

Minutes of: Search & Governance Committee

Date: 3pm 24th June 2024 **Location:** A10 College Road Campus

Present	In attendance
Peta Darnley (Chair) Russell Roberts John Auckland Mervyn Jones Abigail Appleton (Principal/CE)	Rebecca Semple (Clerk to Governors)
Quoracy: Meeting was quorate	

1. **Apologies for Absence** – none received
2. **Declarations of interest** – no new declarations
3. **Minutes of the last meeting**
 - a. **Approval of minutes of meeting held 22nd April 2024** - minutes approved as a true and accurate record
 - b. **Matters Arising** – none raised that are not already on agenda for discussion
4. **Board and Committees – vacancies and succession planning**
 - a. **Student Governors – update:** The Committee noted that the current FE Student Governor is due to leave due to finishing studies, and one of the two HE students has low attendance. The Committee agreed to imminently alert progressing FE students that next year recruitment for an FE Student Governor will be underway, outlining the role and the commitment expected, with a target to increase the number of applicants from the current average of 2 per year. A discussion was held around the Board's role in motivating and supporting appropriate applicants/new Student Governors, with reference particularly to the importance of their induction process.
 - Action:** Principal to start an early recruitment process via letter to returning students over next few weeks
 - Action:** Clerk to follow up with HE Student Governor with lower attendance
 - b. **Independent Governors – recruitment and succession-planning**

Several potential new Board candidates were discussed, including a qualified accountant (Principal to approach to ascertain interest), retiring finance director (Principal has had an initial conversation) and another with business/marketing background (Chair has received CV). The Principal is also in discussion with VP of a local high school who is considering Governorship, and will also approach an ex-student who is a creative professional in early stages of her career.

 - Action:** Principal to approach/meet all new potential applicants above

A discussion around auditing the skills needs of the Board was held, and the need for a qualified accountant for the Board was noted. Discussion at next meeting to decide on range of skills being looked for, and proceed with skills audit following this.

c. **Committee Membership and Chairships update**

Audit Committee: The Committee noted that recruiting to this Committee was a priority, following the recent resignation of a Co-opted Member, and that at least one of the potential Governorship candidates discussed above would be suitable.

AQ&S Committee:

It was noted that TN has now completed his final year as a Co-opted Member of AQ&S, and thanks will be made by the Principal to him. The Chair-ship for AQ&S Committees was discussed following a recent requests for volunteers, noting the length left of Governorship term for potential Chairs, alongside their skills and background. The Committee agreed that a Board Member will be approached as potential FE Chair early in the new 2024/25 term, and it was agreed that the current AQ&S Chair would continue as HE Chair during the transition period.

F&GP Committee – The Committee agreed that at least one of the potential new Governorship candidates discussed above would be suitable

Search and Governance Committee – The Committee agreed that membership was currently satisfactory

Action: Principal/Clerk to invite exiting Co-opted Member to Graduation.

- d. **Potential use of name 'Curriculum & Quality Committee' instead of 'Academic Quality and Standards Committee'.** The rationale behind this proposal was discussed, particularly its alignment with to current development work underway on the AQ&S agenda. The Committee agreed that the Principal would discuss with VPHE/VPFE/VPBDSE, and then draft a note for Clerk to send to external members of AQ&S Committee with rationale for proposed alteration of Committee name.

Action: Principal/Clerk

- e. **Chair of the Board** – this was noted by the Chair as a priority for S&G Committee for further discussion before and at next meeting, considering that the current Chair of the Board has agreed to continue as a Governor for one more academic year, completing his final term in August 2025.

5. **Fellows update**

The Principal informed the Committee that Production Designer James Price (HCA Alumnus) has confirmed his acceptance of a Fellowship, and will attend Graduation this year to accept the honour. Succession-planning for future new Fellows was also discussed by the Committee, noting that a maximum of two a year is the ideal aim.

6. **Training, Development, Staff and Student Engagement**

a. **Draft Governor Induction/Development process**

The draft Governor Induction and Development Plan was reviewed and discussed by the Committee. Suggestions were made about including an extensive facilities tour, aligning meetings with SLT staff into one visit, and the potential value of observation of other Committees was noted. Governor Curriculum Visits were noted as also being invaluable

to new and current Governors alike. The Committee agreed to the commencement of the implementation of this plan, with the Clerk coordinating this.

Decision: *the Committee recommended the Induction and Development Plan to Board for noting and formal adoption.*

- b. **Staff engagement event 8th July** – The Principal confirmed that FE and HE teams are in place for giving a course profile to Governors. A 3pm start was agreed for Staff Engagement event, with a break for Board photo before 4.30pm Board Meetings.
7. **Board and Committees' calendar of business items 2024/25** – noted, but also noted that this will be reviewed over the summer by Clerk to ensure the up to date OfS regulations are included, as well as a more focused review underway on AQ&S on standard. Assurance of review will come to next meeting.
8. **Annual items for Committee**
 - a. **Election of Chair for 2024/25** – Current chair was proposed and seconded to continue with her Chairship of S&G Committee.
 - b. **Committee Self-assessment** – this was noted by the Committee as a reasonable assessment of the current Committee performance, with some comments made:
 - The assessment of Governorship was performance noted as consisting of a 1:1 with Chair/Chair of S&G (organised by the Clerk), which occurs in a year that doesn't contain an external review of Governance. Committee agreed that the Governor Development process reviewed in item 6a will be altered to align with this
 - Standing Orders review - Clerk to follow up regarding when these are next due
 - Attendance statistics – Committee agreed that these should be reviewed at November meeting before reporting to Board in December

Action: Clerk to follow up regarding Standing Orders review
Action: Clerk to update Draft Governor Development process
 - c. **Review of Committee Terms of Reference** – The Committee agreed that the Terms of Reference continue to be appropriate.
9. **AOB**
 - Recruitment of a Clerk was discussed, following the recent resignation of the Clerk who will end in post in August 2024. Principal will continue to work with HLNSC on next steps, as well as discussion with the current Clerk regarding the role scope.
 - Timing of S&G Committee meetings for 2024/25 was agreed to be 3 – 4.30pm
10. **Date and Time of Next Meeting:** Mon 25th November 3pm

Minutes approved: Date: