

**THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER**  
**MINUTES OF**  
**THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD ON THURSDAY 7<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2019 at 16.30**

Present: Mrs Sally Bromley, Ms Ann Donoghue, Mrs Barbara Hobday, Mr Graham Lawrence, Dr David Skipp

Apologies received: n/a

In attendance: Ms Nicola Whitehead

In the Chair: Mrs Barbara Hobday

**1. Declaration of interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

**2. Minutes** of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2019 were approved.

**3. Matters arising**

**Ref Item 4b:** The Clerk confirmed that Dr Powell had been reappointed by the Court of Assistants' of the Mercers' Company on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2019 for a further four year term.

**Item 4d:** The Committee Chair confirmed that a further governor had resigned in mid-July in recognition of the challenge of consistent attendance alongside heavy work commitments.

**Item 4f:** The Clerk reported that she had not yet pursued the extra member of the **Special Committee** in order to allow new and imminent appointees to settle in. A recommendation would be made to the next meeting. **(Action: Clerk).**

**Item 5:** The Clerk reported that she had followed up on the summer meeting with the BHASVIC Chair and provisionally suggested a mutual exchange of Clerk 'consultancy' for the summer or autumn of 2020. She had also followed up on the idea of an **S7 Chairs'/ Vice Chairs' meeting** with some positive responses to-date, balanced however with an appreciation of the difficulty for governors in accommodating further meetings. The forthcoming SE Principals' and Chairs' meeting might afford an opportunity to take this issue forward **(Action: Clerk & Chair of Governing Body)**

**4. Governance Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2018-19 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2019/20**

*Paper: Governance Self-Assessment Report 2018-19 and Quality Improvement Plan 2019/20, Self-Assessment questionnaire results, Governor Attendance and Wider Participation Reports 2018-19 incl. Governance KPIs, Governance Risk Register 2019/20 update*

The Clerk explained that the **governance SAR/QIP** reflected governor confidence in their involvement in **financial strategy** over the previous year as well as insights into a new **Curriculum Strategy** from 2020. **Assurance activities** had been further boosted but there was scope for further improvement in an understanding of the scrutiny undertaken across the piece. Greater flexibility and rigour had been built into **SPH/SMT recruitments** to bear fruit for the future along with the **new Remuneration Committee**. Attendance for some had been challenging with the emphasis now on filling remaining vacancies with realistic expectations and settling in a new team. **All but one of the Governance KPIs had been met** (with 89% of governors having attended a link event against a target of 100% owing to two resignations). It would be helpful if the Chair could promote understanding of these targets through his Chair's reports. **(Action: Chair)**

The Clerk sought views in particular on the proposed actions, including:

- Greater **signposting of** items as being **strategy development, decision-making or monitoring** and governor discussion of the monitoring required when any new strategy introduced;
- Consideration of the **governors' role in relation to mental health issues**;
- Greater reliance on **online training and self-certification** to provide greater flexibility and take-up;
- More overt **distinction between governance and operational issues** with discussion to resolve any grey areas;
- Greater **risk-mapping to committees** to support the assurance framework;
- Enhanced input to **SPH and Clerk appraisal**;

Members supported the **SAR grading of '1'** (outstanding) and QIP actions, particularly in respect of proactivity in proposing appropriate monitoring. It was agreed that all governors should be free to input to SPH and Clerk appraisal and that the College pilot on broader feedback to upper managers would, in due course, be examined to gauge whether there were any tools useful for those members of staff within the governors' responsibility. In all cases it was important that there should be clear criteria for appraisal with evidence-based observations. **(Action: Clerk)** It was noted that the outlook on pension contributions was looking more favourable than anticipated but that there should be ongoing monitoring particularly in the light of the forthcoming election and uncertainty on central government funding. Some further refinement of the milestones might also be useful. **(Action: Clerk)**

Looking in more detail at the SAR questionnaire, members commented on:

- The *relative* lack of confidence in respect of approval of the **Admissions Policy** in spite of recent annual reviews to reflect curriculum changes and progression. It was hoped that further discussion of the Curriculum strategy and how this related to admissions would be helpful, for example in relation to the academic and vocational offer. There was **scope to further develop understanding** in the Quality and Curriculum Committee. **(Action: Clerk in liaison with Chair and SMT)**;
- The need to be careful that historical approaches and **naming** of documents did not run counter to effective governance but instead contributed to **effective strategic planning** and **appropriate hierarchies**, particularly in relation to policies;
- Increased preferences for a **paperless environment** and how this might help contribute to greater attention to strategic issues. It was agreed, for example, that the Clerk might look at providing **hard copies only for the strategic part of the agenda** for Governing Body meetings (with papers retained by the relevant committee). Whilst useful, the Clerk's summaries had been onerous to produce and possibly led to less attention being made to information in the full minutes. She proposed therefore to try instead to produce informative but **more accessible minutes** **(Action: Clerk)**

Members noted too the progress against the **governance risk register** and its close links to the SAR/QIP. The Clerk explained that she had **carried forward a revised cycle of business** in order to be able to take account of the committee's discussion on effective strategic planning and reporting.

**Recommendation: That the Governing Body should approve the Governance Self-assessment 2018-19/ Quality Improvement Plan 2019-20 at their next meeting (including the grading to be awarded to governance) and subject to the minor amendments identified.**

## 5. Governor and trustee appointments and succession planning

*Paper: Cover sheet, updated skills audit, CV of new committee member*

Members noted:

- a) **A new team rector**, The Reverend Canon Lisa Barnett, had been selected to lead the St. Mary's Parish, to be licensed on **6<sup>th</sup> February 2020**. A parish meeting was due to be held shortly and would seek to address whether the **College's ex officio appointment** would be undertaken by the rector or a delegate and when the appointment might be made. The Clerk had sent some information and extended an invitation to visit the College and attend the March Mercers' meeting;
- b) **No further Mercer appointee** had come forward following the previous expression of interest in Scotland.
- c) **One expression of interest** had been received from a parent with local government, audit and risk experience and the application form, skills audit and E&D forms sent for completion. The Clerk would **continue to search alternative avenues** in case this did not prove fruitful and in any event in anticipation of the ESC Chair's departure in March 2020. One member offered to gauge interest in a suitable contact;
- d) Unfortunately, although a former governor had expressed interest in the **Spring '20 trustee vacancy** when approached in the summer, this decision had now been reviewed. The Clerk would therefore be **seeking an alternative** trustee.
- e) Looking to the end of the year, the **Committee Chair's** current appointment was due to end as was that of the ESC co-optee, the latter of which would not wish to continue. Members agreed that owing to other changes and her chairing responsibilities as well as her valuable HR experience, the reappointment of the Committee Chair for a **third appointment could be justified**.

In discussion of succession planning, members asked that the **Clerk continue to pursue local interest** in governance opportunities. It was noted that any potential candidates (or an existing governor) might be of interest to the Mercers' company if they were finding any difficulty in filling their fourth appointment. In terms of skills, members agreed that the priorities were special needs (for which the new Vicar of Horsham could be trained if needed), loans and investments, estate management (at least in time for the next major project) and local government. Alongside these, a diverse Governing Body would also be sought. Although recent resignations had reduced the diversity of the board in terms of ethnicity, age and disability, there were no particular areas of concern at the moment seen against the local community. **(Action: Clerk to circulate revised E&D information)**

In addition members noted that all the further recommended (re)appointments had been approved/ ratified by the Governing Body.

## 6. Governor Training and Development (T&D) Policy and Programme

*Paper: Governor T&D Policy and Programme 2019-2020*

Members noted that the revised **policy** more clearly **identified key aspects of induction training** including Safeguarding and Prevent and **how their completion would be monitored**. The Clerk also welcomed comments on the proposed programme of training for governors in the coming year. This reflected the main **training messages** emerging from SAR/QIP remained covering the **national context, admissions (see item 4 above) and Ofsted** in spite of efforts to address these, particularly in respect of the new EIF. This, and the emergence of student issues, might however, at least in part, be a reflection of low attendance and reinforced the need for **effective induction training and readily accessible information** to ensure that all governors were as up to speed as the more experienced and active members. Members were content to approve a further suite of **SFCA webinars**. An updated programme was expected shortly from

SFCA. The messages about self-certification, particularly in relation to **timely induction training** needed to be conveyed clearly to all governors. **(Action : Clerk)**

**Resolved: The Nominations Committee approved the revised T&D Policy and Programme for 2019-20.**

**8. Governance Quality Framework**

*Paper: Governance Quality Framework*

The Clerk commented that it had taken a while for the current framework (introduced three years ago) to be applied consistently – with, for example, greater emphasis on up-front agreement of key strategic items and consent items. There was scope for further refinement with more assessment during the meeting of what discussion and information had been valued and/or could be enhanced (as per SAR/QIP discussion) but no clear need for significant changes at this stage. Increasing familiarity with the approach might yet prove fruitful e.g. in supporting efforts to share assurance across committees and particularly with the Audit Committee. **(Action: Clerk to update guidance on cover sheets further)**

**Resolved: The Nominations Committee approved the minor changes to the Governance Quality Framework.**

**9. Any other business**

None

**10. Meeting assessment**

The Committee welcomed the comprehensive reports and pragmatic and coherent approaches discussed.

**11. Date of next meeting:** Friday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 16.00. (following UMG Awayday)

The meeting ended at 18.00.

Chair .....

Date .....

NCW 7/11/19