

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Search and Governance Committee
held on Monday 22 March 2021 held remotely**

Present: - Tim Newsholme (Chair)
Abigail Appleton (Principal)
Mervyn Jones

In attendance: - Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)

The meeting was quorate as three Members were present.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Professor Robin Baker and Katie Seekings.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Committee agreed the Chair should sign the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2020 as a true record.

Several matters arising would be addressed during the meeting. The Clerk and Principal had contacted applicants for governorship who were discussed at the last meeting to inform them of the Committee's decision. The Principal had invited some candidates to visit to the College after Easter once lockdown is lifted.

Governors would be invited to equality and diversity training in the summer. The Clerk would invite Governors to Gender identity training later this week.

ACTION: CLERK

Governors had not been invited to a Student Council meeting to date. There was further discussion with various options aired concluding to arrange for the Student Council to meet Governors online before the April Board meeting with the agenda concentrating on the value of campus education, lockdown learning experience and digital learning/platforms. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL/CLERK**

The Committee agreed: -

- To approve the minutes of the last meeting
- To arrange an online meeting between the Student Council and Governors in April which would be divided into sections to gain information on students' experiences and their views, Governors input and questions from both students and Governors
- Drop-in meetings could be arranged to the Student Council in the future as appropriate

4. Vacancies on the Board and Committees 2020/21 and succession planning

There is currently one vacancy for an Independent Governor which the Committee had already agreed to target an accountant. The Clerk suggested a qualified accountant who is a retired finance director who served on the Board and chaired the F&GP Committee in 2001. It was agreed to contact them to ascertain if they would be interested to be considered to join the Board. **ACTION: CLERK**

In 2021/22 three Independent Governors and Members co-opted onto the Audit Committee and AQ&S Committee will have completed at least two terms of 4-years in office. Professor Baker will have completed a term in office. Emma Lewis, a co-opted member on the Audit Committee, will leave the Committee in April 2021.

The Chair confirmed that John Nicol had agreed to consider being re-appointed onto the Board. It was agreed that John Nicol has extensive experience having retired from senior leadership in secondary school education, understands the Ofsted framework and FE curriculum. He is also a Governor at Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School.

ACTION: CLERK

The Principal had spoken with Dr Joanne Horton who is employed by a large university. The Principal explained the importance of challenging SLT on OfS requirements and quality assurance which has a different ethos in a small specialist College. It was proposed to Co-opt Dr Horton onto the AQ&S (HE) Committee for a year. **ACTION: CLERK**

Mike Rookes and Graham Briscoe will have served on the Board and Audit Committee respectively for 10 years. There were several new members on the Audit Committee and the two Co-opted Members would leave the Committee. Mike Rookes' contribution and knowledge are extremely important and ensure continuity on the Committee and Board. Likewise, Scott Rolfe's contribution to the F&GP Committee is equally as valuable concluding to offer Co-opted roles on the relevant Committees. **ACTION: CLERK**

Kate Murrie, the co-opted member on AQ&S Committee (FE) had served on the Board until 2016. It was agreed to invite Kate Murrie to join the Board from September 2021 whose experience and knowledge is current and relevant as a consultant working in the FE sector. **ACTION: CLERK**

The Principal needed to contact Professor Baker to update him on College strategy. She would ascertain if he would be willing to serve another 4-year term. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**

Committee membership was noted agreeing that this should currently remain unchanged.

The Committee agreed: -

- The Clerk would contact the qualified accountant regarding joining the Board
- To recommend John Nicol is appointed to serve on the Board for another year effective from 1 September 2021
- To recommend Dr Joanne Horton is appointed as a co-opted member on the AQ&S Committee (HE) for a 1-year term with immediate effect
- To recommend Mike Rookes is appointed as a Co-opted Member on the Audit Committee until December 2021 initially and Scott Rolfe appointed as a Co-opted Member on the F&GP Committee for a 1-year term in office. (these appointments would be subject to the individual's agreement)
- The Clerk would contact Graham Briscoe to confirm that his term would end in August and thank him for his valued contribution to the Audit Committee
- The Clerk would contact Kate Murrie regarding joining the Board in September 2021
- The Principal would contact Professor Baker regarding serving another 4-year term on the Board

5. Governors' External Review

The report summarised options to review governance for Governors' discussion and agreement.

The Committee agreed: -

- It was appropriate to further defer the external review due to COVID-19
- The Chair of the Corporation and Chair would conduct 1:1 meetings with Governors to identify the challenges of governance during the pandemic
ACTION: CLERK/CHAIR OF THE CORPORATION/CHAIR
- The Clerk would request exit information from Governors who leave the Board to provide an honest opinion on governance practices
ACTION: CLERK
- The Clerk would complete a review of governance against the AoC's Code of Good Governance's ten principal responsibilities and provide evidence
ACTION: CLERK

6. Staff and student engagement and topics for future development

The Clerk reported that John Nicol had joined a music clinic online which he had found useful and enjoyable to observe.

The Committee agreed: -

- Governors would be invited to join additional online lessons and relevant events. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL/CLERK**

7. Graduation update and Fellows for consideration in 2021

The College are liaising with Hereford Cathedral to confirm booking arrangements for Graduation on 16 and 17 September. Governors will be notified once the dates are confirmed.

The Principal has invited staff to make suggestions for Fellows with some suggestions outlined. The Principal would have a conversation with the Chair of the Committee who also had some suggestions. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL/CHAIR**

The Committee agreed: -

- To note progress towards the Graduation and Fellows

8. Any other business

There were no items.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting was arranged for Monday 28 June 2021 commencing at 3.00 pm.

Signed as a true record of proceedings

Chair: **Date:**