

**Meeting of Search & Governance Committee
Tuesday 12th September 2017 at 5.00 pm
Seminar Room 4
MINUTES**

Present: Michelle Clement, Cath Dutton, Jon Thedham (Chair), Rebecca Sandham, Graham Wilkinson

In attendance: Carole Drury (Clerk)

341 **Apologies for Absence**
There were no apologies

342 **Declarations of Interest**
There were no declarations of interest

343 **To approve the minutes of the last meeting**
The minutes of the meeting held on 4th April 2017 were approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record

344 **Matters Arising from the Minutes & Action Plan**
There were no matters arising not covered by the agenda. The updated action plan was considered and noted.

345 **Performance Review 2016-2017**
The Corporation Chair, Cath Dutton, provided an overview of the performance reviews to date adding that 4 outstanding meetings had now been scheduled. In summary, the performance review process had helped in recognising what else governors needed to support effective decision-making making and also asking the most appropriate and useful questions at Board meetings. Several governors had requested further familiarising training in college finance and would prefer 1:1 sessions with the Director of Finance & Resources (Action: Clerk)

Committee members discussed how improvements could be made to Board papers including having more information on what was expected of governors. Trend data, impact and implications, along with clearer links to identified risks would help governors focus on the key strategic decisions that were needed from the Board and help alleviate unnecessary content.

Summary graphs from the survey of the Corporation Chair's performance were considered, noting the high value placed on her performance in the last year. It was agreed that the outcome was a strong reflection on the role. The next stage would be for the Vice Chair to meet with the Chair to review the full findings of the report. Access to all comments and responses would be provided. (Action: Clerk)

346 **Governor Development & Improvement Programme and Link Governor programme 2017-2018**

The draft programme of governor development and improvement was discussed, noting the inclusion of changes to curriculum visits identified at the last meeting.

Ideas for the training event in January were discussed including the option of seeking ETF-funded facilitation for the event, which would, in part, focus on issues arising from to the

reduction of the grade at Ofsted Inspection under the theme of “increasing board confidence to address strategic challenges and to improve scrutiny”.

The following actions were agreed:

- Request funding from AoC/ETF – suggested National Leader of Governance is Carol Jones (Action: Clerk)
- Include a session on apprenticeships and the impact on employers to be facilitated by Mark Emmerson (Action: Chair)
- Training linked to outcomes from the Ofsted report

In respect of the Governor Link programme, proposals for the coming year were agreed with the first presentation taking place at the December meeting. A presentation from the two senior staff who attended leadership training would be given to the Board at the October meeting.

Further discussion on the value of the programme was discussed with a proposal that link governors maintain the contact and provide relevant updates, again linked to good practice and development areas of the Ofsted report. It was suggested that a set of protocols and questions be set up for link governors to ensure the opportunity was maximised. (Action: Clerk)

347 **Attendance, Terms of Office & Committee membership**

The Committee reviewed the attendance log, noting that overall average attendance across Board and Committee meetings was 82%, above average for the sector. No serious concerns had been raised.

Membership of committees was further discussed, with the Corporation Chair reporting that no new membership had been noted at the current time.

Going forward, there was one vacancy for a student governor and no board membership vacancies expected until 2019.

348 **Succession Planning – report from the Task & Finish Group**

The Committee Chair provided a summary of the recent meetings of the Task & Finish Group in respect of the appointment of a senior postholder, advising that a timetable had been put in place and draft job specification drawn up. Nothing would be released until agreement had been reached with the Principal but the Committee was assured that good progress was being made and that the plan would be implemented once formal notification had been received. The Principal’s input would be valued at the next meeting to be held in October and he has been invited to attend that and relevant subsequent meetings of the Task and Finish Group.

349 **Clerk to the Corporation contract**

Following the change of role for the Director of Governance, an updated job description was discussed prior to issue of a new contract. It was agreed that the basis was satisfactory but that more needed to be included as follows:

- Supporting the achievement of outstanding governance
- Leading through best practice
- Mentoring and support for new governors
- Ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the Board
- Inclusion of innovation and creativity

The Clerk was asked to leave while Committee members considered the contractual requirements for the role having been provided with average hours in place across the sector.

350 **Developing improved e-governance**

Consideration was given to a proposal to implement e-governance to streamline processes of governance along with savings in time, paper and postage. The estimated cost would be £180 per governor per year. It was agreed that, while e-governance needed to be progressed within the next year, the College was not in a position to commit to the cost and process at the current time and internal processes would be considered in the first instance.

351 **Any other business**

- Note on Governor Liability – the Clerk provided members with an AoC briefing on questions about collective liability for debts in an insolvent college in light of the introduction of the insolvency regime in the Technical & Further Education Act 2017 (effective from 2019). It was agreed that the paper should be summarised for all governors, demonstrating what we already do to mitigate the risk.
(Action: Clerk)

352 **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 30th January 2018