



BOARD OF GOVERNORS
STRATEGY, GOVERNANCE AND SEARCH COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STRATEGY, GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE
HELD AS A ZOOM VIDEO LINK MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 13 OCTOBER 2021

		<u>Meeting Attendance</u>
PRESENT:	Tina Coates (Chair)	(1 out of 1)
	Gillian May (Group Principal & Chief Executive)	(1 out of 1)
	Tom Wainwright	(1 out of 1)
	Rob Lewis	(1 out of 1)
	Stuart Taylor	(1 out of 1)
	Angela Wellings (from 5.20pm)	(1 out of 1)
	Paul Britton	(1 out of 1)
CLERK:	Lynn Payne	(1 out of 1)

PART I

MINUTE
No

ACTION

- The meeting started at 5pm.**
- Apologies for Absence
Apologies were received from Josie Wragg.
 - Declarations of Interest
No Member declared a conflict of interest with the agenda.
 - Election of Chair & Vice Chair for 2021/22
The Clerk invited members to elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee for the next academic year. Members agreed Tina Coates as Chair and Stuart Taylor as Vice Chair.
All Members were agreed.
 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 23 June 2021
The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 June 2021, having been previously circulated to members, were agreed as an accurate record and the Chair's electronic signature would be applied.
All Members were agreed.
 - Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting held on 23 June 2021
It was noted all matters arising had been actioned.
 - Vacancies of the Corporation & Committees
Members noted the report from the Clerk. In summary, it was noted there were no vacancies on the board at this time but if the current merger with Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA) was successful, more Governors may join the board from there and the determined number of members might be increased.
Members noted the report and dates for committee and board meetings to December 2022.
 - 2020/21 Attendance Report
Members noted the excellent board and committee attendance in the last academic year. Board meetings attendance was 86% and committee meetings attendance ranged from 84% - 100%. Members agreed that the online board and committee meetings over the period of the Covid-19 pandemic had worked well in terms of attendance.

MINUTE

No

ACTION

Tom Wainwright referred to the poor attendance at meetings by student governors and it was agreed there was a need to better support and encourage them to attend meetings going forward. It was agreed there should be a space in meetings set aside for student governors to speak on matters. The Clerk advised Members she was hoping to bring forward the induction session for the three new student governors to next month to better prepare them for meetings. Rob Lewis agreed he would be happy to mentor the students before meetings.

Agenda

Governor

Stuart Taylor queried whether quality was affected by Zoom meetings, as opposed to in-person meetings, as for some members the virtual platform was not as effective. It was accepted that the online platforms worked better for some members but not for all.

The report was noted.

8. Strategic Plan & Merger Update

The Group Principal updated Members on the priorities in the Strategic Plan and current position. Members asked for a copy of the plan to be in the papers next time to enable some context to the report.

Clerk

In relation to the merger update, the Group Principal informed Members that the first JSG meeting had been set and everyone was looking forward to progressing matters as soon as possible.

The report was noted.

(Angela Wellings joined the meeting – 5.20pm)

9. Succession Planning & Skills

Members noted the updated skills chart detailing the skills of the current members of the Board. It was noted there were currently no vacancies for new members but that if the College merger proceeded as planned next year it was likely governors from the merging college would join the Board.

Members considered the data on diversity. They felt the college was under-represented in this area and discussed how it could be improved. It was suggested it might be useful to split the category of FE and HE and make FE a bigger split and include schools within that. It was also felt useful to bring in Governors with Health & Safety experience, particularly with the increase in safeguarding issues.

Members felt that targets should be set to positively recruit within BAME. Tom Wainwright felt that there was a need to understand the issues in expanding and diversifying the members on the Board with a positive encouragement to encourage those from diverse areas to come forward. Paul Britton spoke of an expert advisor in diversity, and it was agreed to contact him for a discussion on what he might be able to bring to the Board. Tina Coates asked how the management group fared under the Board and whether that data was seen.

The Group Principal would provide data on representation with the Group Director Human Resources. In addition, the National Leaders in Governance could help with some target setting in minority areas to boost those areas and this would be scheduled for the autumn 2022 term.

Members noted the report.

**Group
Principal**

10. Governance Update

Members were informed there had been no AoC Governance Briefings released since the last meeting but were advised of the letter to College Principal's from the Interim CEO of the ESFA. This referred to requirements in relation to Governance Professionals. Specifically, there was a new requirement in college funding agreements that any person who was selected by the Governing Body for appointment as the Governance Professional or Clerk must have a qualification relevant to the role or equivalent experience. It was noted there must be a report in the College annual report and accounts on activities undertaken over the year to develop the Governance professional.

The report was noted.

MINUTE

No

ACTION

11. Eversheds 17th Edition Code of Conduct
This item was presented by the Clerk. Members noted the updated Code of Conduct from Eversheds and agreed to recommend this to the Board for approval.
All Members were agreed.
12. Committee Self-Assessment & Terms of Reference
Members noted the Committee Self-Assessment and agreed to recommend this to the Board for approval.

The Terms of Reference were agreed and recommended to the Board for approval.
13. Evaluation
This was an interactive meeting where members added value in a number of the agenda items and also made appropriate challenge. Papers were considered sufficient for decision making.
14. Dates and times of Future Meetings

The next meetings were noted as being scheduled for:

Wednesday 9 February 2022
Wednesday 8 June 2022
15. Any Urgent Business
The Chair of the Board referred to the need for Governors to have a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check because of the handling of confidential data and work with young people. She suggested all Governors had a regular DBS, potentially every five years. It was agreed to recommend this to the Board in December.

Refer to Corporation

Refer to Corporation

Refer to Corporation

Refer to Corporation

The meeting ended at 6.00pm



Chair:

Date: 9 February 2022