

## OPEN MINUTES OF SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 03 October 2017 5.30pm in the Principal's Office



### STANDING ITEMS

#### ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

- Present:** Sue Taylor (Chair)  
Wayne Marley  
Karen Hucker (Principal)
- Minutes:** Ka Wong (Acting Clerk for the meeting)
- Apologies:** Alison Dennett (Clerk to the Corporation – on Maternity Leave)  
Melissa Drayson (Clerk to the Corporation, Maternity Cover – unable to attend)

#### NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

#### DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No interests were declared.

#### MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Search Committee meeting held on 2 May 2017 were agreed and signed as correct.

#### MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair led the Committee through the Action Plan and it was noted that all actions had been completed.

It was noted that Carole Shaves would continue as Safeguarding Lead Governor until the end of her office and would support Pat Strickson, who would be taking over the role. Carole would remain as an external adviser to the College Safeguarding committee once her term of office ended.

### MAIN AGENDA

#### 1. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR 2017/2018

The Committee considered the appointment of Vice-Chair for 2017-18.

The previous Committee Vice-Chair's Term of Office was coming to an end in February 2018 and she had made the decision that she would not be continuing in her Vice-Chair capacity for part of an academic year. The Committee had, therefore, agreed at their meeting in May that the Vice-Chair of the Committee should be new Vice-Chair of the Corporation, once elected, and that the appointment would be made at the September 2017 meeting.

Wayne Marley had been appointed as the new Vice-Chair of the Corporation for 2017/18.

**RESOLVED: The Committee approved the appointment of Wayne Marley as the Vice-Chair for the Committee for 2017-18.**

#### 2. REVIEW OF TERMS OF OFFICE

The Committee noted the terms of office for the current serving Governors; there were no terms of office for renewal at this meeting.

Five Governors would be coming to the end of their Terms of Office during 2017/18 The Committee held a discussion on succession planning for the future.

- Elisabeth Lawrence had indicated an interest in re-standing for the staff Governor position for a second term.

David Padmore would be approached to renew his term of office in April before his renewal in Oct 18.

The Corporation would continue to look at recruiting one or two more governors. In the past, open advertisement for governors have not received high levels of interests. Most recently, governors had been recruited through recommendation.

**ACTION: The Principal would ask other SLT members if they had suggestions of individuals with a business background who could be approached.**

### 3. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

A number of amendments had already been made to Committee membership for 2017/18 with the introduction of two new Governors: Lorraine Brown had joined the Finance and Property Committee and Pat Strickson had joined the Personnel and Audit Committees, as well as being the Safeguarding link governor.

The Committee needed to consider the membership of the Remuneration Committee when Carole Shaves stepped down as governor from February 2018.

**ACTION: The Committee to review Remuneration Committee Membership for 17/18 at the next meeting.**

### 4. ANNUAL REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES

One change was proposed for the Committee to consider. As the Internal Audit had been dispensed of, it was suggested for point 10 of the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference to be removed: "To review and make recommendations to the Corporation on the internal audit assignment reports and annual reports".

**RESOLVED: That the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference be recommended to the Corporation meeting in December 2017 for approval.**

### 5. REVIEW OF ATTENDANCE 2016-17

Overall Governor attendance rates for 2016/17 were excellent and had increased from 2015/16. Where issues had arisen with figures for individual Governors falling below the 70% expected rate, there were clear reasons for this. Lower attendance on Governors Morning was often due to work commitments. The Committee felt that these did not reflect any concerns. Governors often participated in other College activities such as talks, theatre events and supporting specialist issues which demonstrated their support.

The Clerk had received benchmark figures for attendance at Corporation and Committee meetings combined across 92 colleges and the average was 80.52% with figures ranging from 70% to 95%. The figure for Bexhill Corporation (for Corporation and Committee meetings combined) was 88% which demonstrated that the Corporation rated highly against benchmark figures and was towards the top end of the range.

### 6. REVIEW OF SKILLS AUDIT

The Committee considered the current Skills Audit of the Corporation, which demonstrated a wide spread of skills across governors.

It was noted that, with four long standing and experienced Governors stepping down at the end of their current Terms of Office, skills gaps could emerge. These could be used as a potential focus for future recruitment of Governors. Safeguarding was highlighted as an important area for continuity in that the current Lead Governor in this area would be leaving the Corporation in February 2018. It was also noted that Audit companies often offer expertise for Governing Bodies.

**Action: The Principal would approach RSMUK with a view to identifying a potential Governor**

### 7. REVIEW OF SELF ASSESSMENT 2016-17

The Committee considered the results from the annual Corporation Self-Assessment survey, which had achieved 100% completion.

Overall, responses had been positive again this year with few negative points being raised. It was demonstrated that the College had a strong and unified Corporation who were aware of their roles and responsibilities and felt confidence in their Chair. Governors also felt positively about the relationship between the Chair and the Principal, as well as Governors' relationship with Senior Management. There

was a good understanding of the role of the Governor and those in place had an extremely strong commitment to the Corporation and the College. Governors felt fully informed and appropriately trained, through useful and pertinent training sessions, to be able to undertake their roles. All agreed the committees were well chaired and handled. As in previous years, succession planning was prominent in Governors' minds.

There were a couple of suggested areas for improvement highlighted through comments received mainly relating to the introduction of new Governors and an increase in strategic discussions at Corporation meetings. Training sessions received fewer agree or strongly agree responses because some governors were unable to attend.

Under the section asking for comment on the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Corporation, it was agreed that it would be valuable to continue with the Self Assessments for next year as drafted but that Governors should be sent the link for completion via email as opposed to being asked to complete the Survey during a training session.

**Action: To remove the training question from the SAR and use the individual session evaluations which capture the views of those who attended the sessions. This will provide a more accurate representation of views.**

## 8. TRAINING SESSIONS FOR 2017-18

The Committee were asked to agree Training sessions for 2017/18. It was agreed that, based on the feedback received through the Training Needs Analysis sent out to Governors, the following topics would be covered:

- Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017 - Had been used to provide an Apprenticeships update.
- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2017- Finance and Funding
- Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June 2017 – Effective Chairing

For the April training on Finance and Funding, it was suggested that International House was used as a case study of effective decision making around funding and finance.

In June training, it was suggested we focus on Chairing training as there would be several new chairs of committees in 2017/18.

The Clerk had also identified potential trainers from an external agency. The Principal would enquire if other S7 Colleges have used this training.

**Action: The Principal will approach S7 Principals about the external training**

## 9. CONFIDENTIALITY REPORTING REVIEW

The Committee reviewed the list of confidential items and minutes to determine whether confidentiality was being maintained appropriately and whether any of the material could be released. It was agreed that all items should remain confidential.

It was also noted by the interim Clerk, that minutes were going on the website prior to approval at the next meeting. It was agreed that in future, the minutes would be published following approval be approved by the Corporation and Committee at its subsequent meeting.

## 10. POLICIES

The Committee had one policy to review: Policy for Removal of a Member SG5. There were no major changes proposed to the policy in terms of process as an in depth review had previously taken place which included appropriate legal advice. Slight amendments to the wording of the policy had been made as follows:

- Replacement of the term 'Member' with 'Governor' throughout the document;
- A minor amendment to the final paragraph which was referring to a Panel making the decision to remove a co-opted member, whereas this decision would be made by the Corporation.

**RESOLVED: That the Policy for the Removal of a Member SG5be recommended to the Corporation for approval in December 2017.**

#### 11. PAPERLESS COMMITTEES UPDATE

At the May 2017 meeting, Search agreed the following recommendations in relation to Paperless Committees. The Committee considered a paper from the Clerk which gave a brief update on the status of each recommendation. It was noted that this would be a slow process as the Governors become familiar with this approach.

- The method for sending out Agendas, Reports and Minutes to Governors has been amended to uploading Agendas and Reports to the Secure Governors' Area of the website with the expectation that governors download them;
- The Clerk has written and issued guidelines on the new download process and the 'Paperless Committees' process for those Governors who will be using their own IT equipment at meetings (i.e. not receiving hard copy packs),
- The Clerk had contacted the Governors who indicated they would be willing to use their own IT equipment at meetings; from the start of 2017/18. Wi-fi passwords had been provided to these Governors Procedure sheets for each Committee had been updated with the amount of hard copies required for each meeting to reflect those Governors who no longer require hard copies.

The Clerk had set up a monitoring process to keep track of savings made across the year and will complete this monitoring on her return at the end of July 2018.

Other issues were that:

- Hard copies would continue to be issued for Committee Chairs as standard (unless requested otherwise).
- The undertaking of a 'Paperless Trial' for a complete committee would be postponed for consideration at a later date.
- A number of Governors did not respond to the IT User Survey. The Clerk would contact these Governors on the return from her maternity leave to determine whether they would be willing to dispense with hard copies of papers.

#### 12. RISK REVIEW

The Committee noted that there were currently no risks delegated to the Committee.

#### 13. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There was none.

#### NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 8 May 2018 at 9.30am in the Principal's Office. The Agenda will close on Thursday 3 May 2018.

The meeting closed at 7pm.