

MINUTES



SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday 22nd June 2021
Time: 5.00pm
Venue: Video Conference

Present:

Dr Andrew Roberts (Chair)
Andrew Fawcett
Bill Webster (Principal)
Professor George Holmes

In Attendance:

Deborah Bradburn (Clerk)
Jill Hebden (Secretary)

1. SECTION A - BUSINESS MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

1.1 Welcome to Members

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, which commenced at 5.03pm

1.2 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies received.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any interests in relation to any item on the agenda.
No interests were declared.

1.4 Request for an item to be unstarred

No requests were made.

1.5 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd September 2020

The minutes of the meeting held 23 September 2020 had been previously circulated to members for consideration.

Agreed: that the minutes are approved as a correct record and authorised for publication.

1.6 Matters arising from the Minutes and Action Progress Log

The Clerk presented the action progress log and confirmed that the majority of actions from the previous meeting had been completed with the only ongoing action to be completed by the next meeting in September.

2. SECTION B - COLLEGE MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED OTHERWISE

2.1 Governor Membership 2021-22 / Succession Planning

The Audit Committee co-opted member had completed his 12 months' probationary period. The Committee considered his performance with the recommendation that his membership continue.

RESOLVED:

The Committee **agreed** that a recommendation be made to the Board to approve the continuation of the co-opted member's term of office.

ACTION:

- Clerk / Board Agenda
- Co-opted member meeting with the Vice Chancellor

Governor Questions:

- Is the College complete in terms of governor membership?
Yes, the College had achieved its full complement of governor membership.

2.2 Annual Register of Interests 2020-21

The Clerk reported that the Register of Interests had been updated, as there had been some changes to Board membership.

RESOLVED:

The Committee reviewed and noted the annual Register of Interests.

2.3 FE White Paper – Strengthening Governance

The Clerk presented the FE White Paper (Skills & Post-16 Education Bill) report and noted the following key points:

- There were a number of governance proposals covering:
 - (i) The composition of boards and promoting governorship
 - (ii) Governor and senior post holder recruitment
 - (iii) Governance reviews
 - (iv) Promotion of the role and status of governance professionals/clerks
 - (v) Governor training and development activity
- Notification had been received from DfE that the funding agreement for 2021/22 would have some governance requirements:
 - (i) Newly appointed governance professionals must in future have a qualification relevant to the role or equivalent experience.
 - (ii) Boards would need to report annually on the training and development activities of that governors and governance professionals had undertaken over the year.
 - (iii) Annual self-assessments and three yearly external governance reviews would be a funding requirement.

MINUTES



- Revised FE governance guidance with details of how best to manage compliance with the new requirements would follow in due course.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the report and agreed on the following:

- An external governance review should be undertaken in the near future.
- At the start of each Committee or Board, governors would be asked if they had attended any training or development activities since the last meeting.

ACTION:

- Clerk to liaise with PwC to undertake an external governance review.

2.4 Board Evaluation / Self-Assessment

The Clerk informed the Committee that:

- The Board had adopted the AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and used this to assess itself against the Ten Principal Responsibilities of Good Governance, which underpinned the code and demonstrated the Boards commitment to accountability and improvement.

The Clerk presented the annual self-assessment and the following points were noted:

- The self-assessment was cognisant of the AoC Code of Good Governance ('Code') consultation that took place earlier in the year.
- The revised Code had a stronger focus on equality, diversity and inclusion and environmental sustainability.
- The assessment focused on the 'musts' criteria that were the key areas of activity that would be the minimum expected by regulators and funding agencies. The College would complete the other areas of self-assessment that demonstrated how the Board exceeded the governance requirements.
- The self-assessment was a live document and would be reviewed and updated on a continual basis and presented to the Committee and Board on an annual basis.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted that the self-assessment included some requirements that were not 'musts' but that members completed and recommended that it be completed as much as possible for use as a reference document during an inspection.

ACTION:

Circulate board evaluation to all members for feedback.

2.5 Governor Link Scheme

The Clerk presented the report and noted that this was included as a standing item on the Standards and Performance Committee agenda but brought to this Committee for targeted governor recommendations in relation to new link areas proposed.

MINUTES



RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the contents of the report and recommended governors to approach in the areas of equality, diversity and inclusion, environment and sustainability and high needs/SEN. Feedback from link governors would be reported to the relevant sub-committee to be appropriately reviewed.

Action:

Committee recommended link governors to be contacted.

3. SECTION C - UNIVERSITY GROUP MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION UNLESS INDICATED

No matters were raised.

4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 22nd September 2021 at 3.00pm

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 5.45 pm

Chair's Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Neill".

Date: 22 September 2021