

APPOINTMENTS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting held at 4.00pm on 28 November 2017

Present: K Golding (Chair)
D Wildridge
S Howard
J Bloomfield
N Savvas (Principal)

In Attendance: J Bridges, Clerk to the Corporation
A Hicks, Deputy Clerk

Members confirmed that they had no conflicts of interest to declare in relation to the items of this agenda.

Action

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
There were no apologies for absence.
- 2 **Minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2017**
The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a correct record.
- 3 **Matters Arising**
From the minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2017.
 - 3 **Matters Arising – Learning Board Programme Actions – Mike Snell Report**
The Clerk has made contact with the Clerk of Truro and Penwith College and is waiting to receive a reply.
- 4.iii. **Board Skills Mix**
The recruitment events superseded the need for contact to be made with the contact of S Howard or for the Principal to write to the Chair of West Suffolk Hospital NHS Trust.

An expression of interest from the contact of J Bloomfield was received and will be held for consideration of any future vacancy.
- 4.iv. **Governor Representative Role Vacancies**
K Points has accepted the offer and will succeed R Carter as Chair of the Safeguarding Board.
- 4.v. **Student Governors**
The Committee agreed that student membership should remain as one and our process of nomination and election widened and this decision was reported back to the Corporation in the Governance paper presented at the meeting held on 7 July 2017.
- 6 **Innovative Governance Self Reflection Framework**
The template was issued in word format for completion and examples provided in a PDF copy. These were issued on 18 July 2017. A summary report is provided for under agenda item 8 of this meeting.
- 7 **Governor Link Procedure**
The Clerk made contact with Debbie Tappin for K Golding and Phil Stittle for D Wildridge. Both have subsequently had meetings with their links.

8 **Governors' First Hand Week Feedback**

Due to absence individual First Hand sessions for governors are to be progressed and completed in the Spring Term 2018.

JBridges

4 **Committee Terms of Reference**

Each Committee is asked at their first meeting in the new academic year to review and approve its Terms of Reference. There were no amendments proposed to be changed since the review last year. The Committee **approved** the Terms of Reference. **Proposed** by K Golding and **seconded** by D Wildridge.

The Committee considered including the Vice Chair of the Corporation as a member of the Committee as in previous years this has been the case. It was agreed that the Chair is to contact S Daley to see if she has the availability to join the group subject to other governance changes which may evolve as we discuss the strategic direction of WSC and SAT.

KGolding

5. **Membership**

The campaign to elect a student governor has taken place. Only one nomination was received from Jake Mann, a level 3, year 2 Computer Science student. He is enjoying his course and hopes to go to University in London or Wales next year. Eventually he would like to teach computing. A recommendation to approve his appointment is to be taken to the Corporation meeting to be held on 14 December 2017.

JBridges

The term of office of Joe Winter, Support Staff Governor, came to an end as a consequence of him leaving the employment of the College to pursue his dream, to play Rugby in New Zealand.

Staff governors are nominated and elected by the staff of the College and this process took place over a number of weeks in October and November 2017. We had three nominations and over 100 staff took part in the election. The number of votes were close but Rudy Berongoy, IT Service Desk Team Leader received the highest number and a recommendation to approve his appointment it to be put to the Corporation at the meeting to be held on 14 December 2017.

The Corporation is to be informed at the 14 December 2017 meeting that K Golding's term of office as Chair is to come to an end in December 2018. In accordance with the Corporation's procedure for Chair succession it was agreed that the Chair would give one year's notice of their intention to step down at which point the Corporation would appoint a Chair Designate.

Given that the Corporation is currently in consultation with Suffolk Academies Trust to review and create a collaborative governance structure that will enable a strategic alliance between both entities it is proposed that the usual Corporation appointment process and succession plan for the Chair is postponed pending the outcome of this governance review and strategic alliance. The Committee agreed to suspend the process and will take the recommendation to the Corporation at the meeting to be held on 14 December 2017.

The report included an overview of the current membership on each Committee. Further to the appointment of the Student Governor, Jake Mann, the vacancy on the Standards and Excellence Committee will be filled. This

leaves one vacancy on the Audit and Risk Management Committee which will be held until a suitable appointment can be considered. Membership is stable on this Committee with a good skillset and balance of membership so an additional appointment at this time is not considered to be a priority. Subject to S Daley, Vice Chair, taking up membership on this and the Remuneration Committee, who only meet twice in the academic year, the current vacancy may/may not be filled.

6. Attendance Records – Three Year Comparison Report

The average attendance at Corporation and Committee meetings has dipped slightly by 2% compared to the previous year down to 85% but is on the target attendance rate. The attendance target of 75% for Committee attendance has been achieved across all Committees which is an improvement on the previous year.

The only Committee whose attendance dropped from the previous year was the Resources Committee (from 90% down to 83%) but this is still 8% above the 75% target attendance rate so is of no cause for concern. Notably the attendance rate for the Audit and Risk Management Committee has significantly improved in the year from last year (from 71% up to 90%) due to the new appointment of co-opted member H Nydam which has brought stability and consistency to the group.

The Committee commented that there is a healthy turnover of governor membership and this has been managed effectively through introducing a restriction on the number of years a governor can be in office together with using the skills audit matrix, we can plan for members succession and recruit effectively because we know what skills and attributes we need to replace or strategically we need to recruit to the Board.

It was noted that attendance records of individuals are published in the Annual Report and Financial Statements each year and there were no concerns with the attendance of any member in the 2016/17 academic year.

7. Skills Audit Matrix

In order to effectively plan for succession, the Corporation agreed to introduce a Skills Audit process that could be used to adequately assess the skills required in the future. The audit now includes the skills of new member, T Hunt and the proposed new Support Staff Governor, Rudy Berongoy. The audit does not include the scores of the Principal as arguably this could favourably distort the actual balance of skillset among members.

At a glance we can see from the audit (high scores, Green 4) that the skills and strengths of the board are Leadership, communication skills; including listening, problem solving and/or creativity, ability to influence, staff performance management, strategic planning, staff recruitment and data analysis. Skills gaps on the board (lower scores, Red 1 or Yellow 2) are SEN, legal, procurement and purchasing, young people's services or activities, premises and facilities management, stakeholder perspectives, safeguarding and child protection and teaching and pedagogy.

The Committee commented that the completion of the audit is subjective as the matrix shows that 5 governors have extensive expertise and knowledge of Human Resources whereby it is know that only 2 governors (1 co-opted) are qualified and have a profession in this field.

More importantly it was noted that 3 governors have scored themselves a 1 (no expertise of knowledge) for Safeguarding and Child Protection, despite all governors receiving and completing online training. Likewise there are 4 governors who have scored a 1 for Teaching and Pedagogy and 6 governors scored a 1 for SEN. The Clerk will look at all low scoring categories and organise in-house training for the individuals concerned.

JBridges

8. **Governance Self Reflection Innovation Report**

In previous years governors have completed an annual governance self-evaluation questionnaire to review the effectiveness of its operations at Corporation and Committee level. The process became tired and we developed the Innovative Governance Self Reflection Framework that was released to governors over the summer to reflect on the 2016/17 academic year.

Assessments were not received from the three co-opted members; J Bloomfield, H Nydam and N Roberts, but the Committee agreed that because their work as member is only limited to a particular Committee it is a difficult ask for them to contribute/comment on a wider strategic view. Co-opted members will not be approached in future to complete the assessment.

The Clerk confirmed that she had now received the final form from the one governor she had been chasing. It was noted that their contribution will not negatively impact the collective scores noted in the report but will enhance the percentage further showing that in all four categories the Corporation should keep up the good work.

Despite a time consuming process to complete for governors this has produced an extensive and comprehensive evaluation and evidence bank of how innovative and self-reflecting the Corporation is.

The Committee discussed and agreed the action plan arising from the assessment. The plan has identified four potential areas for improvement; 1) improving the student voice; 2) rotating Committee membership; 3) reviewing methods of how information is disseminated to governors; and 4) having an innovations section as an agenda item at the Governors Strategic Conference in January 2018.

The Committee agreed with the first action and the Clerk will discuss how this can be taken forward with the Vice Principal for Students and Learning Support, C Shaw. The second action was not agreed with as rotating Committee membership in past attempts has not been successful. It also goes against the use of the skills audit as Committee membership is drawn from the skills that the group needs and the individuals that have those skills, expertise and interest. It was agreed that a review of Committee membership would be undertaken in the year, but rotation of membership would not. The action plan is to be updated.

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The Clerk proposed establishing a Task and Finish Group to review how information is disseminated to governors. The Committee agreed. Information may be difficult to complete and return because of technical difficulties with computer equipment or the format in which it has been sent is incompatible with the technology held/owned by members so we need to understand what the issues are before we can resolve them.

Finally, it was agreed that the last action on the plan is to be removed as the Committee agreed that the whole agenda of the Conference is about innovation, this is not a separate agenda item, it's just what we do.

It was agreed that the innovation assessment will be used again to reflect on the performance in this academic year and is to be released after the Corporation meeting to be held on 5 July 2018.

JBridges

9. Any other business

None.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 9 May 2018 at 4.00pm. Room TG1.16

The meeting closed at 5.00pm.