

**Joint statement of Hackney Community College and Tower Hamlets College.
23rd March 2016**

Colleges' merger confirmed. Chief Executive Designate Appointed.

The Governing Bodies of Hackney Community College and Tower Hamlets College are pleased to **confirm that the proposed merger of the two colleges has been formally approved by the Boards of both colleges.** The two colleges will retain their current names, campuses in each borough, and branding within the new merged organisation, which will be officially formed on 1st August 2016.

The rationale for the merger is to create a larger and more sustainable further education college, which is better able to meet current and future local needs. There is a firm commitment to maintain a substantial curriculum in each borough into the future, and also to actively seek opportunities to develop existing and further specialisms at higher levels (level 4 and above).

A partnership of equals

As [previously announced](#), this merger has been planned as a partnership of equals. As part of this process, the existing Chairs of Governors will stand down from the end of July, and a new independent Chair of Governors, recruited from outside of the existing Boards, will be appointed. Aside from the new Chair, membership of the continuing Corporation's Board will be made up of governors drawn from both colleges.

Appointment of Chief Executive

Further to a recent selection process, involving governors of both colleges, the two College Boards have agreed the appointment of Gerry McDonald as Chief Executive. Gerry will continue in his role as Principal of Tower Hamlets College, alongside carrying out the role of Chief Executive Designate. He will formally take up the role of the Chief Executive of the merged college on 1st August 2016.

Merger Adviser

The Boards have agreed that a fixed-term, part-time Merger Adviser role will help and support the management teams in the successful implementation of the merger. This role will be taken up by Ian Ashman, current Principal of Hackney Community College, and the initial appointment is until the end of December 2016.

The current Chairs of Governors, Professor Martin Earwicker (Tower Hamlets College) and Tom Mautner JP (Hackney Community College), have issued the following joint message:

“This merger, a partnership of equals, brings together two very strong organisations, which play vital roles in their local communities and the wider region. While we will maintain the local names and identities of Hackney Community College and Tower Hamlets College, the merger will create a much stronger organisation, which will continue to meet the skills needs of local people, employers and our communities, for the foreseeable future.”