

MINUTES



SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: 25th September 2019
Time: 2.30pm
Venue: Boardroom

Present:

Andrew Roberts (Chair)
Andrew Fawcett
Roger Peet
Bill Webster (Principal)

In Attendance:

Fatema Hussein (Interim Clerk to the Board)

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

1.1 Welcome to Members

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies to receive.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

Members were invited to declare any interest in agenda items at the start of the meeting.

No interests were declared.

1.4 Request for an item to be unstarred

No requests were made.

1.5 Minutes of the previous meeting – 20th June 2019

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

1.6 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

The Clerk presented the action progress log and the following matters were raised:

Item 2.1 Governor Skills Audit

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The Clerk advised that the Committee had previously agreed that external guest speakers were invited to the Board strategy meeting.

RESOLVED:

Following a discussion, it was agreed that two presentations linked to the results of the Governor skills audit were arranged for the strategy meeting in November

ACTION:

- Principal to liaise with David Singleton Chairman of Bolton Vision Strategic Partnership to deliver a presentation on working with local communities / Bolton Vision and Strategy
- Clerk to liaise with HR Director to arrange an internal speaker for the SEND presentation

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

2.1 Governor Attendance 2018/19

The Clerk presented the attendance report for the 2018/19 academic year and the following points were noted:

- The Board had previously agreed an attendance target of 75%
- 8 members recorded 100% attendance at Board meetings
- 5 members recorded 100% attendance at Board and Committee meetings
- Any individual attendance below the 75% target could in the majority of cases be explained due to unavoidable circumstances
- The overall attendance target of 75% for the year had been met

RESOLVED:

The Committee noted the report and agreed that the advance publication of the meetings calendar for 2019/20 would help to ensure that the Board continued to meet the attendance target

2.2 Board / Committee Membership

The Committee reviewed and discussed the current Board and Committee membership. Although there were no vacancies on the Board, the Clerk suggested that it would be useful to have a Co-opted member on the Audit Committee with recent and relevant audit experience.

The Clerk made the Committee aware of the Inspiring F.E. Governance service for Colleges to search for volunteers with the relevant skills set and suggested that this was utilised to find a suitable Co-opted member for the Committee.

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ACTION:

Clerk to use the Inspiring Governance service and put forward recommendations for the Committee's consideration

2.3 Staff and Student Governor Election Procedure

The Clerk explained that as Staff and Student Governors were directly elected by the staff and student body, it was necessary to have procedures in place should an election be required.

The Clerk presented draft procedures to the Committee and proposed that they were implemented to ensure transparency and consistency in the election process.

RESOLVED:

The Committee reviewed and agreed that the procedures were recommended to the Board for approval

ACTION:

Clerk / Board agenda

2.4 Staff & Student Governor Election

The Clerk advised that there was currently one vacancy for a Student member and a support staff member.

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed that elections were arranged for both posts

ACTION:

Clerk to arrange

2.5 ETF Governance Development Programme

The Clerk informed the Committee that:

- The Education and Training Foundation had developed an online Governor training and development programme that comprised of 24 different modules
- The pilot phase of the programme which comprised a few modules was currently free to access for all Board members
- Once finalised, the ETF were proposing an annual charge of £200 per Governing Board to access the training
- The training could be accessed at any time and would be useful for new and existing Board members who were not able to attend face to face sessions

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RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed in principle to buy into the training programme but stated that it would be useful to consider the feedback from the pilot programme before a final decision was made.

2.6 Board Self- Assessment / AOC Code of Governance

The Committee was informed by the Clerk that:

- The Board had previously agreed to adopt the AOC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges
- It would now be an appropriate time to consider whether the Board should use this to assess itself against the Ten Principal Responsibilities of Good Governance which underpinned the code

The Clerk presented a draft self-assessment template and explained that it could be utilised for this purpose and also to confirm compliance with the key requirements of the Code of Good Governance

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed that the template was used as part of the Board self-assessment / evaluation process.

ACTION:

Clerk to complete the self –assessment template and submit to the Committee for review

2.7 Governor Link Roles

The Committee discussed the proposals for link areas and the following suggestions were made:

- It was important to facilitate Governor interaction with key curriculum areas within College
- Some guidance was required on the purpose of the visits and the level of Governor involvement
- Opportunities could be made available before a Board or Committee meeting for Governors to carry out a link visit
- The Standards & Performance Committee could undertake a deep dive into one or two curriculum areas on an annual basis
- Some curriculum areas could also be linked to Committees

RESOLVED:

It was agreed that the Committee's suggestions were presented to the Board for further discussion/ endorsement

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ACTION:

Clerk / Board Agenda

2.8 DBS Checks – Student Governors

The Clerk reported that:

- A discussion had taken place at the previous meeting in relation to DBS checks for Student Governors
- During a recent internal audit at another College, the Auditors had questioned whether it was necessary to DBS check student Governors
- Ofsted had not raised this as an issue in previous inspections
- Although DBS checks on Governors were not mandatory, it was recommended that they were undertaken

A Governor stated that the current Student Governor was over 18 years of age and there were a large number of adult learners in the College who may be elected as Student Governors in the future.

The Principal advised that the College had robust safeguarding procedures in place and also undertook risk assessments if there were any concerns in relation to an adult learner.

RESOLVED:

The Committee agreed that DBS checks on Student Governors were not undertaken and that the recommendation was submitted to the Board for approval

ACTION:

Clerk / Board agenda

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

None.

4. SECTION D - ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

5. SECTION E - FUTURE MEETINGS

To be confirmed

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.25pm

Chair's Signature:

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

Date: 23 June 2020