



Department  
for Business  
Innovation & Skills

To: Mathew Hancock  
From: [Redacted]  
Date: 12 December 2012  
Subject: Application to change the name of  
Lewisham College Corporation

Redacted section 44  
- Personal Information

### Purpose:

To seek your decision on the application from Lewisham College Corporation to change their name to LeSoCo on 15 April 2013.

**Recommendation:** You agree the name change and sign the letter at Annex A.

**Timing:** Routine

### Summary:

1. On 1 August 2012 Lewisham and Southwark Colleges merged to form a new college in South East London. Following extensive consultation with students, stakeholders (MPs and local authorities), staff, the Skills Funding Agency and other local educational institutions, the new college propose changing the Corporation's name to 'LeSoCo'; a blend of the names of the two colleges: Lewisham and Southwark, and College. The Corporation feel that by combining the three words to form the college's new name something unique, innovative and inclusive is created signalling a new beginning.
2. The Corporation has followed the process set out in the Department's name change guidance and provided all the supporting documentation required, including confirmation from the emergency services that the name will not cause confusion; positive consultation responses from local educational institutions and agreement of the Corporation to change their name to 'LeSoCo'. The 3 local MPs have been consulted. None raised any objection to the name [Redacted].  
[Redacted]. DfE have been consulted on the name change and said if the correct consultation process has been followed and the proposed name has local support they do not have any objection.
3. While 'LeSoCo' is not be a conventional name for a college we recognise that we are operating in a new landscape of freedoms, where we are placing more responsibility on the Corporation to decide how is best to deliver to their local community operating in a competitive market. The corporation feel this new name will mark a new beginning for the college, give them a competitive advantage, positioning them clearly within a sometimes fragmented market and most importantly adopt a name that resonates with students and employers.

Redacted  
section 35  
- Formulation  
of government  
policy

### Background:

4. As part of the merger consultation the Corporation tested the name 'Lewisham and Southwark College' with a wide range of stakeholders. There was quite a degree of negativity, primarily focused on Southwark College and its poor reputation. There was support for retaining the local connection, but the name was seen as lacking inspiration and representing a brand that was tarnished.
5. This led the college to consider a new name. They held one to one interviews and workshops with key stakeholders including student's staff, local authority partners, and employers to come up with ideas. The Corporation conducted a formal consultation on the final name with 50 local educational institutions. The consultation received a number of positive responses, with no objections raised to the proposed name.
6. The Corporation believe the new name will help change current perceptions; bring staff together and dissipate the feeling of Southwark staff being taken over; give them permission to be different; and help draw a line under the past while retaining a link to the new.

**Copied to:**

PS/Willetts, PS/Permanent Secretary, PS/SoS, Special Advisers, Rachel Sandby-Thomas, Susan Pember, Bobbie McClelland, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED].

**Advice received from:** *Redacted section 40  
- Personal Information*

Finance	SpAds	Press / Comms	Legal	Analysts
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	- N/A

Cleared by – Susan Pember