

Report of Deputy Principal Students and South Leeds

Report to South Leeds (Outer) Area Committee

Date: Monday 26th March 2012

Subject: Update to the merger of Joseph Priestley School and Leeds City College

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The focus of the first 6 months has been to align services and the curriculum offer and to address staffing structures and management issues. This has been done whilst maintaining a strong focus on students and their experience. Every effort has been made to minimise any negative impact of the merger on students, staff and the employers we work with.

It is still early days for the merger but the overall stability it has brought – both now and for the future should be noted as a positive.

The other major update relates to the potential acquisition of the Print works by the College. The proposed purchase, not yet finalised, is part of the overall property strategy of the College. Initially the College will only develop and use part of the building with further development over the next 10 years. The buildings will house several important vocational faculties including Hospitality and Catering and Hair and Beauty. This will not affect the current Joseph Priestley sites of Beeston, Rothwell and Morley.

Recommendations

Area Committees are requested to note the contents of this report.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To update and inform Outer South Leeds Councillors on the merger transition to date and future plans.

2 Background information

- 2.1 On August 1st 2011 Joseph Priestley merged with Leeds City College. The College undertook to update the councillors of South Leeds on a regular basis on progress and implications for South Leeds. This report covers the first 6 months post merger.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The future curriculum offer is under discussion covering what can and should be offered as full time provision for the 16 to 18 age group. No major changes are planned for the immediate future other than the addition of retail as an option as the retail sector offers significant career opportunities in Leeds. The intention is to build the current small Sport provision in Morley and potentially to add qualifications for the Uniformed Public services. However, much will depend on the allocation for 2012/13 by the Young People's Learning Agency.
- 3.2 The offer for adults wanting to enhance their skills and qualifications is also under review and will potentially include a wider full cost leisure offer. Government funded adult provision has to be focused on employability and includes a continued emphasis on literacy, numeracy and IT skills. A BA for Learning Support staff delivered in partnership with Huddersfield University may be available this September. Again the adult offer is subject to the allocation in 2012/13 by the Skills Funding Agency.
- 3.3 The Joseph Priestley Centres are becoming involved in the delivery of programmes for the unemployed and Youth Inspire. This includes the development of a retail programme. This area of development demonstrates the advantages of being part of a larger organisation with a broader range of expertise and management.
- 3.4 The provision for young adults with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities is being maintained at the Joseph Priestley centres in Morley and Beeston. Joseph Priestley's expertise in this area is contributing to the city wide development of this provision.
- 3.5 The SAIL (Supporting Achievements in Learning) programme for those not in education, employment or training has been delivered at the South Leeds Hub since late September with a second cohort currently being recruited. The close working relationships established between IGEN, the College and the Centre are important in making this programme successful although the challenge of recruiting the most local young people continues.
- 3.6 No major changes to the Joseph Priestley buildings in Beeston, Rothwell and Morley are planned other than routine maintenance and upgrading of the facilities.

3.7 Joseph Priestley staff and managers are steadily being integrated into the Leeds City College faculties and departments. For some there have been welcome opportunities to take on responsibility; for others the transition has been more challenging.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 There are no immediate requirements for customer consultation with regards to the content of this particular report.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 The merger will enable the College to make a stronger contribution to the regeneration of the south of Leeds and to work with other agencies to narrow the educational achievement gap. The College is focused on building pathways to higher level qualifications and supporting individuals to progress. The opportunities to plan across the city should bring significant benefits and the improved coherence of provision will enable us to target resources to the areas of greater need.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The merger should bring enormous benefits to Leeds and future planning for Leeds City Region. South Leeds has the potential to be a key area as the southern gateway within the Leeds City Region. Strong Further Education provision can make a very valuable contribution. I remain the representative for Leeds Colleges on the South/South East Area Leadership team bringing continuity and understanding of the area.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.1 There are no resources or value for money considerations in this report.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 Local Authorities have a major strategic responsibility for the provision of education for the 14 to 19 age group and those up to 25 with learning difficulties or disabilities. The merger will support the discharge of this responsibility. The economies of scale of a large college should optimise the use of resources that will be more scarce in the future

4.5 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Councillors are asked to note the progress made since the merger.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Outer South Area Committee are asked to note the contents of this report and make comment where appropriate.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 There are no background documents to this report.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.