

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER

MINUTES OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 2nd NOVEMBER 2010 at 11.05 a.m.

Present: Mr G R Baird, Revd. G Bridgewater, Dr J Johnston, Mr R Pope,
Mr M Marchant

Apologies received: None

In attendance: Ms N Whitehead

In the Chair: Mr G R Baird

1. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interests other than discussion of the potential reappointments of both the Chair and Vice-Chair as members of the Governing Body (Items 7a) and b) below). Members agreed that neither would be required to leave the meeting for this item.

2. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 9th March 2010 were approved.

3. **Matters arising** None

4. Governor Attendance Report 2009-2010

Paper: Summary 2009-2010

Members reviewed the attendance report 2009-10 and were pleased to note that, in relation to the target of 80%, attendance was excellent at committee meetings at 89% (82% in 08/09), very good overall at 85% (83% in 2008/09), but slightly disappointing for Governing Body meetings at 76% (83% in 08/09). It was noted that five governors had achieved 100% attendance and five more were individually above the target attendance but, for example, that three governors had missed at least two of the three Governing Body meetings. The Committee was confident that the lower attendance figures owing to conflicting work commitments or occasional ill-health were unavoidable particularly given the additional pressures in the workplace owing to the wider economic situation. They noted that the recent survey had shown that governors were aiming to have satisfactory attendance at meetings in the coming year. There was discussion also as to the scope for Governing Body meetings to be more rewarding for governors in allowing more open discussion of strategic issues whilst ensuring compliance issues were still properly addressed.

Action: a) Chair to inform governors of the attendance outcomes at their next meeting with a view to meeting targets next year b) Clerk and Chair to consider any changes in format of Governing Body meetings to help encourage full attendance c) Clerk to check on availability of Audit Committee co-optee.

5. Governor Training & Development Report 2009-2010

Paper: Governor Training 2009/10

Members agreed that in 2009-10 there had been good governor attendance at an effective mix of training and development events so that governors could be up-to-date on the impact of the wider political and economic picture on the college, their legal obligations, funding, quality and curriculum issues. Once again cost had been kept to a minimum with moderate charges only for the first joint AoSEC/FE Sussex event and FE Sussex Clerks training which fulfilled an objective in the governance QIP for more benchmarking and joined-up thinking. It was agreed however that attendance at training tended to be quite ad hoc with the Chair and Clerk most heavily involved. As such a more formalised programme with wider participation

could be advantageous. Members noted the recent survey results on the potential availability of governors for additional training over the coming year and their preferences as to how this might be delivered.

6. **Skills and experience audit 2010**

Paper: Skills and experience audit 2010

Members welcomed the more detailed survey of the skills and experience reflected on the Governing Body. The latest audit showed that the Governing Body could usefully benefit from greater experience in the areas of equality and diversity, legal expertise and employee/industrial relations. Potential losses to the Governing Body might also be expected to reveal a need for new members to have experience of HE and risk management.

7. **Appointment of Foundation Governors**

Papers: The Governing Body and Collyer's Experience Audit 2009

a) **By the Court of Assistants**

It was noted that two such foundation governor appointments were coming to the end on 31st March 2011, both governors having now served two terms. Taking account of his own wishes and the Nolan recommendations on the renewal of appointments, it was agreed that the current Vice Chair, Mr R Pope, would stand down from the Governing Body. It would however be welcomed if he were to remain a trustee so that he may use his knowledge of Collyer's to good effect whilst also contributing to the existing degree of independence on that body. The replacement governor might helpfully replicate his predecessor's financial and risk management skills as well as personal qualities such as good judgement, interpersonal, communication and analytical skills. Availability for at least 6 meetings a year as well as additional time for other college activities and training was also important. A local appointee might find such commitments easier and could assist the Governing Body in its succession planning .

The second Mercer governor whose term was coming to an end, Mr C J P Watney, had shown a notable degree of dedication to the college over the past 8 years, not least through regular support of additional activities such as SAR reviews, selection interviews and appeal panels as well as being a member of two Committees. Taken with the sum of changes expected to the Governing Body in the coming year and the difficulty in finding a suitable alternative who would show such commitment, it was agreed that the Committee should recommend reappointment.

Recommendation:

The Court of Assistants' of the Mercers' Company to be asked to reappoint Mr C J P Watney as a foundation governor with effect from 1st April 2011.

Action: The Clerk to the Trustees to:

i) consider a suitable appointee to replace the current Vice Chair;

ii) ensure the reappointment of Mr R Pope, Mr C Watney and Mr D Watney (as trustees appointed by the Court of Assistants) was on the forthcoming meeting agenda.

b) **By the trustees.**

The Clerk explained that both the current Chair, Mr G R Baird, and the former parent governor, Mr C J Eley were coming to the end of their current appointments in March 2011. Whilst the Chair had already served five terms, this was also an asset in terms of his considerable experience and corporate memory. He had only been Chair of the Governing Body for two years and there was a lack of an obvious alternative ready and able to dedicate the appropriate amount of time. He was willing to serve one more term. Mr Eley had now served only 6 years as a governor and was willing to continue. He also had served the Governing Body extremely well in terms of his varied support of the college and he was also willing to take on additional responsibility if required.

Recommendation:

The Trustees of the Collyer Endowment to be asked to reappoint Mr G R Baird as a foundation governor for a term of four years with effect from 1st April 2011.

The Trustees of the Collyer Endowment to be asked to reappoint Mr C J Eley as a foundation governor for a term of four years with effect from 1st April 2011.

8. Appointment of Co-opted governor

The Committee noted that the Chair of the Q&S Committee who had now served three terms as a governor of Collyer's would like to step down as soon as possible owing to his additional responsibilities as Acting Vice-Chancellor of a Sussex University. Whilst desirable to find a replacement governor with HE management experience, current pressures on the sector might make such an appointment difficult. A fallback might be to have a co-optee with HE experience on the Q&S Committee who might in future be willing to be a full governor.

Action: Clerk to pursue with the co-opted governor how best to find a replacement in HE. Members to consider relevant contacts from the Sussex, Surrey or London area.

9. Governor elections

a) **Parent governor:** the current parent governor's appointment was due to end in July when he would no longer be eligible to stand as a parent governor. Members agreed that the election procedures should be amended, as the student ones had recently, to remove any fallback selection on the grounds of age. Members also discussed the timing of parent governor elections and agreed that on balance the current programme provided the best possible chance of obtaining a suitable candidate.

Action: Clerk to amend election procedures as discussed.

b) **Staff governor:** the current staff governor's period of office was also due to end in Summer 2011.

Action: Clerk to amend election procedures in tune with student and parent governor procedures

10. Appointment of Trustees by the Governing Body

Paper: The Trustees of the Collyer Endowment

Members noted that both Mrs E R Cowley and Mr M Hodgson came to the end of their terms of office as Trustees on 25th March 2011.

Recommendation: That the Governing Body should nominate both Mr Hodgson and Mrs E R Cowley as Trustees or, if this were not Mrs Cowley's wish, nominate instead Mr C J Eley (subject to his agreement) for a term of four years with effect from 26th March 2011.

11. Governor Training and Development Policy

Paper: Governor Training and Development Policy

The Clerk explained that this was a new policy designed to reflect best practice. Since completing the EIA a small number of changes were proposed to help the policy have a positive impact on E&D.

Recommendation: The Governing Body to approve the policy (as slightly amended) at their next meeting.

Action: Clerk to arrange a training up-date for governors in E&D and Safeguarding as a priority for this term and to bring forward a recommended two year training programme to the next Nominations Committee meeting.

12. Meeting assessment

The Committee felt that the meeting had been very productive in considering succession planning. It had sought to balance effectively the expectation of some regular turnover of governors with the need for a firm base of understanding against the background of change in the education sector. In so doing it had been able to use the papers on attendance and skills presented to the meeting effectively. It welcomed the new training policy as a clear statement of current good practice and as an opportunity to build further on governors' ability to be effective in increasingly challenging times.

13. Date of next meeting: Provisionally 2nd March (to be confirmed following consultation with the Clerk to the Trustees).

The meeting ended at 13.15 p.m.

Chairman

Date

NCW 02/11/10