



HUDDERSFIELD NEW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
Search & Governance Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 12th February
2019 from 5pm.

Confirmed Minutes

Present: Ms M Boryslawskij (Chair), Ms L Summers, Mr J Dawson Mr A Nelson,
Ms A Williams (100% attendance)

Clerk: Mrs C Coupland

1. Apologies for Absence/ Declaration of Interest

There were no apologies received.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes from Meeting held on 4th December 2018

Resolved:

- That the minutes be accepted as a true record.

3. Matters arising

- *E-Governance : Guidance Paper on Data Security : Requirements and Guidelines*

The Clerk reminded the Committee that at the Corporation meeting on 14th November 2018; Governors were advised that all agendas and supporting papers for Committee and Corporation meetings are to now only be electronically distributed by the Clerk; unless governors have asked specifically for paper copies to be issued. Tablets have also been issued to all Governors who were not able to use the College's Bring your own device (BYOD) provision and HNC –Guest WiFi.

It was explained to Governors that the tablet provided is to only be used for two key functions:

- Governor access to current Board Papers for upcoming meetings and access to stored papers, policies and articles via Moodle
- Governor access to college email accounts

The Clerk explained that from conversations with all Governors, it is viewed that through e-governance - services and information made available to the corporation- is now in a more secure, convenient, efficient and transparent manner. However at the last Search & Governance Committee meeting (December 2018) it was agreed that it would be useful for the Clerk to issue specific guidance about safe storage of electronic files.

The Clerk presented to the committee the proposed "Data Security Briefing: Requirements and Guidelines for Governors". The Committee, post deliberations, agreed that it would serve to remind Governors of the basic security requirements and guidelines expected by the College. The Committee also agreed it appropriate for all Governors to read and agree to the Staff IT Acceptable Usage Policy. This Code of Practice informs all Governors of the College's expectations when using College IT facilities or their own IT devices to ensure they are used appropriately in the furtherance of the aims and policies of the College.

The Clerk confirmed that all sensitive documents emailed to Governors would in future be password protected. Details of which will be texted to Governors and shared with members of the Senior Leadership Team, as necessary.

Resolved:

- **That the Guidance Paper on Data Security : Requirements and Guidelines, be issued to all Governors**
- **That the Staff IT Acceptable Usage Policy be issued to all Governors**
- **For all Governors to confirm by email to the Clerk that they have read and understood the Staff IT Acceptable Usage Policy**

- *Head Students : An Update*

Ms Williams informed members that she will advise the Corporation once the Head Students had been appointed. The roles had been advertised to all students and also explained to staff. Ms Williams confirmed to the Committee that a rigorous application and interview process was in place.

4. Clerk's Report : Membership Determination and Succession Planning.

Corporation Membership :

The Clerk confirmed that at present the Corporation is comprised of 14 Governors; noting that there were two external governor vacancies. Two applications were considered by the Committee. It was noted that the formal interview process had been undertaken for only one of the candidates – Mr Leach . The Chair and the Clerk had however met informally with the second applicant to discuss role responsibilities and expectations; but had not been able to undertake the formal interview process in advance of today's meeting. It was agreed by the Committee that it remained necessary for the individual to meet with the Principal, Clerk and Chair of the Search & Governance Committee to satisfy all elements of the governor recruitment process prior to any formal recommendation being made to the Corporation on their appointment. The Clerk was tasked with organising this. The Principal and Chair of the Committee were also delegated responsibility to make a recommendation to the Corporation on appointment; should the interview pre-date the boards next full meeting scheduled for 9th April 2019.

Resolved:

- **For the Committee to recommend to the Corporation that Mr Leach be appointed as External Governor for up to 4 years as of 29th April 2019 (start of Summer Term) in accordance with Instrument 2(1)(a)**

Committee Membership:

The Committee continues to welcome interest from co-opted members to further bolster the membership of the Finance and Resources Committee and Audit Committee. At present the Audit committee has two co-opted members Mr N Uppal and Mr G Wright. Mr P Cropper and Ms J Pryce serve the Finance Committee. The Clerk confirmed that opportunities for co-opted members continue to be advertised on the college's website and via its newsletter as well as via external mailshots / e-shots and publications on relevant governor recruitment websites and social media platforms.

Ms Williams also advised the Committee that regrettably the Assistant Principal - Finance remains on long term sickness leave and is not expected to be able to return to work. The Assistant Principal serves the Audit Committee and the F&R Committee; the Clerk is liaising with the Senior Leadership Team regarding meeting schedules and agenda plans to ensure that all executive reports are provided as necessary. Ms Williams briefed the committee on the colleges approach to securing interim financial support for the remainder of the academic year; prior to appointing a replacement Assistant Principal for Finance.

The Committee wished to record their sincere well wishes to the Assistant Principal - Finance and to also thank him for his sterling contributions, guidance and support that he has provided to all Governors since incorporation.

Link Governors:

The Clerk confirmed that the Link Governor role descriptions and responsibilities have been reviewed and updated where necessary to ensure that they all reflect statutory requirements and good practice, as stipulated within the 'Further education corporations and sixth-form college corporations: governance guide' published by the Department for Education on 29th January 2019. The Clerk explained that the Guide is a helpful reminder for Governors, which clarifies all legal and regulatory requirements and recommended practice applicable to further education (FE) and sixth-form college corporations. The Clerk confirmed that the updated role descriptions and responsibilities have been shared with the appropriate Link Governor.

Resolved:

- **For the Clerk to circulate the guide to all Governors.**

Student Governor:

Mr Blade Tillford-Whitehouse is the current Student Governor and will serve until Easter 2019. The Clerk is regularly meeting with him for support.

The Clerk is to advise all students of the forthcoming student governor vacancy. Deadline for nominations will be Friday 5th April 2019.

Staff Governor:

Ms Maria Dean is the appointed Staff Governor. Ms Dean's term of office is for two years until August 2020.

5. External Stakeholder Event held 17th January 2019: Feedback Summary & Tracker

The Clerk briefed the Committee on the outcome of the Stakeholder event that took place at the College on 17th January 2019. The morning provided a welcomed opportunity for Governors to meet with a range of external organisations which the college has developed relationships with.

The Committee described the summary report and action plan as helpful and affirmative of what the corporation understood to be key stakeholder views. The Clerk confirmed that the summary report had been shared with the Senior Leadership Team and all other relevant staff.

Resolved:

- **That the report be received.**

6. Governance Codes : How do they Compare

The Clerk reminded Members that a key task for the Search & Governance Committee is to review and improve the effectiveness of Governance policies, practices and procedures and make recommendations to the Corporation.

While there is no legal requirement for a college to adopt a code of governance, the Accounts Direction requires each governing body to publish a Statement of Corporate Governance and Internal Control as part of its annual report and accounts. The Corporation resolved to adopt and comply with the English Colleges Foundations Code of Governance as of 1st August 2015.

The Clerk explained that the circulated paper “the Governance Codes: how do they compare” had been published by the Sixth Form Colleges Association. The occasional paper provided a broad comparative overview of the different governance codes available to sixth form colleges.

Post discussions, the Committee agreed that they remained satisfied that the currently adopted Governance code remains to be the most appropriate one for the college; given that it has been specifically developed for sixth form colleges. It remained the committee’s view that this specific code sets out the principle responsibilities and practices needed by a College to show how it is conducting its business in the best interests of its students and funders. The Committee was also mindful that a comprehensive and robust compliance check of the AoC Governance Code was undertaken by members in May and December 2018. The review confirmed that the Corporations current framework and processes addressed all ‘must’ activities of the code. There were however a small number of best practice initiatives identified and an action plan has since been determined. These identified opportunities need time to be implemented to enable the corporation to continue to deliver enhanced governance practice.

It was acknowledged however that there is real merit for the corporation to use elements of all other un-adopted codes, as appropriate, to continue to inform and support good governance practice as part of the Boards quality improvement planning.

Resolved:

- **That the report be received.**

7. Governance Quality Improvement Plan 2018/19: Mid-Year Review

The Clerk reminded members that the Quality Improvement Plan has derived from the areas for improvement identified through the self-assessment process. The targets agreed are founded on what the Corporation believes it needs to address in its efforts to maintain outstanding. Key development priorities have also been identified for 2018/19 and incorporated into the Quality Improvement Plan.

The Committee was satisfied that good progress was being made on the actions agreed as necessary to enable the corporation to maintain its high performance.

Resolved:

- **To receive the report**

8. Governance Policies and Procedures – Annual review.

The Clerk confirmed that the following policies have been reviewed and that all have been deemed to be comprehensive and appropriate. No changes are therefore required:

- Access to Corporation Information
- Guidance for Clerk on public access to meetings of the Corporation
- Procedure for the removal of a Governor from office for reasons other than statutory disqualification.

- Selection of Governors
- Succession Planning
- Governor Induction Policy
- Mentoring Policy

The Clerk also reminded the Committee that in the summer of 2018 all corporate policies and procedures had been sense checked for compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Resolved:

- **To record that the annual review of the above policies and procedures have been undertaken by the Clerk, and that no recommendations on changes to Policies are necessary.**

9. Any other Business.

There was no other business to be considered.

10. Learner Impact Reflection

The impact of discussions and scrutiny of the Committees work in improving the outcomes and experience for all learners was considered and the following agreed:

Resolved:

- **Maintaining high performance amongst Governors enables the Corporation to continue to provide strategic leadership and accountability**
- **A high performing corporation is able to support the college to achieve its aims and objectives and secure positive outcomes for students**
- **The Corporation is committed to ensuring the effective control and due diligence takes place and that systems of delegation and accountability are in place**
- **The Board continues to conduct its affairs as openly and as transparently as possible**
- **To continue to ensure that the college publishes accurate and honest information about its activities and processes - this is particularly important in relation to information for prospective students, parents and employers.**
- **This self-critical approach enables the corporation to provide a strong level of assurance to all stakeholders of the Corporation's high standards and continued commitment to conduct its business in the best interest of its students and stakeholders.**
- **By reviewing Membership and agreeing succession planning strategies; the Committee ensures that the Corporation continues to have the required mix of skill sets to effectively undertake its business in improving the quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment.**
- **Assurance received that the governing framework is compliant with statutory responsibilities and regulations.**
- **Assurance that the Corporation continues to seek out best practice initiatives as well as to inform/lead best practice within the sector in order to remain outstanding in its performance.**
- **Maintaining high performance amongst Governors enables the Corporation to continue to provide strategic leadership and accountability.**
- **A high performing corporation is able to support the college to achieve its aims and objectives and secure positive outcomes for students.**

- **The pursuit of excellence in all of the Corporations activities is demonstrated by an uncompromising and highly successful drive to contribute to the colleges success and ambitions**
- **Systems for rigorous evaluation and analysis are embedded within Governance with a clear focus on continuous and ongoing improvement**
- **Assurance received that the governing framework is compliant with statutory responsibilities and regulations.**
- **A high performing and informed corporation is able to support the college to achieve its aims and objectives and secure positive outcomes for students.**
- **Systems for rigorous evaluation and analysis are embedded within Governance with a clear focus on continuous and ongoing improvement**

11. Determination of confidentiality

The supporting papers for agenda items 4 and 5 are deemed confidential.

12. Date of next meeting: 14th May 2019 at 5pm