

## Minutes of a Search and Governance Committee Meeting

Monday 14 October 2019

Conference Room, Richard Huish College, at 6.40pm

**Members Present:** Ann Helsby (Chair), Barbara Barratt (Vice-Chair), John Abbott (Principal), Victoria Harrison (Co-optee) and Moira Reynolds.

**Also in attendance:** Xanne Blythe (Clerk to the Corporation)

Apologies: Duncan Alexander.

Governors joined the Chair in welcoming Victoria Harrison to her first meeting.

<b>Min GOV 1</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest (agenda item 2)</b>	<b>Action</b>
	No declarations of interest were received.	

<b>GOV 2</b>	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising Report (agenda item 3 and 4)</b>
	The Search and Governance Committee minutes dated 8 April and informal notes dated 17 June 2019 were approved and signed as an accurate record. The meeting noted the Matters Arising report.

<b>GOV 3</b>	<b>Governance and Membership Matters (agenda item 5)</b>
	<b>(a) Governors' Terms of Office 2018-19/Skills Gaps and Succession Planning</b>
	A list of members and their associated terms of office and retirement dates were circulated. The Search and Governance Committee regularly discussed the members' register in line with the Governor Recruitment, Succession and Renewal Procedure. The meeting considered the following:

- the current Staff Governor and Student Governor vacancies;
- there was an open and transparent process in place for the Corporation Chair and VC nomination and election each year, David Griffin had intimated that he was willing to be nominated as Chair of the Corporation from 1 September 2020 to 31 Aug 2021, as the current Chair of Governors' term of office came to an end on 30 September 2020 and his Chair's term of office came to an end on 31 August 2020,
- it was duly noted that the Chair of the Corporation, automatically becomes (ex officio) a RHT Member, it was possible for a Director to also be a Member (if in the minority), as advised by the College's legal adviser for academies;
- Ann Helsby, due to retire from office in December 2019, agreed to remain a co-optee on the Remuneration Committee from January 2020;
- Ann Helsby and Karuna Tharmananthar were currently the safeguarding governors, the Committee agreed, once Ann Helsby had retired that one safeguarding governor was adequate for the Corporation,
- an advert for an audit specialist co-optee for the Audit Committee was being advertised currently, the Clerk suggested contacting the ex external auditor after a two year period, the Committee asked for the Clerk to search locally for a co-optee with an audit specialism,
- Mary Tighe was recommended for reappointment (from 31 Dec 2019) for a two year period, in accordance with the Governor Recruitment, Succession and Renewal Procedure,
- Sasha Burns was recommended for reappointment (from 30 Nov 2019) for a four year term of office,
- Succession planning for Committee Chairs and Vice-chairs was discussed.

## **(b) Governor Attendance Overview for 2018-19**

The Committee reviewed attendance records for individual governors and each committee as well as the overall attendance rate for 2018-19. Members noted that governor attendance data for Corporation meetings was published in the College's financial statements and published on the external website. The Corporation had adopted a target that individual members should attend 75% of all meetings held each year, all governors aimed to exceed this target.

### **2018-19**

- Overall mean attendance at Corporation meetings was 76%. (2017-18 76% )
- Overall mean attendance for all meetings was 87%. (2017-18 77%)
- 71 % (2017-18 57%) of members exceeded the target (individual attendance).
- 29% (2017-18 43%) of members were below the target (individual attendance).

The overall mean governor attendance for all meetings was 76% for 2018-19 (77% 2017-18). As a comparator, out of 79 Colleges whose details were supplied, the mean average governor attendance rate for all meetings for 2018-19 was 82%.

Although attendance was generally good, it was inconsistent for a small number of individuals. The Committee reviewed the individual data to understand some governors' lower attendance and agreed that governors were well engaged.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. that the succession planning for the 2020-21 Corporation Chair be noted,
2. that Ann Helsby be co-opted to the Remuneration Committee from January 2020,
3. that Mary Tighe be recommended for reappointment (from 31 Dec 2019) for a two year period, in accordance with the Governor Recruitment, Succession and Renewal Procedure,
4. that Sasha Burns be recommended for reappointment (from 30 Nov 2019) for a four year term of office,
5. that only one safeguarding governor be in post from January 2020 (Karuna Tharmananthar),
6. that a local audit specialist be sourced to join the Audit Committee.

### **GOV 4 Anonymised RHC Annual Complaint and Positive Feedback Report for 2018-19 (agenda item 6)**

Whilst not a statutory requirement, an annual anonymised report with formal complaints and compliments was presented setting out the timescale in which the complaints were dealt with. This could be of use in terms of providing information on the student experience, and general quality assurance, and trends along with ensuring that any procedures relating to complaints were being complied with.

The Clerk informed the meeting of a FOI request received in July 2019 and the response made from the Chair of Governors.

**RESOLVED:** that the anonymised 2018-19 RHC Complaint and Positive Feedback report be noted.

### **GOV 5 Corporation/Governance Annual Self-Assessment Report (SAR)for 2018-19 (agenda item 7)**

As a condition of government funding, the Corporation had to confirm compliance with, or due observance of, one of three governance codes of practice:

- Charity Governance Code
- Code of Good Governance for English Colleges
- UK Corporate Governance Code

The Corporation had adopted the AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges in 2015. The Clerk had completed a compliance checklist against the Code in 2019 and this had been circulated to all Committees. It was agreed that this compliance checklist would be used as the annual Governance Self-Assessment for 2018-19.

**RESOLVED:** that the AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges compliance checklist be used as the annual Governance Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for 2018-19.

**GOV 6 2019 DfE New Statutory Policies for Colleges (agenda item 8)**

The DfE had recently published its revised statutory policies for schools, academies and colleges. This replaced the 2014 version.

For sixth form colleges the following was now statutory:

- protection of biometric information of children in schools and colleges, biometric data was not used at the College,
- NQT Policy, the NQT induction formed part of the personnel induction processes,
- Accessibility Plan, this would be integrated within the Accommodation Strategy Plan.

**RESOLVED:** that the newly published statutory policies for colleges dated 2019 be noted.

**GOV 7 FE and Sixth Form Governance Guidance 2018 (agenda item 9)**  
[www.gov.uk/guidance/fe-governance](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/fe-governance)

The Chair of Governors, at a Corporation meeting dated 23 September 2019, had requested that each Committee review its individual compliance with governance arrangements. The Search and Governance Committee had received an annual compliance checklist on the adopted AoC Code of Good Governance for 2018-19.

The FE and Sixth Form Governance was an additional guide and detailed the legal and regulatory requirements and recommended practice applicable to FE and sixth form corporations. This guide replaced the 'College Governance: a guide', published by the Department of Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) in 2014. The guide should be read in conjunction with the Instrument and Articles of Government, standing orders and the AoC Governance Code adopted by the Corporation in 2015.

**RESOLVED:** that the Clerk circulate a compliance checklist against the FE and Sixth Form Governance Guidance 2018 electronically to Committee Governors for comment. The compliance checklist would be circulated to all Committees for information.

**Clerk**

**GOV 8 Bournville Letter to College Chairs and ESFA Letter to Chairs with 15 Actions (agenda item 10)**

Governors NOTED the Bournville letter and investigation report to College Chairs dated July 2019, previously circulated to all Governors electronically. The ESFA letter to chairs with 15 actions had been completed by the Clerk with compliance against the actions in relation to Richard Huish College.

**GOV 9 Huish Strategic Development Plan 2019-22 (agenda item 11)**

Governors NOTED the Huish Strategic Development Plan 2019-22. Governors had been involved in its formation during strategic discussions at a meeting in February 2019 and the Plan's approval at subsequent Corporation meetings.

**GOV 10 Any Other Business (agenda item 12)**

Date of next meeting 24 Feb 2020

With no further business the meeting ended at 7.15pm

Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_