

Governors Present:

Yvonne Bradshaw (Chair), Martyn Lylyk, Clare Russell (Principal)

In Attendance:

Fatema Hussein (Head of Governance)

Meeting Began: 12.00pm

Meeting Closed: 1.00pm

Attendance: 60%

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Alison Watson-Bird and Ade Oladapo.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Governors were invited to declare any direct, indirect, pecuniary, personal or prejudicial interest relating to any item on the agenda for the meeting.

No declarations were made.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5TH FEBRUARY 2021 (*enclosure*)

3.1 Approval of the Minutes

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

3.2 Matters Arising

The Head of Governance presented the action progress log and it was noted that most actions had been completed or included on the agenda for discussion.

3.2.1 Governors Dashboard

The Committee reviewed the dashboard which had been updated as requested and agreed that the addition of the extra column for the relevant Governors' meeting was useful and suggested that the People and OD Committee be added to the column for the Internal Stakeholder row.

4. SUCCESSION PLANNING

4.1 Vice-Chair Role

It was noted that Yvonne Bradshaw's term of office would end in December 2021. This was Yvonne's final term of office and a new Vice-Chair and Chair of Search and Governance would need to be elected.

The Committee discussed the need to ensure that there was an appropriate balance of business and academic skills/ experience between the Chair and Vice-Chair roles as those skills complemented each other.

The Head of Governance advised that nominations for the Vice-Chair and Chair of Search role were sought at the July Board meeting with an election to be held at the first Board meeting in the next academic year.

RESOLVED:

The Committee endorsed the proposal to seek nominations at the July Board meeting.

ACTION:

Head of Governance / Board agenda

4.2 Search & Governance Committee Chair Role

Discussed as part of Item 4.1

Martyn Lylyk left the meeting at this point.

5. BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Terms of Office

It was noted that:

- Joshi Jariwala's term of office would end in September 2021 and Joshi had agreed to be re-appointed
- Warren Middleton's term of office would end in December 2021 and Warren had also agreed to be re-appointed
- The decision to re-appoint would have to be made by the Board on the recommendation of the Search Committee

5.2 Governor Application

The Committee considered the application that had been received from Dominic Martinez and recommended that the other members of the Search Committee were consulted on whether to progress the application.

ACTION:

Head of Governance to contact Search Committee members

5.3 Committee Membership

The Head of Governance informed the meeting that:

- There was currently a vacancy on the Audit Committee and a Co-opted member was to be appointed in the new academic year
- Jacqui Chatwood (Finance Chair) was in her third term of office and there were currently only two Board members on the Finance Committee
- A succession plan needed to be put in place to replace Jacqui when her term ended March 2023
- Some Co-opted members had expressed an interest in a future Committee Chair role

- Jo Venn (Standards Chair) was also in her third term of office and a succession plan was required to replace Jo

RESOLVED:

Governors recommended that:

- Discussions were held with members who had expressed an interest in a future Chair / Committee Chair role
- Further consideration was given to the Standards Committee Chair role in the next academic year

6. GOVERNOR LINK PROGRAMME AND LINK ROLES

Governors reviewed the guidance and link areas/roles and some further amendments were put forward. It was noted that the Committee would need to agree how the impact of the programme would be assessed.

RESOLVED:

The Committee recommended that the updated proposals were circulated to all members before or shortly after the July Board meeting

ACTION:

Head of Governance to update the guidance and circulate to all members. Details of the revised Link roles and areas where support could be provided to the College to be agreed in readiness for the implementation of the programme at the beginning of the new academic year.

7. GOVERNANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT & PERFORMANCE RESULTS

The results of the Governor self-assessment review were considered, and it was noted that:

- Most Board / Co-opted members enjoyed their role and agreed that the College made best use of their skills and experience
- A majority of members felt that the Board had performed effectively in the last 12 months
- It had been suggested the Board packs were too big and needed to be reduced to key performance data and areas of focus to allow Governors to debate key issues in greater detail

A discussion ensued during which the following points were raised:

- The executive summaries at the beginning of each report were designed to provide a precis of the key issues to Governors
- A balance needed to be struck in relation to the length of papers and providing Governors with sufficient information so that they were able to fulfil their statutory duties and provide appropriate scrutiny and challenge to management
- It had been previously suggested that the Convene document library was used to upload some of the lengthier Board papers with links for members to access them separately
- The size of some papers could be reduced by senior management focussing on the key issues “that kept them awake at night” and where it was felt that Governor input could add value
- The size of Board packs was an issue in all Colleges and also in the corporate sector
- It would be useful to receive feedback from members who had seen Board packs in other Colleges and companies

- The independent external evaluation of the Board had been very positive about the quality of the papers that Board members received

8. GOVERNOR SKILLS AUDIT RESULTS

The results of the skills audit were reviewed and whilst there was a good balance of skills and competencies on the Board, it was noted that:

- The lowest rated essential attribute was 'Health and Safety Management'
- 'IT systems and management' has fallen in average by 19% since the last survey was undertaken
- 'Understanding of current education policy' had fallen in average by 12% since the last survey
- 'Legal - commercial/general law' had fallen into the range of 'Basic' to 'Satisfactory'
- The broad skill area of 'Quality Strategy' has fallen in average by 6% overall since the last survey was held

Governors discussed the results and the Head of Governance explained that the drop in some areas above could be due to not all members having completed the survey, and the appointment of new members who did not yet have sufficient understanding of some areas such as the quality strategy.

The Head of Governance proposed that the format of the skills audit was simplified, and Microsoft Forms or Survey Monkey was used for the next audit.

The Chair advised that the DfE was consulting on the development of a Governor competency framework for F.E. boards and it may be prudent to wait until this had been finalised as there could be a requirement for all Boards to use the same template to review Governor skills and areas of expertise.

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the results and recommended that they were checked to ensure that the drop in some ratings was due to non-completion rather than in the skills set of members

ACTION:

Head of Governance

9. MEETING EVALUATIONS - COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS

Governors reviewed the comments from the meeting evaluation forms and noted that Board members were satisfied with how the meetings had been conducted in the current academic year.

10. GOVERNANCE IMPACT STATEMENT*

- Discussion on succession planning will ensure that vacancies will be filled in a timely manner and allow for a smooth transition
- Proposal to re-launch the Governor links Programme will assist in further strengthening the governance of the College
- Review of the Governor self -assessment results and discussion regarding the size of Board packs
- Discussion on the Governor skills audit results and suggestion that the Governor competency framework could be utilised as recommended best practice in future

11. *GDPR / CONFIDENTIALITY

It was noted that the names of members who had expressed an interest in becoming a Committee Chair or Chair/Vice Chair in the future would not be shared with the Committee, or any Governor, until the individuals permission had been obtained by the Head of Governance. This had been highlighted in the introduction to the self-assessment questionnaire.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday 8th October 2021 at 12.00pm

* Standing Item

Chair's Signature:

Date: