

Minutes of the Governors' Search & Governance Committee meeting held on 12 May 2021 – conducted remotely



Present: David Brown
David Meakin
Paul Ragnall
Jim Sutcliffe
Guy Thomas
Gillian Bardin
Richard Thorley

In Attendance: Karen Buchanan
Simone Lomas
Simon Jordan
Joanne Weeks

Apologies for absence

- 1 There were no apologies noted.

Declarations of Interest

- 2 An interest was noted in relation to Agenda Item 6 by Jim Sutcliffe and David Brown.

Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 14 October 2020

- 3 The minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2020 were accepted as a true record, proposed by Paul Ragnall and seconded by Gillian Bardin.

Matters arising from the minutes

- 4 **Paragraph 7** – Simone Lomas confirmed that Louise Robinson has accepted the offer to be re-elected to the board for a further Term of Office.
- 5 **Paragraph 13** – Simone Lomas confirmed that the amendments to the Standing Orders had been made to reflect the extension to the Term of Office of the Independent Governor on the Search and Governance Committee from one to two years.
- 6 **Paragraph 14** – Simone Lomas confirmed that the process to elect the new Student Governors had taken place with successful appointments being made.

Complaints registered at Board Level

- 7 Joanne Weeks informed the Committee that there had been no formal complaints registered against the Board or Corporation between 1 May 2019 and 30 April 2020. One complaint has been made to the Governing Board in the same period, the complaint was not upheld.

- 8 Joanne updated Governors of the current position in terms of the vexatious litigant who had not paid the £2500 legal fee that he had been ordered to pay to the College following the court case. Governors were keen to follow the College process in terms of bad debtors and asked for the next stage to retrieve the money to be actioned.

Action: Simone Lomas

- 9 Governors noted the position.

Planning for the future

- 10 Simone Lomas presented the report advising that there is currently one vacancy on the Board. Governors had been sent the bibliography of a potential governor; Annette Weekes, for consideration. After a discussion and input from Governors who had previously had associations with Annette, it was agreed that Annette should be invited in to undertake an interview with the Chair, Vice Chair and Principal.

Action: Simone Lomas

- 11 Further discussions relating to the make-up of the Governing Board took place, raising the issue of inclusivity and ethnic minority representation along with an advocate of the digital agenda.

- 12 Fiona Lugiano had made a request to join the Curriculum and Standards Committee along with continuing her commitment to the Human Resources Committee. Governors were pleased to accept the request.

- 13 A discussion in relation to the appointment of a Vice Chair to the Curriculum and Standards Committee took place. Governors asked that Karen Buchanan discuss this situation with Fiona Lugiano and Louise Robinson.

Action: Karen Buchanan

- 14 Simone updated Governors on the recommendation that the Office for Students (OfS) and Code of Good Governance are placing on Governing Boards in relation to their Terms of Office; that Governors should only hold their position for two Terms of Office.

- 15 Karen Buchanan relayed the conversations she had had with principals from across the country; some operate a model that have governors who have not completed more than two Terms of Office (eg. Grimsby College - Grade 1) whilst others have practices that are similar to Burnley College (eg. Newcastle under Lyme - Grade 1). Governors were keen to understand the impact of the White Paper – Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth and requested that the outcome of the paper should be concluded before making changes to the current system. An annual paper will be presented in future September Full Board meetings.

Action: Simone Lomas

- 16 Governors wished to note their appreciation to the Staff Governors; Keeley Seamans and Humera Khan who had gone above and beyond in their role, extending their Term of Office to provide continuity during this period of challenge. Governors requested that the process to appoint two new staff Governors should be initiated.

Action: Simone Lomas

Governors Code of Conduct

- 17 Simone Lomas presented the updated Code of Conduct. The introduction had been amended to include up to date information in relation to National Awards and the developments that the College has undertaken in terms of the curriculum and the physical aspects. Governors unanimously approved the Governors Code of Conduct.

Approved by Chair, David Brown

Signed: D Brown

Date: 6 June 2021

NOTE: Final approval of the minutes will be at the following sub committee meeting.