

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER
MINUTES OF
THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2021 at 16.30 (on Zoom)

Present: Mrs Ann Donoghue, Mr Graham Lawrence, Mr Dan Lodge, Dr David Skipp
Apologies received: Mrs Barbara Hobday
In attendance: Ms Nicola Whitehead
In the Chair: Mrs Ann Donoghue

Members were content with the proposed items for discussion and agreement as consent items.

1. Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interests.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2021 were approved.

3. Matters arising :

Item 3 (see minute 7)

4. Governance Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2020-21 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2021-22

Paper: Governance Self-Assessment Report 2020-21 and Quality Improvement Plan 2021-22, Self-Assessment questionnaire results, Governor Attendance, Skills and Wider Participation Reports 2020-21 incl. Governance KPIs, Governance Risk Register 2021/22 update

Members noted the detailed evidence contributing to governance self-assessment as per the papers provided and the subsequent conclusions reflected in the **governance SAR/QIP**. Going forward, the Clerk proposed **priority areas** included:

- Ensuring governance information and discussion achieved **appropriate focus** and effective balance between breadth and depth with a review of the reporting cycle planned to reflect the new strategies;
- **Maintaining** the College's long-standing '**outstanding**' **financial status** whilst ensuring cost-effective further development of the College estate through a review of the Masterplan and future funding strategy;
- **Ongoing support** to the Principal, DP, Clerk (and wider SMT as appropriate) in terms of development, pay and appraisal in challenging circumstances with forward programme of appraisal conversations aligned appropriately with the Remuneration Committee;
- **Effective succession planning in respect of governor skills, knowledge, diversity and responsibilities:** filling governor vacancies and reviewing the training package to include a balance between flexible online access and face-to-face opportunities with comprehensive tracking and review; effective use of the ETF/ SFCA subscriptions and enhanced mentoring including early catch-up on delayed discussions.

Members welcomed the emphasis on recruitment and training for the recently appointed assistant, acknowledging the difficulties in tracking training, particularly when access was flexible (though this was highly valuable, for example in catching up on recorded webinars). They suggested

therefore that in future the training report be shared with governors so that it might better reflect the full range of training undertaken.

The Clerk commented that work was in hand to address the 12-18 month reviews delayed by Covid. An e-mail was ready to go to address the difficulty in accessing the new ETF subscription and stressing the need to provide feedback – not least owing to the need for greater reporting of training in future in the College's Report and Financial Statements. Tailor-made governor surveys had been created to follow up on key events such as Planning Day, the Learning Walk and Upper Managers' Awayday and a revised comments sheet created to elicit a more considered response on the impact of training. This would help further to highlight effective elements of training for wider dissemination and, along with the feedback on training needs in the annual self-assessment questionnaire, help inform future training programmes. It was encouraging that SFCA had responded to previous feedback in devising some longer webinars on key topics in the year's programme.

Recommendation: That the Governing Body approve the Governance Self-assessment 2020-21 and Quality Improvement Plan 2021/22 at their next meeting (including the grading to be awarded to governance).

5. Quincentenary Committee: ToRs

Paper: Quincentenary Committee: ToRs

The Principal explained that the group was intended to be a steering body rather than Governing Body committee, comprising of both internal and wider community members, to help ensure the commemoration for and events leading up to the College's quincentenary were effective. He envisaged a two-way process, with the constituencies involved feeding back ideas whilst also encouraging participation from their various bodies. The approach was based on research with other organisations celebrating similar milestones with a proposed emphasis on tone and reach. He welcomed feedback on the proposals.

Following discussion, it was agreed that:

- There be a title change from 'committee' to e.g. 'Steering Group' to distinguish it from the governance committee hierarchy, with the College the driver and governors simply kept in touch;
- Some helpful aspirational context;
- A greater focus on the aims (rather than functions) of the committee;
- Flexibility with regard to both the Chair's tenure and membership (to be drawn from the Horsham business community, education e.g. a partner school or history expertise, Collyer's recent *alumni*, but keeping the group to a manageable number).

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

Paper: Governor T&D Programme 2021-22

The Clerk sought **feedback** on the **priorities for training** and the possible need for *a calendar of events*. She highlighted the difficulty of balancing flexibility and self-determination with effective coverage and similarly face to face versus online provision, especially with newer members. An ideal programme of induction, 6 month+ and 12-18m conversations had been evolving but thoughts on the division of responsibilities between the committee chairs, Vice Chairs and Chair and scope for greater consistency would be welcome.

All agreed the helpful impact of face to face meetings and tours with members wholly new or new to specific committees and *an early conversation, one to two meetings in*. There was scope indeed scope for *a greater sharing of responsibilities* between the Principal, Clerk and all governors with *a greater presumption, rather than the current offer, of mentors*. **(Action: Clerk to draw up proposal).**

The Principal also proposed an expansion of paragraph 3.8 d) *to refine the need for a broad level of understanding in terms of budgets, forecasts, cashflows and ESFA financial health and levers*

and a more advanced level for F&GP members in anticipating funding pressures longer term particularly in respect of capital project needs. **(Action: Clerk to refine)**

Members discussed the need for expanding ownership of the programme to all governors and the best communication of the various elements related to training. *Staged messages to reflect priorities were deemed the best approach* with the immediate needs being safeguarding, Ofsted and Planning Day attendance with scope for an overview within the Nominations Committee report to the Governing Body. **(Action: Clerk to structure communications)**

Members agreed that the Clerk *subscribe once more to the Eversheds' subscription service*, not least to provide invaluable support to the new Clerk. **(Action: Clerk)**

Finally, the Clerk drew attention to the revised link scheme which better reflected the latest Strategic Plan and the restructure of the house system with a Director of Student Engagement. She also drew attention to the discussions with the Vicar of Horsham in her *ex officio* role as a governor and the proposed flexibility, for example, with regard to membership of the Quincentenary group rather than the Q&C Committee. Members were content with both proposals.

Following discussion it was also agreed to remove the proposed strategy links and retain the key focus on governors and the student experience. This would be reviewed in the light of succession planning, the reporting review and the development of discussions on forward financial planning.

Resolved: The Committee approved the Governor Training Programme 2021-22 subject to the amendment identified and its continuing refinement as the year progressed.

7. Chair/ Vice Chair job description

Further to the summer discussion of the Committee, the Chair introduced the minor update to the Chair's job description and separate new Vice Chair job description which was for endorsement prior to Governing Body approval. In response to questions, the Clerk confirmed that the Chair or Vice Chair of the Governing Body did not necessarily need to chair a committee. The change from automatic chairing of the F&GP Committee by the Chair of the Governing Body had been changed at Collyer's to allow either the Chair or Vice Chair to lead. This was to provide greater flexibility in deploying skills effectively and to reflect the shift in emphasis reflected in the Ofsted framework to the quality of education rather than a more finance-orientated approach (with the Chair at the time moving to chair of the Quality and Curriculum Committee). Further flexibility was at the gift of the Governing Body in amending the terms of reference. Members noted too the ineligibility of the Principal, staff and student members to be Chair or Vice Chair of the Governing Body.

In response to a question on the role of the Vice Chair as an 'intermediary', the Clerk explained that she had adapted the text from other examples to be more general rather than conflict-orientated. The Chair commented that the Vice Chair might also be a useful conduit at least whilst the new Clerk settled in. He welcomed the explicit reference to ensuring the Vice Chair was sufficiently well-informed to be able to step up were the Chair indisposed.

Recommendation: That the Governing Body approve the job descriptions for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body

8. FE Workforce Governor Data Collection

The Clerk reported on the regular reports of EDI considerations in its annual review in response to the public sector duty to do so. The ESFA was however taking a closer look at both EDI and succession planning through a new survey which would be compulsory from next year covering 2021-22 but which had been completed voluntarily for 2020-21.

9. **Any other business**

10. **Meeting assessment**

The Committee welcomed the thorough discussion with a particular emphasis on the governance QIP priorities for the coming year.

11. **Date of next meeting:** Provisional Spring meeting w/c 21st March (tba) and Friday 10th June 2021 at 16.00. (following UMG Awayday)

The meeting ended at 18.03.

Chair

Date

NCW 26/11/21