

## OPEN MINUTES OF SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING

### Tuesday 20 September 2016 9.30am in the Principal's Office



Bexhill 6th Form College

#### STANDING ITEMS

##### ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

<b>Present:</b>	Sue Taylor (Chair) Carole Shaves (Vice-Chair) Karen Hucker (Principal)
<b>Minutes:</b>	Alison Dennett (Clerk to the Corporation)
<b>Apologies:</b>	None

##### 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 27 May 2016 were agreed and signed as correct.

##### MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair led the Committee through the Action Plan and the following updates were given in relation to the outstanding actions:

- Meetings for the Lead Governor for CEIAG / one to one session with Student Support Manager: the Principal had progressed this with the Student Support Manager and the Lead Governor would be contacted if required.
- Advertising for a new Governor in September: the Principal reported that this was in progress with the advert currently being prepared based on previous successful adverts. It had been agreed not to seek a 'specialism' but rather to keep the advert general to encourage a wider response.

#### MAIN AGENDA

##### 1. REVIEW OF TERMS OF OFFICE

The Committee noted the terms of office for the current serving Governors. Five Governors would be coming to the end of their Terms of Office during 2017/18 and therefore the Committee held a discussion on succession planning. The Committee agreed it was important to plan ahead and this was a good time to look to the future for those coming to the end of their Terms of Office as well as with a view to recruiting new Governors.

The Committee considered the renewal of the one Governor, Jessica Stubbings, who had been appointed in February 2016 and would be reaching the end of her 'probationary year' in February 2017. Jessica had demonstrated excellent attendance during her probationary period making a positive contribution to meetings. The Committee were happy to recommend the continuation of her Term of Office for a further 3 years (i.e. a full 4 year term).

**Resolved: The Committee recommended to approve the renewal of Jessica Stubbings for a further three years following a successful probationary year.**

**Recommendation will be presented at the Corporation meeting in December 2016.**

## 2. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

It was noted that one change had been made to the Committee membership for 2016/17 with Sue Adams moving from Strategic Planning, Policy and Quality Assurance to Personnel and Jessica Stubbings vice-versa.

No further amendments to Committee membership were proposed at this time.

## 3. REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMMITTEES

The Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference for each Committee which were presented as part of an annual review. Minor amendments were proposed as follows:

- References to the term 'Member' have been removed and replaced with 'Governor' throughout as agreed at the Search Committee meeting in May 2016;
- The Director of Services Supporting Learning had been included under 'attendance' for Strategic Planning, Policy and Quality Assurance.

The Committee considered that the Principal should be included under 'attendance' for the Remuneration Committee 'as required'.

**Resolved: The Committee recommended to approve the amendments to the Terms of Reference.**

**Recommendation will be presented at the Corporation meeting in December 2016.**

## 4. REVIEW OF ATTENDANCE 2015-16

Overall Governor attendance rates for 2015/16 were excellent and, where issues had arisen with the figures for individual Governors falling below the 70% expected rate, the Committee felt that this did not represent a consistent pattern and therefore was not of concern at this time.

The Clerk had received benchmark figures for attendance at Corporation and Committee meetings combined across 98 colleges and the average was 80.55% with figures ranging from 64.2% to 94%.

The figure for Bexhill Corporation (for Corporation and Committee meetings combined) was 91% which demonstrated that the Corporation rated highly against benchmark figures and was towards the top end of the range of figures collated.

## 5. REVIEW OF SKILLS AUDIT

The Committee considered the current Skills Audit of the Corporation and it could be seen that there was a wide spread of skills across the Corporation and Committees.

It had been highlighted that it would be beneficial to recruit a Governor with a financial background / financial knowledge, however it was agreed that this would not be specified in the current round of recruitment.

It was also highlighted that, with three long standing and experienced Governors stepping down at the end of their current Terms of Office, there could be potential gaps in the skills audit which could be used as a potential focus for future recruitment of Governors. It was considered that the best approach would be to await the results of the advert to be placed before starting to start looking at the skills required.

Safeguarding was highlighted as an important area for continuity in that the current Vice-Chair, who would not be re-standing at the end of her current Term of Office in 2018, was extremely knowledgeable and experienced in that area and was also the Lead Governor for Safeguarding. It was important to start thinking about who would be a good successor for this role.

## 6. REVIEW OF SELF ASSESSMENT 2015-16

The Committee considered the results from the annual Corporation Self Assessment survey which, for the first time since 2010, had received 100% completion.

Overall the results were significantly positive identifying that the College has a strong and unified Corporation who are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The Self Assessment served as a good reminder to Governors of the importance of their role as well as the expectations that were held of them.

There were a couple of areas for improvement highlighted through comments received and the Committee discussed these in detail. It was considered that these did not require follow up with individual Governors at this stage, however if similar comments were received through the Self Assessment survey for 2016/17 then action would be considered.

Comment with regard to the timings of meetings were considered; the Committee had looked at this issue in depth previously and, on the whole, it was felt that timings were adhered to. It was not necessarily that timings were ambitious, rather that keeping to timings relied on Governors coming to meetings fully prepared and informed so that only essential discussions were held during the meeting. Under the section asking for comment on the relative strengths and weaknesses of the Corporation, one Governor had commented that continued stability in the role of Finance Director was required; the Principal confirmed that this was an area that did need some stability and that current arrangements were working well with both External Audit and Internal Review taking place over the coming months. A different approach had been taken for the completion of this year's Self Assessments in that Governors had completed the Survey during the Governor training session held in June. At the session comments were made that the survey was too long and was difficult to complete on line with such a large number of questions.

It was, however, agreed that it would be valuable to continue with the Self Assessments for next year. As a way forward it was suggested that the content of the survey for 2016/17 could be condensed and a starting point could be to highlight key aims of what the Committee wants to learn from the Survey. It was agreed that the Clerk would look into making amendments to the Survey and circulate her work when available.

**Action:** The Clerk to start looking at amendments to condense and focus the Self Assessment Survey for 2016/17.

## 7. TRAINING SESSIONS FOR 2016-17

The Committee were asked to agree Training sessions for 2016/17. It was agreed that, based on the feedback received through the Self Assessment Survey, the following topics would be covered:

- Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016. Already agreed to cover the new UCAS points system and the new data tables to be used by Ofsted.
- Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017. The Principal advised that the main Ofsted changes this year were around Safeguarding; with a new KCSIE being released in September it seemed opportune to focus the February training session around Safeguarding. The session would also focus on a strategic element with specifics to be agreed at a later date.

A decision as to what the June Training session would cover would not be made until the Search meeting held in May to ensure that account could be taken of issues that may arise between now and then.

The Committee considered that the training provided to Governors was of a very good quality.

**Action:** Topics for the February 2017 Governor Training session to be finalised at a later date.

## 8. CONFIDENTIALITY REPORTING REVIEW

The Committee reviewed the list of confidential minutes to determine whether confidentiality was being maintained appropriately and whether the Corporation was adhering to the Confidentiality Policy with regard to the information that was kept confidential.

Minor amendments were proposed by the Committee to the Confidentiality Policy with regard to the separation of confidential items on Corporation meeting agendas as follows:

Part A: **Public Items:** no restriction. This section includes most items of business and is attended by all Corporation members, ~~and the Deputy Principal.~~ SLT and Senior Students (in attendance).

Part B: **Confidential Items:** restricted to ~~certain~~ full members and SLT only. Under provisions in the Instruments & Articles of Government the ~~Staff and~~ Student members, and any other staff member in attendance, will be asked to attend these sessions as appropriate. Confidential items are printed on pink paper.

Part C: **Restricted Items:** restricted to full members only. This section deals with remuneration of the Principal and Senior Post Holders. The Principal is asked to leave these sessions as appropriate; Staff and Student Governors do not attend.

**Resolved:** The Committee recommended to approve the amendments to the Corporation Confidentiality Policy.

**Recommendation will be presented at the Corporation meeting in December 2016.**

## 9. POLICIES

The Committee had one policy to review: Policy for Complaints against the Corporation SG6. Although there had been no changes to the Policy in terms of process as it was considered to be clear and straightforward, slight amendments to the wording of the policy had been made as follows:

- inclusion of 'if required' under the section referring to the Clerk being authorised to seek independent advice; and
- clarification that EFA refers to the Education Funding Agency.

**Resolved: The Committee recommended to approve the amended Policy for Complaints against the Corporation SG6.**

## 10. RISK REVIEW

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

## 11. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

There was none.

## NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 2 May 2017 at 9.30am in the Principal's Office. The Agenda will close on Thursday 27 April 2017.

The meeting closed at 10.30am.