CONSULTATION PROPOSAL
For a merger of Bury College with the University of Bolton

April 2016
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper lays out proposals for Bury College to merge with the University of Bolton within the context of the Greater Manchester Area Review of Post-16 Education and Training Institutions (GMAR). This consultation paper serves as the Statutory Proposal in the context of that Review, states the potential benefits associated with this Option and lays out a schedule of action which will be adopted should the proposal be confirmed. It is concluded that the ‘Incorporation’ model is the most compelling option of those which meet the GMAR criteria and is the one most likely to be in the interests of the College and of the town of Bury and the surrounding area. Crucially, the Incorporation model explicitly enables the College to retain its name and identity, yet enhances its capacity and capability to deliver on its vision and maintain adherence to its historical values and its clear focus on the primacy of the learner and on the college as a community asset. The Incorporation Option also at a stroke creates a university presence in the town. Views are explicitly sought on the proposal by 20 May 2016.

“"We expect institutions to take the right action, in light of the findings of a review, to ensure that they are resilient and able to respond to future funding priorities. Ultimately we expect the funding agencies and LEPs to only fund institutions that have taken action to ensure they can provide a good quality offer to learners and employers, which is financially sustainable for the long term."”

‘Reviewing Post-16 Education and Training Institutions’
(HM Government, 2015)
The Governing Body of Bury College proposes to merge with the University of Bolton by its incorporation into the University. “Bury College” would continue as a visible and significant provider of high quality training and education as part of the University group.

Both organisations bring considerable strengths to this proposal and view this opportunity as a merger of two equal partners with complementary strengths. This will be a strategic merger of two successful, high performing educational organisations with a track record of continuous improvement, high quality standards, excellent achievement rates and outstanding financial performance.

Of overwhelming priority is the commitment to continue to ensure positive benefits, outcomes and success for our students and the communities we serve.

The University and its merged college will continue to operate closely and collaboratively in partnership with the local enterprise partnership, local authorities, schools, other training providers, communities, employers and other key stakeholders to provide even greater choice, opportunities and progression for learners and respond to the needs of the local and regional economy.

This proposed merger provides an exciting opportunity to shape the future development of education, training and skills in Bury, North Manchester and beyond. The organisation will provide a more comprehensive, flexible and responsive curriculum offer, with the potential to improve access and increase choice for a broader range of learners at all levels.

The proposal is presented as being in the best interests of all stakeholders. This consultation document is the opportunity for your feedback and thoughts. The consultation period runs from 12 April until 20 May 2016. All feedback received will be reviewed and considered.

The views of our stakeholders are greatly valued and we very much look forward to receiving them.

Peter Nicol
Chair of Governors - Bury College
A. CONTEXT TO THE NEED FOR REVIEW

A.1 The Greater Manchester Review of Post 16 provision

The national review of Post-16 Sixth Form and FE colleges is intended to reshape FE and develop a more effective and responsive post-16 system to meet the needs of the national economy. This is a major reform of colleges across the country and all 21 further education and sixth form colleges in Greater Manchester are part of the associated regional review.

The Further Education Sector has been subject to five successive years of funding cuts and fiscal restraints, which has weakened the financial stability of Colleges across the sector. No college has been immune to this impact and many colleges have already sought to mitigate the impact by exploring different structural arrangements such as federation, merger or shared services.

The national review aims to deliver “fewer, often larger, more resilient and efficient providers” in the interests of financial resilience and long-term sustainability. The Greater Manchester Area Review is designed to deliver this ambition locally, whilst addressing educational need and GM work and skills priorities. A key aim of the GM Area Review is to develop new models of delivery that are better equipped to deliver this aim.

The Review further highlights the importance of a focus on collaboration between institutions rather than on individual institutions. It states that it is essential that solutions are resilient and able to respond to emerging changes in the labour market.

Nationally, therefore, the educational landscape is in the process of a significant overhaul. The Government’s Area Review process is encouraging education providers across the country to rethink and reimage their operations in order to maximise the impact of valuable educational resources. Greater co-operation between providers is taking place and mergers are being widely encouraged.

This proposal plays to the strengths and synergies between Bury College and the University of Bolton. It has the wellbeing of its stakeholders at its heart and is entirely consistent with the Government’s agenda.

Both organisations have a long and widely-recognised history of creating enviable learning environments through delivery of high quality learning, enriched student experiences and excellent educational attainment. At a time when many educational organisations are struggling financially, through strong leadership and foreshadowed planning, both Bury College and the University of Bolton remain financially healthy and strong. By combining their organisational assets, Bury College and the University of Bolton are well-positioned to take advantage of the potential new investment and development opportunities this proposal could bring to their communities.
The proposed merger will create an organisation strong on provision, responsive to the needs of learners and our stakeholders and connected to the current and future demands of the wider labour market. Specialisms will be built upon and developed, supported by employer demand and the guidance of our stakeholders to strengthen the educational opportunities for learners.

The University of Bolton continues to pursue its agenda to develop the education zone working closely with the Bolton Council to achieve that end. The University is however clear in its view that the best way to protect local community provision across the northern arc of Greater Manchester is to make it part of a larger structure. This provides greater stability, leverage, identity, and flexibility for providers, learners and communities.

A.2 The Partners

A.2.1 Bury College

Bury College is an outstanding college with an enviable reputation for excellence and success locally, regionally and nationally. The college holds many awards that recognise this success, including the highest range of Government inspection results possible. Other awards include Beacon Status for outstanding teaching and learning, Investors In People Gold standard for the strong value placed on staff; the Investors in Diversity Award for excellence in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; the Matrix standard for the quality of the information, advice and guidance offered to staff and students and the Buttle UK Quality Mark in recognition of the college’s commitment to young people in and leaving care.

Bury College offers a wide range of provision, including A Levels, vocational courses, apprenticeships, training for businesses, courses for adults, university qualifications; in addition to bespoke projects aimed at helping individuals gain the skills they need to get back into the workplace.

The college currently has 9257 students. 5077 are full-time students, 2055 are part-time students and 2125 are apprentices in the workplace. 30 of the full-time and 71 of the part-time students are on pre-16 courses.

Over £48 million has been invested in the college campus in recent years in response to local need and demand. Recent examples include the Venture Centre which provides students with a state-of-the-art learning environment and a landscaped internal courtyard; a Construction Centre that provides learners with modern facilities and tools to perfect their trade; the Endeavour Centre to support learners develop their IT and wider trade skills and an Enterprise and University Centre with facilities for adult learners at the college, in particular those studying university courses.

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Partnerships and the views of stakeholders are integral to the college’s place within the communities it serves. Bury College works closely with over 50 high school partners each year to support the transition from school to college. The college offers a wide range of supportive activities to help school staff, their pupils and parents make informed choices when planning their future education and career.

The college is an active and key player in the local economic and voluntary communities. Over 900 employer partners work with the college each year, helping to develop the skills and practices within their companies in order to help them succeed. Bury College works closely with its Team Bury partners, including the Local Authority and many public, private and voluntary organisations, and plays a strong role in supporting the Community Strategy and Local Area Agreements. Through links with the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, the college represents the educational needs of current and future learners at a Greater Manchester level, helping to create economic growth and prosperity within its communities.

The college is also the lead partner in an Employment Gateway, which is situated in the heart of Bury’s town centre. Developed in partnership with Bury Council, Job Centre Plus and Connexions, the Employment Gateway supports individuals into employment, with a strong focus on apprenticeship provision.

A.2.2 The University of Bolton (Teaching Intensive Research Informed)

The University of Bolton is a local institution with international reach. The University traces its educational roots all the way back to 1824 when it opened as one of the first mechanics institutes.

Committed to access to educational opportunities and Widening Participation to Higher Education, the University is one of the most socially inclusive and diverse HEI’s in Britain.

Granted university status in 2005 but having degree awarding powers since 1989, Bolton now has a global graduate body of around 50,000 and almost 10,500 per annum learners today - including all campuses and affiliates. The University is based on a modern, compact, town-centre campus and its teaching quality has consistently won the highest ratings possible from the Government’s quality control agency.

There is a clear employment and industrial focus in the portfolio of the University full undergraduate degrees in subjects such as Accountancy, Automotive Performance Engineering, Biology, Business Management, Civil Engineering, Computer Networks & Security, Construction Management, Dental Technology, Games Design, Law, Mechanical Engineering, Medical Engineering, Sports Development & Coaching, Visual Effects for Film & Television, Building Surveying & Property Management and Quantity Surveying & Commercial Management. Employment rates in its key industrial and commercial programmes are high.
For example, over 80% of its Engineering graduates, despite entering the university with lower than average A levels, go on to employment or further study.

Strong industry links allow the University to provide a large number of professionally accredited courses through partnerships that include several Chartered Institute organisations, the British Psychological Society and the Nursing and Midwifery Council. More than 30 courses are professionally accredited, reflecting the industry-needs focus of the courses’ content.

The University of Bolton is committed to helping and supporting students and their teachers and advisers at every stage of the journey into higher education. Valuing its strong partnerships with local schools and colleges, the University offers a range of enrichment activities supporting progression into higher education.

In recent years the University has had a major redevelopment programme creating new and exciting facilities for study and recreation. In early 2012 a moot Law Court was opened, as well as Bolton One, a new, purpose-built, £31 million health, leisure and research centre, in partnership with NHS Bolton and Bolton Council. 2013 saw the launch of Bolton Business School — housing Business, Law and Accountancy, along with the Centre of Islamic Finance under one roof. In 2015, a purpose built Centre for Advanced Performance Engineering was opened, run in conjunction with RLR motorsports. This year will see the completion of the National Centre for Performance Engineering facility (a £13m new build on campus).

University of Bolton is home to premier teaching and research activity, including flagship health and sports courses and services which are open to everyone. These include an Athlete Development Centre, Sports and Spinal Injury Clinic, climbing wall, Centre for Research and Health and Wellbeing, and a Clinical Simulation suite.

The University’s research infrastructure is specialist and has been ranked in most areas as ‘world-leading’ by independent audit and assessors. The Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 results showed that six of the seven subjects submitted by the University of Bolton demonstrated world-leading research whilst the seventh was deemed to demonstrate evidence of an internationally excellent standard. General Engineering was particularly distinguished, with over 70% of its work judged to be world-class or internationally excellent. The submission from the subject was recognised as having high levels of application whilst retaining research quality. The research on renewable energy was deemed to be very significant, with the case study on preventive measures and enhanced health, hygiene and quality of life of the wider community judged to demonstrate very considerable impact. The sub-panel also believed that the innovative contributions to bandage design and wound dressing were notable. The impact of the English Language and Literature department was praised, with case studies demonstrating elements of outstanding and very considerable reach and significance and with strong evidence of impact in engaging with the local community.

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In Education the research environment was assessed as producing research of internationally recognised quality with the Institute of Educational Cybernetics a particular strength. Engaging with the local community was one of the areas that contributed to this; similarly with the Social Work and Social Policy department with Worktown and its related activities.

There was also recognition that the framework of the Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience department could continue to provide a basis for well-focused plans and strategies, such as their work on UK PPI, judged to be very considerable in terms of reach and significance. Architecture, Built Environment and Planning was praised for integration and how it had proactively engaged with local businesses and international networks as was Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management. Its research staff continue to achieve significant success in areas related to the GM Agenda Dr Silviya Halacheva secured a prestigious EPSRC research grant to study Multifunctional Gel Scaffolds for Cell Delivery and Tissue Repair — her first research grant. Similarly, Dr Tao Sun, from the University’s Institute for Materials Research and Innovation was awarded a prestigious Newton Research Collaboration Award.

A number of options were considered by Bury College Board of Governors in relation to the future of the College in the context of the GM Area Review.

The options considered by the Board of Governors of the College included:

- Continuing with status quo, standing alone as Bury College
- Shared services with one or more other Colleges
- Merger with other Greater Manchester FE Colleges
- Merger with a Greater Manchester University

The criteria were as specified by the Government’s Review of Post-16 Education and Training Institutions. However the Board of Governors have given particular emphasis on criteria which are important given the distinctive nature of Bury College in relation to:

- Protecting the name ‘Bury College’ for the institution
- Enhanced opportunities for learners
- Protecting the college as a community asset
- Alignment of Ethos, Mission and Values
- Existing Links
- Best Alignment with the Greater Manchester devolution and investment agenda
- The priorities for the town
It was the unanimous view of the Governors that having considered the options available and the criteria specified by the Department for Education, that the most compelling option was that of incorporating Bury College into the University of Bolton Group Structure.

This option would entail Bury College operating as part of the University but with its own operational brand and identity and with substantial local ownership and support. It is assessed that this will ensure the preservation of the College’s identity while providing a stronger infrastructure to support the delivery of its mission and its long term financial sustainability. The combined Group will achieve substantial improvements in learners’ overall experience while achieving economies of scale in technological and physical infrastructure investments. This will also enable provision of a state-of-the-art education environment based on common educational frameworks and technology platforms. The College would retain clear ‘Bury’ branding and retain its focus on the learner and its commitment to the community of Bury and the surrounding region. Additionally, this option effectively at a stroke creates a university presence in the town. Research shows that a university presence can boost enterprise, innovation, talent attraction and inward investment. The College will retain a local Curriculum and Quality Committee, appointed by the University of Bolton Governing Body and subject to its terms of reference, to oversee the academic performance of the College and hold management to account. The committee will oversee the quality of the student experience, including the quality of outcomes, teaching, learning, assessment and quality improvement and ensure that students and staff have an input into the monitoring of performance.

Most mergers that succeed have a match in the vision and values of one or more of the partners. In this case there is a significant convergence between Bury College and the University of Bolton. Both institutions bring complementary strengths to a new unified structure. This alignment of coherence and complementarity is itself a significant asset.

**Governance**

If the College were to be incorporated into the University Group, there would be one Board and the Board membership and executive structures of the University would need to be reviewed to reflect the strategic objectives of the new body and its constituent components. In the context of the College joining the Group, the University recognises the importance of achieving the right balance between continuity and development in managing the risks inherent in the transition from one set of governance arrangements to another. It is absolutely essential that Bury is represented on the University’s Main Board of Governors and this has been agreed in principle by both parties.
KEY ARGUMENTS IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSED MODEL

Through discussions to date, it is clear that both Bury College and the University of Bolton are committed to widening access to educational opportunities. Both the University and the College have long-standing traditions and national recognition as institutions committed to providing opportunities for individual learners to achieve their full potential for themselves, their communities and their current and prospective employers. Both have a clear vision of their role within their communities and of the transformational power of education, innovation and partnership. This proposal ensures those traditions and those commitments continue to endure and continue to generate opportunities for those learners and those communities. The integrated Group structure would contribute to the education and training in the Greater Manchester area in improving productivity through collaboration with industry.

B.1 Common Missions and Values

The mission of the University of Bolton clearly aligns with the mission and vision of Bury College:

By 2020 the University of Bolton will be a teaching intensive, higher education institution whose distinctive high quality, student-focused ... programmes attract applications from all over the world. It will offer an exciting and challenging student experience with high levels of proactive student support and with excellent facilities which match the quality of its academic provision. It will be a local resource, a regional asset and a national and international centre of excellence as well as a byword for exemplary vocationally focused undergraduate and postgraduate programmes ... Where appropriate, our students will study in an environment which reflects as closely as possible, the working environment which they are likely to enter, with industry standard equipment. All students will be offered work-based learning through placements, internships or ‘sandwich’ gap years.

University of Bolton Vision Statement

Mission
• Developing individual potential
• Inspiring excellence
• Promoting prosperity through knowledge

Vision
• Continuous improvement through knowledge

Values
• Openness • Innovation • Empowerment • Reflection • Integrity • Support

Bury College Vision Statement
B.2 The Centrality of the Learner: increased access to work and qualifications

The overall model implied by incorporation is one which is emphatically learner centred. The new model means that at each step of their journey, learners’ employment and educational options are significantly enhanced and more integrated (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. A Coherent Learner Centred Approach to Educational and Employment Opportunities

In this model learners can choose to enter the world of work or continue with further training and qualifications with a view to entering the employment at a later date. The incorporation of the College into the University creates a much more coherent and transparent range of opportunities for all learners in Bury and the surrounding area. It should be noted that the model ensures that learners are able to move to other providers as they go through their training and educational journey. As part of the broader University of Bolton family, students at Bury College would be eligible for a wide range of additional bursaries, scholarships and free summer schools.
B.3 The Benefits for Bury’s Employers and the Skills Agenda

Bury College is one of the leading Further Education colleges in the country, providing general and specialist educational skills to students, clients and employers. In 2014-15 the college helped 11,300 learners pass exams, progress to further learning or successfully enter the world of work. Approximately, 35% of residents are educated to NVQ Level 4 or above, above the GM average and average income per household is 3rd highest in GM.

The College is wholly committed to meeting the needs of employers and the skills agenda of the region. Manufacturing is a key strength for Bury. It accounts for 11% of jobs and has opportunity for growth. The Pilsworth Industrial Estate is a possible expansion site for manufacturing, and there is an opportunity to attract firms that will be priced out of the regional centre over the next 20 years.

Business, Financial & Professional services employs 8,800 people in Bury, with Professional services comprising the largest sub-sector in employment terms. Key employment sites include Bury town centre with several business services and legal businesses based there.

Health Innovation whilst much smaller in size with 200 employed is a growing sector in GM as a whole. This presents an opportunity for the district to play a role in more closely aligning health innovation activities with the health and social care sector.

It is the view of the Board of Bury College that the College can best continue to meet the needs of the people, employers and the economy of Bury, by integrating with a higher education provider that specialises in these key employment and skills areas. With significant strengths in manufacturing, engineering, financial services and in health and social care, particularly at the higher education and advanced skills level, it is clear that the University can help Bury College provide a wider and more compelling offer to the businesses of the local area than it can currently do alone or in partnership with another FE provider which only offers similar training and the same level. The introduction of significant higher education opportunities into Bury via the College is a major and decisive consideration in assessing the best option for Bury and its economic growth.

B.4 Building on partnership - existing Links between the two institutions

Incorporation of the College into the University Group would not be a leap into the unknown — the University and the College already work closely together on a number of educational pathways. There are already a very strong links between the College and the University. Bury is the largest provider of students to University programmes with over 675 applicants in the last three years alone. Some of these students will study at the University of Bolton campus some on the Bury campus. This is higher than Bolton VI Form College (498) Bolton College (392) or Wigan
& Leigh College (249). This indicates that there is an appetite amongst learners to pursue further study at the University, having received an excellent education at the College. Further, an impressive 63% of Bury students on Bolton degrees already secure good First Class or Upper Second Class degrees indicating strong preparation and support through this partnership route.

Overall the University already franchises 33 higher education programmes of study which are delivered by the College. The quality of delivery of these programmes is highlighted in the March 2016 Higher Education Review of HE provision by the QAA which has indicated a clean bill of health and several areas of good practice including assessment and feedback - which many other FE colleges fall short on.

The University Group structure already includes the successful University Technical College which further indicates a strong fit in principle with the mission of the College.

B.5 The fit to the Greater Manchester Agenda and opportunities for inward investment

It is the view of the College Governors that if Bury is to take advantage of the economic benefits of increased devolution to the Greater Manchester city region, it is essential that it both contributes to and positions itself to benefit from the work that is being done around creating the conditions for growth. The Greater Manchester Local Economic Partnership has identified the priorities in this regard (see Table 1). The Board is clear that incorporation into the University is the best approach to ensure that Bury is not left behind on investment as Greater Manchester modernises its infrastructure, skills, reputation and economy. It is clear that the merger of Bury College with the University enables the College and by extension the town of Bury to position itself to secure the benefits of the Greater Manchester economic growth plan in the context of the framework laid down by GM LEP.

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B.6 Developing a Stronger and Better Framework for Apprenticeships in Bury

Bury College is one of the leading providers of Apprenticeships in the Greater Manchester area. Consideration of how any proposal could support our ambitions to grow this area of our work has been of paramount importance. It is particularly significant that University of Bolton has made it a strategic priority to develop and offer a comprehensive range of apprenticeship programmes through integrated partnerships with companies in the region. The provision is based on demand drivers from industry, and supports progression of learners to further/higher education and skilled employment through apprenticeships. The University is currently developing apprenticeship programmes in a number of key areas, including the following, based on its broad range of educational capabilities and capacity:

- Health Care: Nursing, Early Years, Palliative, End of Life Care, etc.
- Engineering: Civil Engineering, Construction Management, etc.
- Business & Mgmt.: Logistics, Supply Chain, and Retail Management
- Sports Sciences: Sport & Exercise Sciences, Sport Rehabilitation etc.
- Creative Technologies: Games Development, Special & Visual Effects (SFX/VFX)

This is in line with the Government’s priorities in relation to higher level apprenticeships. In September 2015, places on the first degree apprenticeships became available in four key industries: digital; automotive engineering; banking relationship manager; and construction. Degree apprenticeships in a further nine industrial areas have also recently been announced: chartered surveying; electronic systems engineering; aerospace engineering; aerospace software development;
defence systems engineering, laboratory science; nuclear; power systems; and public relations. The University has expertise in all these topics but does not want necessarily to develop Degree Apprenticeships in all areas. However, with Bury College as part of the University, the opportunities to develop degree apprenticeships in Bury and regionally would be significantly strengthened. This brings together the University’s expertise in specialist areas in higher education alongside the College’s experience and success in delivering apprenticeships. By coming together more can be done for people in Bury than could be done by each institution in isolation.

For the University each of the above developments encompasses collaborations with a number of SMEs and large companies in the respective industry sectors (e.g. NHS trusts, retailers, logistics firms, manufacturing companies etc.). The proposed incorporation, by avoiding duplication of education provision, will allow the combined organisation to channel resources to enhance breadth and depth of apprenticeship disciplines. It will achieve synergies in delivering apprenticeships at all levels (Level 2 to Level 8) including Foundation Degrees (e.g. FdSc), Bachelor’s Degrees (E.g. BSc) and Masters Degrees (e.g. MSc). It will also enable the Group to offer apprenticeship programmes to serve the specialist and niche skills needs of SMEs and large businesses in the region. Such broad range of provision will not be possible without bringing the disparate educational resources and organisations together.

The group structure will also create a highly productive and critical mass educational platform for learners, thereby providing obvious economies of scale for delivering innovations and delivering new curriculum developments. The integration of resources will assist in creating state-of-the-art technological infrastructure and learning environment for students. Focusing on cooperation and coherence, rather than competition, the proposed Group will play a significant role in the GM region in delivering the government’s ambition of 3 million apprenticeships nationally by 2020.

B.7 A Better Basis for Bury College to help Bury Council help Bury grow.

Bury Council has highlighted six priorities for its work in the period 2015-2020. It is clear that incorporation of Bury College within the University would enable the College to make an even stronger contribution to these priorities. It also highlights how the Bolton-Bury model aligns with Bury Council’s transformational agenda, effectively bringing a university to Bury.

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# Bury Council Priorities

1. **Drive forward through effective marketing and information, proactive engagement with the people of Bury to take ownership of their own health and wellbeing.**

   The University has holistic educational capabilities and capacity to support the “Health and Wellbeing agenda” with programme ranging from Early Years & Childcare to Palliative & End of Life Care. The University has a nationally-leading nurse training scheme which is at the forefront of increasing the number of nurses in all healthcare settings. The University also has internationally recognised provision in mental health training with a focus on access to effective care and therapy for all.

2. **Continue to develop business friendly policies to attract inward investment and new jobs so that Bury retains its position as a premier destination for retail, leisure, tourism and culture.**

   The University of Bolton Business School runs programmes in retail logistics globally and has increasing links with food manufacturers and elite sports teams. In addition, the University has developed substantial expertise and excellence in new technology growth areas such as Games, Media, Special and Visual Effects.

3. **Ensure new and affordable housing is developed to support growth in the Bury and Greater Manchester economy.**

   The University’s has several leading applied researchers specialising in the Built Environment. Working together enables a critical mass of political and stakeholder strength.

4. **Build on the culture of efficiency and effectiveness through new, progressive and integrated partnership working models to drive forward the Council’s and City Region Public Service growth and reform agenda.**

   The proposed solution to the challenges of the GM Review is in many respects an excellent example of progressive integrated partnership working. A university specialist has recently been working with a Cabinet Office sponsored programme on rethinking youth services in the context of public-private partnerships and mutuality.

5. **Ensure staff have the right skills to embrace significant organisational change, through embedding a culture of ownership, empowerment and decision making at all levels of the organisation.**

   The University has an extensive programme of skills development and training which can help develop businesses and public sector organisations rapidly and in line with agreed strategic priorities.
6. Work toward reducing reliance on government funding by developing new models of delivery that are affordable, add value and based on need.

The proposed solution to the challenges of the GM Review is also an excellent example of new models of delivery that are “affordable, add value and based on need”. Bury Council can point to the Bolton-Bury partnership in education as a model for public services regionally. More broadly the University of Bolton has proven expertise in establishing collaborative partnerships within the UK and internationally. It has a global knowledge base and delivers degrees in more than 12 countries across the world including China, Malaysia, Zambia, Botswana, Germany, Greece, UAE and Sri Lanka. This opens up additionally opportunities in terms of trade and innovation.

B.8 Other Benefits of the Incorporation Option

In arriving at its preferred option the College Governors have identified a very wide range of specific benefits to the College and its stakeholders which are only associated with the University option or realised most effectively through the University Option. This section summarises the main benefits and highlights others that have been identified by the College.

1. Overall, the Incorporation Option provides a clear, robust, sustainable, geographically coherent, politically acceptable 360 degree solution which meets the criteria specified in the Greater Manchester Area Review options assessment.

2. Crucially, the Incorporation Option allows the College to maintain its Vision and adhere to its Values. In particular the College’s focus on supporting the learner and its community is protected.

3. The Incorporation Option supports a coherent post-14 offer to address its economic regeneration agenda, skills gaps, employer needs and in order to promote the growth of SMEs.

4. Enhanced staff development, training and CPD opportunities for all College staff within the context of the University’s extensive professional development programmes for academic and service staff. College staff would have access to a wider range of specialists in their discipline which enhance their professional development. This will complement existing sector-specific CPD.

5. Merger with the University provides an ideal opportunity to strengthen the Multi Academy Trust (currently known as the Bury College Education Trust).
6. Academically, there are potentially a number of clear benefits for students and sponsors:
   - Improved access to education offers as there is greater clarity on potential routes through FE and into HE and employment.
   - Clear progression routes from College courses onto University of Bolton courses, supported by extended preparation and transition management for students; even though students will, of course, continue to have a choice of HE provider.
   - Convergent planning for movement in market demand by employers and government.
   - A more sustainable and comprehensive offer on apprenticeships at all levels focusing on coherence rather than competition.
   - ‘Complete package’ solution for employers in relation to specialist training/apprentice/applied degrees/innovation/R&D solutions.
   - A simpler, more coherent, more extensive and more responsive offer to SMEs in the area, promoting increased revenue and business performance locally.

7. The incorporation would secure a university presence in the town which as well as creating more higher education routes per se, provides opportunities for enterprise, innovation, talent attraction and inward investment.

8. Incorporation would give Bury College students access to state-of-art facilities within the context of the University Group. For example, the University will this year open a National Centre for Motorsport Engineering housed in a new £13 million Science & Engineering building. The building will house incubation space and a range of SME and national engineering companies.

9. More generally this option ensures that the College can address the focus of the GM review on the better use of technology to support more efficient and effective delivery. Working together and alongside other current and prospective members of the group, the College and the University can adopt shared online platforms for learning, procurement, invoicing, account management, estate and asset management, marketing and CRM. The College would secure access to a very wide range of industry standard software and knowledge databases. Crucially, this access would be supported by experienced advanced users of such digital applications enabling the college to rapidly secure extensive academic and business dividends.

10. As part of the University group students (and indeed staff) would have access to a significant infrastructure to start their own business and boost the enterprise culture further in the Bury area. Innovation and enterprise support for learners in partnership with local and national companies is a key part of the University’s infrastructure. Proximity to innovative research in textiles, materials, fire engineering, creative
digital design, healthcare and automotive design will facilitate the development of enterprise in the College in appropriate contexts.

11. College staff and learners would have ready access to a wide range of expertise, skills, technology and international networks at the University by virtue of its world-leading research in areas such as Engineering, Psychology, Built Environment, and English. This research being assessed as such in the national research audit of 2014 (the UK Research Excellence Framework) which classed these areas as involving research quality that is “world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour”.

12. Incorporation into the University would enable Bury College and its stakeholders to access a student community network at the heart of Greater Manchester which has a global reach.

   “With the largest student population in Europe (100,000) and with Universities accounting for £1.4bn of income and 18k jobs the educational sector is a source of invention (graphene), export and enterprise development”

   (Greater Manchester City Deal, GMCA, 2015)

13. The incorporation of the College and integration would make it easier to provide financial scholarships for students progressing through organisations in the Group structure. This would also be supported by mentoring by University students of College students.

14. The proposed arrangement would enable a significant enhancement of the community asset value of the College as a campus gateway to national and international opportunities. This would include access to a wider range of employers in the public and private sector for learners in relation to employment and enterprise. This would also provide greater opportunities for staff to update their skills in national and multinational companies. In addition, the University’s involvement in social research in the areas of youth, social work, health, access to justice, educational inclusion and arts diversity, would support further enhancement of the College’s position as a thought and action leader for all the communities of the town and surrounding area. This also aligns with Bury Council’s vision for the area.

15. The Incorporation Option provides for greater business sustainability for the College through stronger and more extensive infrastructure and financial resources. Both the College’s and the University’s reserves provide a source of stability in the face of stress and a source of intervention in the face of opportunity.

16. Creation of incorporation within the Group Structure model will have high levels of political support in the Greater Manchester context.
17. The Group Option provides a solution which is in line with the detail and the spirit of the HM Government statement ‘Reviewing Post-16 Education and Training Institutions’ (2015) which lays out two fundamental priorities for Her Majesty’s Government:

- Clear, high quality professional and technical routes to employment, alongside robust academic routes, which allow individuals to progress to high level skills valued by employers; and

- Better responsiveness to local employer needs and economic priorities, for instance through local commissioning of adult provision, which will help give the sector the agility to meet changing skills requirements in the years ahead, building on the agreements with Greater Manchester, London and Sheffield.

(‘Reviewing Post-16 Education and Training Institutions’ p2)

C. SCHEDULE OF DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

It is proposed that the following timetable manages the risk of precipitate action on the one hand and failing to meet the expectations of the GM Review on the other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Launch of Consultation and Publication of Statutory Proposal</td>
<td>12 April 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions with stakeholders</td>
<td>12 April — 20 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Closes</td>
<td>20 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Responses to Consultation By Bury College in conjunction with the University</td>
<td>21 May to 31 May 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication of Response to Consultation</td>
<td>By 14 June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval by College Board and University Board</td>
<td>By 11 July 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissolution of existing College legal personality</td>
<td>11 August 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporation into the University Group Structure</td>
<td>12 August 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to the adjacent there will be a parallel process of managing the transfer of staff to the new entity in legal compliance with the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (as Amended 2014).

D. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

The Board recommends adoption of the Incorporation Option as the course of action which is most likely to secure the long-term stability of the College in its present form in terms of its mission, vision and values. It is the one which makes the most compelling case educationally and financially. It is the option that is best for its students and for its staff - and for the town. We now seek the views of all stakeholders as we prepare for a major new chapter in the long and proud history of Bury College.

E. THE CONSULTATION PROCESS - HOW TO RESPOND TO THIS CONSULTATION

Please complete the consultation survey online at:

https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CCGRPRG

Alternatively complete the form overleaf and return by post to:

Consultation,
John Fargher,
Clerk to the Corporation,
Bury College,
Beacon Centre,
Market Street,
Bury BL9 0AT

Consultation closes 20th May 2016
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please respond to the following questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.  Do you agree that the protection of the name ‘Bury College’ is important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.  Do you agree that having a university presence in the town of Bury will be helpful to the local economy and the reputation of the area?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.  Do you agree that alignment with the Greater Manchester ‘Creating conditions for Growth Agenda’ is important in repositioning Bury College to benefit from future investment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.  Do you agree that focusing on the learner and the college as a community asset is important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.  Do you agree that the focus on increasing apprenticeships for Bury is important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.  Overall do you agree that merging into the University will deliver these objectives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.  In order to make this new arrangement work most effectively for you and any stakeholder group you represent what should the college within the framework of the University Group, do to make it work for you and people like you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.  Are there any other comments you would like to make?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
F. STATEMENT OF STATUTORY PROPOSAL

(i) Institution to which assets are being transferred
The University of Bolton

(ii) The address of the institution
University of Bolton
Deane Rd,
Bolton BL3 5AB

(iii) A general description of the education provided at the Institution
The institution is a University with approximately 10,500 students offering degrees at all levels from Foundation Degrees to PhDs. The University is a member of Universities UK and is listed as a recognised university by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills.

(iv) The number of FT student, PT students, and the total number of students at the Institution
on Bolton Campus (2014-15):
Full-time 4395
Part-Time 1990
Total 6385
Off campus: circa 3,970

(v) The reason for the proposed dissolution
The Governors of Bury College have determined that in the context of the Greater Manchester review of Post-16 Education and Training Institutions that dissolution and incorporation into the University of Bolton is the most sustainably beneficial option in terms of the relevant financial, academic, community and economic considerations.

(vi) The date for the proposed dissolution
11 August 2016

(vii) The education provision to be made for those students who have not completed their studies at the proposed date of dissolution
Students who have not completed their studies at the proposed date of dissolution will stay on the same courses of study at the same location.

(viii) The proposed arrangements for the transfer of property and the rights and liabilities of the College.
The transfer of property and the rights and liabilities of the College will be effected under the terms of a joint agreement between the University and the College to be approved separately by both Boards of Governors at properly constituted meetings. This agreement to incorporate considerations reflecting the due diligence reports commissioned by, and delivered, separately to each Governing Body.