

<b>Item No.</b> N/a	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 17 October 2019	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Cabinet Member for Jobs, Business and Innovation
<b>Report title:</b>		Response to consultation on the proposed merger of Kensington and Chelsea College and Morley College London	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Head of Chief Executive's Office Director of Education	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Business and Innovation

1. Notes the consultation response on the proposed merger of Kensington and Chelsea College and Morley College London.
2. Delegates authority to the Head of the Chief Executive's Office to submit the formal consultation response to Kensington & Chelsea College as provided at Appendix 1.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Morley College is an adult education college located in Southwark. The board of Morley College announced in March 2019 that it was in negotiations to merge with Kensington and Chelsea College (KCC). The proposal is to create Morley College London comprising the existing centre at Waterloo and two new centres in Chelsea and North Kensington which currently constitute KCC.
4. The proposals aim to ensure the continued provision of adult learning for communities in parts of west London where there is a pressing need, allowing Morley College to apply its successful model of adult learning provision to broader range of residents, and open up new opportunities for curriculum innovation and progression.
5. The council maintains a strong relationship with Morley College as a key skills provider in the borough. The College is an active member of the Southwark Skills Partnership, working closely with the Council and a range of other partners to improve quality of provision and access to skills training.
6. KCC has issued notice of its proposal to dissolve its Corporation and has instigated the formal consultation process required under the Statutory Instrument. The deadline for consultation responses is 23 October 2019.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

7. The proposal for a merger between Morley College and KCC will create Morley College London which would be the largest adult education college in London. The merger proposal presents an ambition for a London-wide reach, aligned to

the Mayor of London's Skills Strategy. This ambition presents an opportunity for expanded and strengthened adult learning provision for communities in Southwark and West London, in line with the ambitions articulated in Southwark's Skills Strategy.

8. While the proposal demonstrates a London-wide ambition, there is a continued commitment to ensuring high quality provision in Southwark by retaining and enhancing Morley's Waterloo Centre and further strengthening the provision delivered from this centre. The council strongly welcomes the continued commitment to Morley's important role in Southwark.
9. Morley College currently holds a "Good" rating from Ofsted, while KCC has been rated "Requires Improvement" over the last three years. The council recommends that further information is provided in relation to how a "Good" overall rating will be achieved for the merged college group and the specific measures that will be taken to address the longstanding financial and quality related issues identified and reported by Ofsted at KCC.

### **Consultation**

10. This consultation response was coordinated across a number of relevant teams across the council including the Southwark Adult Learning Service, Education Department and Local Economy Team.

### **Policy implications**

11. The consultation response is in line with the Southwark Skills Strategy, specifically its aims to strengthen skills provision in the borough. The Skills Strategy seeks to ensure that residents have access to skills provision that enables them to access the range of opportunities available in the borough.
12. The response is also aligned to the below 2018-2022 Council Plan ambitions related to achieving a full employment borough:
  - Make sure everyone has a basic qualification in English and maths and that residents have the digital skills to get the jobs of the future
  - Ensure all residents benefit from opportunities to take advantage of the digital revolution
  - Ensure residents are equipped with the tools they need to find employment and to progress to better paid work.

### **Community impact statement**

13. The merger presents an opportunity for expanded and strengthened adult learning provision for communities in Southwark and West London, in line with the ambitions articulated in Southwark's Skills Strategy, recognising that the development of skills delivers social value. While the proposal demonstrates a London-wide ambition, there is a continued commitment to ensuring high quality adult learning provision for Southwark residents by retaining and enhancing Morley's Waterloo Centre and further strengthening the provision delivered from this centre.

## Financial implications

14. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

15. Not applicable

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
None		

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Response to consultation on the proposed merger of Kensington and Chelsea College and Morley College London

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Stephen Gaskell, Head of Chief Executive's Office	
<b>Report Author</b>	Susan du Toit, Senior Strategy Officer	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	17 October 2019	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments included</b>
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	No
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional</b>	17 October 2019	

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Consultation on the proposed merger of Kensington and Chelsea College and Morley College London**

#### **Southwark Council Consultation Response**

##### **1. Please share any comments you may have on the merger proposal**

Morley College is a valued partner of Southwark Council and plays an important role in delivering high quality adult learning provision to Southwark residents. The proposal to create a larger single provider through the merger presents the opportunity to expand and strengthen provision available to communities in Southwark and West and North London. While the Council supports the College's ambition to create a London-wide reach, it is important that Morley College's valued role for communities in Southwark is maintained. The Council therefore welcomes the commitment to retaining and enhancing existing centres and further strengthening the wide-ranging provision at Morley's Waterloo centre as part of the proposed merger. The Council also welcomes the proposal's focus on ensuring high quality teaching, improving the student experience and aligning provision with the needs of local employers.

The Council would welcome further information regarding identified risks of the proposed merger and how these risks will be controlled and mitigated.

##### **2. Please share any questions you may have about the proposal consultation**

We are aware of the challenge of improving and maintaining a college group's overall Ofsted rating following a merger, particularly where one college previously had a low Ofsted rating and the other previously had a good rating. Kensington and Chelsea College has been judged as "Requires Improvement" by Ofsted in the last three consecutive inspections. Morley College maintained its "Good" rating in an inspection in 2019. In light of this, it would be helpful to understand how a good overall rating will be achieved for Morley College London and the specific measures that will be taken to address the longstanding financial and quality related issues identified and reported by Ofsted at KCC.

It would also be helpful to understand any learning that has been gained from local mergers such as the merger and subsequent de-merger of the two large local FE colleges, Southwark and Lewisham Colleges.

**3. Please share suggestions of courses you would like to see offered by the college**

Increased and expanded provision in the below courses would support local skills priorities:

- Employability Skills
- Essential English & maths qualifications
- Digital Skills for the Creative Industries
- Film Production
- Digital Animation
- Design and Technology courses in Ceramics, Jewellery making, Furniture, Industrial Design
- Option of additional English Language support for the above courses