

THE COLLEGE OF RICHARD COLLYER
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE
HELD ON Monday 26 February 2024 at 16.00

Present: Steve Allen, Ann Donoghue, Barbara Hobday Graham Lawrence (Chair of the Governing Body), Dan Lodge (Principal), Dr Grant Powell

In attendance: Russha Sellings (Clerk)

In the Chair: Barbara Hobday

1. Chair's Introductions and Apologies for Absence

The Chair opened the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Dom Valente. The Chair of the Governing Body agreed to follow up with him in respect of his request to the Clerk regarding Committee attendance. This was part of a wider suggestion made by the Chair of the Governing Body to increase communication with Governors through 1-2-1 contact. **(Action: Chair of GB)**

2. Declaration of Interest

The Chair referred to the Collyer Endowment Trustee vacancy and candidates presented under Item 6a(ii) one of which was the spouse of Governor Steve Allen. Steve agreed to withdraw from the meeting for the duration of this agenda item leaving the other members of the committee to discuss and agree next steps to progress the appointment of the vacancy and the associated selection process. This was to ensure that any conflict of interest was mitigated.

3. Minutes of the meetings held on 3 November 2023 and 26 January 2024

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved without amendment.

4. Matters Arising

Paper: Trustee profiles

The Chair handed over to the Clerk for an update as follows:

03-11-23

Item 5 – EGR exemption which the Committee had agreed to monitor. The Principal said that the Territorial Lead was present at the meeting to discuss the academy application with the DfE so was well aware of the progress and current timelines, however it would be sensible to revert back once the application had been presented to the Advisory Board due to funding implications. **(Action: Principal)**

Item 7a – Cyber Essentials and email accounts which the Clerk said was actioned and complete with all Governors and Co-optees confirmed as transitioned to Collyer's accounts.

Item 7d - AoC Code adoption since the last meeting. The Clerk advised that while the revised Code had been adopted by a number of colleges, it was currently considered a pilot document and therefore subject to change until finalised. There had so far been a wording amendment to one of the principles which the Clerk would share. **(Action: Clerk)**

26-01-24

Item 3ai – Governor vacancy for which the Chair had recently intervened. The Clerk would speak to the Co-optee who had made the recommendation before the Committee Chair wrote to the prospective Governor again. **(Action: Clerk)**

Governors were aware that during the transition period, the pipeline was becoming limited and the Chair of the Governing Body was concerned about succession and capacity in the intervening

period. Members discussed alternative recruitment methods before considering a paid recruitment service. This could be through approaching local business directly in terms of corporate social responsibility. Another suggestion was reaching out to parents for contacts or expressions of interest. The Principal took an action to include something in the next parents' newsletter focussing on the need for education experience and making reference to marketing and finance. **(Action: Principal)**

Item 3aii) – MAT Trustee recruitment and the profile included for information on recommendation of the Clerk. The Clerk and the Principal had met the candidate online to assess the required education experience and the Chair of the Governing Body would also meet him in person the following week.

Item 3bii) – Committee Chair succession which was an action for the Chair of the Governing Body who was pleased to confirm that he had spoken to the Governor in question regarding her future role and she had confirmed her commitment to continuing her term to the summer of 2025. In terms of succession, the current Q&C Committee Chair asked about handing over the Chair arrangements and the Clerk suggested extending the invitation to the next pre-meets. The Chair of the Governing Body would have a further conversation to confirm the outcome of the Committee's discussion. **(Action: Chair of GB/Clerk)**

Item 3cii) – Collyer Endowment Chair recorded in the minutes as Geoff Bowley. While this agreement was interim, the positive work and support including able chairing of the last meeting was noted. The Clerk advised the Mercers' Company had been in touch regarding the vacancy for a Mercer appointed Trustee, however it may be helpful for the new Trustee to transition to the Chair role over time. The Committee Chair suggested bringing forward Item 6a(ii) at this point.

[16.35 – Steve Allen departed the meeting for the duration of the discussion]

Applications had been received following the OCA notice in the spring newsletter and there was an additional application submitted separately. Members were informed that candidates who did not meet the skills requirements had not been shortlisted. Each application was considered on its merits, and as all had potential it was agreed should be interviewed by the Clerk, Principal and at least one other Trustee, although it was confirmed the recommendation would come from the Governing Body. An invitation had been made to the first candidate initially to attend the College and meet the Principal and Chair of the Governing Body. It was agreed the main interview should be online with another Trustee included and the Clerk would make the necessary arrangements. **(Action: Clerk)**

[16.49 – Steve Allen returned to the meeting]

5. Governance & Strategy

Papers: Committee merger proposal (top sheet and background documents), Governance QIP and RR

a) Academisation update

The Principal relayed the most recent developments. Work was continuing on the application following some comments from the DfE. Useful feedback had been provided by Sue Samson and the Head of Forest had been consulted. A decision from Forest was expected by the end of the month on progression of their application. Some wider discussions with possible future partners were underway and the Principal had been invited to join meetings of the new soft federation in East Horsham which included primaries. There was a discussion about possible conversion timings.

The Clerk was invited to provide an update on the work with consultants utilising TEG funding before the end of March. SLT colleagues at Forest had been involved in the relevant aspects of the projects.

b) Committee merger proposal/draft ToR

The Chair expressed thanks to the Clerk for preparing the proposal and conducting the research. The top sheet laid out the rationale and there were several benefits. It was confirmed this would

apply to current governance arrangements and the governance structure in a new MAT would need to be considered separately. Members referred to the merged Terms of Reference and the Clerk recorded comments as follows:

- Under Responsibilities, section 1 as per recent discussions, it would be pertinent to include College appointed Trustees of the Collyer Endowment
- Under Responsibilities, section 3 consistency in terminology ‘SPHs, SMT and the Clerk’
- An additional bullet to be added to this section on consulting on changes to structures or operating models relevant to SPHs and SMT.

Recommendation: The Governing Body approve the merger of Governance & Search and Remuneration Committees creating ‘Governance, Search & Remuneration’ including the new Terms of Reference.

c) Governance QIP updates

It was suggested and agreed that in response to target 3, the Q&C Committee were provided regular updates on Ofsted readiness and the action plan would added to the next agenda. **(Action: Clerk)**

d) *Governance Risk Register updates

It was noted that SFCs were depleting in number and therefore the sector was at risk as numbers continued to diminish.

It was agreed to include the issues with succession and the pressures on capacity under the cause of G.3 at the next review point. **(Action: Clerk)**

6. Governance Succession Planning

Papers: Trustee applications

This item had been covered by previous agenda items. The Clerk suggested that due to the number of changes ahead that a summary be provided in the Governing Body papers to bring everyone up to date and highlight where decisions would need to be taken at either the spring or summer meetings. **(Action: Clerk)**

a) Updates since the previous meeting

i) Governor applications

ii) Trustee applications
(Collyer Endowment)

b) Latest Governance updates for GB

7. Governor Training & Development

Papers: Updated role descriptions, wider participation report, event feedback

a) Updated Governor/Co-optee/Chair role descriptions inc Committee Chairs

The Clerk had revisited, refreshed and consolidated the role descriptions in readiness for recruitment. The Chair of the Governing Body requested the responsibilities of the Committee Chair role be documented and this was included in the Chair role descriptions. The Clerk highlighted comments and explained that aspects of the role descriptions had been updated in reference to the principles of the AoC FE Code of Good Governance at the suggestion of the Chair of the Governing Body and the DfE’s FE Governance Guide which had recently been reissued. Members discussed the time commitment of the Chair of the Governing Body which was difficult to estimate, and it was acknowledged that during the current period, the workload was significantly higher than normal owing to the College pursuing academy conversion and navigating external partnerships.

The documents would be useful for succession planning and would be included in the Governing Body papers for their next meeting. **(Action: Clerk)**

b) *Wider Participation Report

Thanks were recorded to Admin Assistant for logging all the training and attendance at other events.

c) *Planning Day and Learning Walk feedback surveys

The feedback was noted as very positive.

d) Plans for next Strategy Day

Members heard from the Principal about the proposal for a whole day onsite session for the next strategy event following agreement about aligning away days with the strategic planning cycle. This was scheduled for Friday 7 June. SMT, Directors and Governors would be invited. There would be updates and discussion on growth and the estate, people strategy and academisation. The second half of the session would allow Governors to hear from an FEA consultant and former Ofsted lead inspector on an Ofsted readiness exercise he had been engaged to undertake the previous day. The Clerk added that this could be an opportunity for Governors to consider the review within the Accountability Agreement, the deadline for which was before the Governing Body meeting in July. Members noted the event would provide a good opportunity for networking and agreed it would be helpful to have more of an idea of the structure of the day and also to consider feedback from the Strategy Morning the previous year as a guide. A draft schedule would be circulated via email *(Action: Principal/Clerk)*

8. AOB

The Clerk was requested to leave the meeting when it closed while a confidential matter was discussed.

9. Meeting Assessment

Nothing to record.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee would next meet on Friday 21 June 2024, 14.00

The meeting closed at 17.40

Chair

Date

RRS 05-03-24