

Press Release

Wednesday October 18, 2017

Sussex Coast College Hastings & Sussex Downs College to merge

Sussex Coast College Hastings and Sussex Downs College have announced their intention to merge to form a Sussex wide College group, with effect from March 2018.

Over the coming months, the two colleges will engage with stakeholders to discuss merger plans. A public consultation document has been released to outline more detail. Members of the public who have questions or comments are invited to email info@scc-sdc-merger.com by November 20, 2017.

The merger will see Sussex Coast College and Sussex Downs College coming together to create a single organisation, serving the whole of East Sussex. Utilising the combined expertise and experience of both colleges is a proactive step to create a secure future for further education and skills training across the county. The public document on the merger can be found here:

https://issuu.com/sdcommms/docs/merger_public_consultation_doc

The intended merger is a positive step on the part of both governing bodies to ensure the continuation and future development of Further Education (FE) and sixth form provision for the towns of Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes and Newhaven.

The merged organisation would:

- Deliver enhanced choice and access to provision for all students and communities
- Provide local learning for local people and businesses
- Deliver financial stability, boast attractive employment opportunities for staff, while simultaneously shaping a new future for the wider education and skills agenda for the area.

The organisation would provide even higher quality academic, technical and professional education and training for young people, adults and employers. It would deliver a more inclusive provision at all levels of need, covering entry and initial skills for employment, through to advanced and higher education opportunities linked to local and national skills needs.

Sussex Coast College would retain its existing structure to include the development of the college's existing sub brands including the University Centre Hastings. The merger would allow Sussex Downs College to create two colleges – a dedicated sixth form college delivering in both Lewes and Eastbourne, and a professional and technical college serving Eastbourne, Lewes and Newhaven, which would include skills training for young people and adults and a higher education offer.

Henry Ball, Chair of the Governing Board at Sussex Downs College and Chair of the newly formed Transition Board that will guide the merger, said: "This is an incredibly exciting time as we work together to create a new college that will be a step change in the quality and responsiveness of post-16 education in the county of East Sussex. The range and specialisation on offer will be unparalleled in the county. This, combined with the sharply focussed provision for Academic, Professional and

Technical education, Higher Education and Adult Education, and a commitment to work with partners to achieve this ambition, means we are looking to establish a world-class college that will serve both current and future generations of our region.”

Tony Campbell OBE, KSG Chair of Sussex Coast College and Vice Chair of the Transition Board said: “By joining in this strategic partnership both Colleges will ensure a sustainable and forensic focus on improving the quality of curriculum provision. This offer of curriculum quality will match any available elsewhere in the South East. It will support economic growth and social regeneration in the local communities the Colleges serve and also across East Sussex.”

Ends

Note to News Editors:

Sussex Coast College Hastings and Sussex Downs College participated in the Government’s Area Review process designed to give colleges recommendations on how to be secure and provide a good quality offer to learners and employers in the long-term.

Following the Area Review recommendations and the Colleges’ close working relationship they have declared their intent to form a strategic alliance which in legal terms must be classified as a ‘merger’.

For more information, please contact Dan Shelley, Vice Principal, Enterprise, Employment and Skills, Sussex Coast College Hasting, on 01424 458571 or email DS Shelley@sussexcoast.ac.uk