwell College Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Local |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employer | <input type="checkbox"/> Government |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FE or Sixth Form College | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government Body/Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> School/University |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HE Institution | <input type="checkbox"/> Student |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Please use this space to tell us a little about yourself (optional)

Please tell us your preferred contact details (such as address, contact number or email address)

If you represent an organisation, please tell us about your role

HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE PROPOSED MERGER?

Do you support the proposal for the merger?

Yes No Unsure

Please use this space to provide any further details on the reasons for your answer.

If you do not support the proposed merger, are there any alternative options which you wish to suggest to be considered?

We plan to maintain and widen the range of opportunities for students and to expand our employer focused provision and services. Do you support these aims?

Yes No Unsure

Please give details of the provision or services you would like to see prioritised.

We plan to share good practice across our campuses in order to further enhance the quality of the student and customer experience. Do you agree that the Proposed Merger would meet this aim?

Yes No Unsure

Please give details of any areas, services or provision you would like to see prioritised.

Do you think any group, including students and staff, would be adversely affected by the merger plans?

Yes No Unsure

Please use this space to provide any further details on the reasons for your answer.

Please use this space to make any comments relevant to the plans in the Merger Consultation document or to expand on any of your previous answers.