

# MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2024 IN THE COLLEGE BUSINESS CENTRE

## **1/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2/24 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 29 NOVEMBER 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held 29 November 2023 were APPROVED as a true record.

## **3/24 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 29 NOVEMBER 2023**

The Director of Governance reported on Matters Arising. She reported that Human Resources (HR) would be contacting Governors regarding Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and Sam Brand will invite Governors to submit an expenses claim. Targeted recruitment would be paused and informed by the work of the External Governance Review Task & Finish Group. An application has been made to the Further Education (FE) Governor Recruitment Service. The target for Governor attendance would be amended for the review of the Governor Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in June 2024. Legal advice on the review of the Instruments and Articles of Government and Standing Orders has been paused and an extension of review date is recommended pending approval of the External Governance Review (EGR) recommendations.

## **4/24 MEMBERSHIP OF GOVERNING BODY, COMMITTEES, VACANCIES AND NEW APPLICATIONS**

The Director of Governance reported on membership of the Governing Body, Committees, vacancies and new applications. There are currently four external vacancies and recruitment has been ongoing. Two candidates have been interviewed since the previous report to Committee and one was considered appointable. A summary of interest in vacancies was provided. An application has been made to the FE Governor Recruitment Service.

The Director of Governance outlined vacancies to Designated Governor Leads. Following discussion the Committee requested that all current Designated Governor lead roles continue but suggested that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) role is merged with the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) role under the overarching title of Designated Lead Governor for Inclusion. A Lead Governor for Teaching and Learning was also suggested by the Committee.

The Chair expressed concern regarding the current gap in teaching and learning expertise. The Principal added that there was a gap for marketing and communications expertise.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and:

- NOTED the terms of office ending by March 2025;
- RECOMMENDED to Corporation the reappointment of Martyn Pearl for a two year term from 28 April 2024 – 27 April 2026;
- RECOMMENDED to Corporation the appointment of Ken Dueck as Vice Chair of Search & Governance Committee;
- RECOMMENDED to Corporation the proposed timetable for appointment of Corporation and Committee roles subject to the recommendations of the External Governance Review.

#### **5/24 GOVERNANCE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023/24**

The Director of Governance reported on the Governance Action Plan for 2023/24. The Committee requested that the Action Plan be amended to include numbers and an update on progress. It was also requested that the Director of Governance seek confirmation that Governors have read and understood the induction documentation. There was some discussion regarding Governor training and the importance of achieving a balance with optional and mandatory training recognising the demands on Governors' time. It was requested that the Director of Governance draw attention once more to the training platform offered by the Education and Training Foundation (ETF).

There was some discussion regarding board portals. The Chair currently uses Convene in his organisation.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and NOTED the progress in actions agreed to address areas for improvement.

#### **6/24 GOVERNANCE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2023/24**

The Director of Governance reported on the Governance Performance Indicators (PIs) for 2023/24 and progress made to date. There was some discussion regarding the red RAG (red, amber, green) rating for the target to recruit to Governor vacancies within three months. There was recognition that efforts were being made in this area. The Committee suggested that this PI may need to be reviewed.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report.

#### **7/24 GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE REGISTER 2023/24**

The Director of Governance reported on the Governance Compliance Register. DBS checks for Student Governors were in progress. The DBS check for one Governor appointed February 2024 was in progress and this Governor also needed to complete their mandatory training. Two staff members needed to complete their Declaration of Interests.

The Committee NOTED the report.

#### **8/24 EXTERNAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW (EGR)**

The Director of Governance provided a progress report on the EGR. The draft report had been received and a workshop on its recommendations was facilitated by Fiona Chalk of Governance4FE on 12 March 2024. At this meeting there was consensus around prioritising the following recommendations: to revise the governance structure to a committee structure; and to give greater clarity of the advocacy role of Governors. The Director of Governance recommended that the EGR Task and Finish Group be re-established to take forward the setting of the Action Plan and implementation.

The Chair expressed some disappointment at the facilitated session and stated that he would have preferred a longer, in-person meeting. He suggested that a further session was necessary and suggested that the first meeting of the EGR Task and Finish Group be open to all Governors. There was also some discussion regarding how many committees were proposed, and modes of meeting. It was agreed that the Chair would speak to this paper at Corporation following this meeting.

The Committee CONSIDERED the report and:

- RECOMMENDED to Corporation to APPROVE the EGR report;

- RECOMMENDED to Corporation to APPROVE the summary of review for publication;
- RECOMMENDED to Corporation to APPROVE the re-establishment of the EGR Task and Finish Group to take forward the setting of the Action Plan and implementation.

#### **9/24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs Bev Burgess shared her recent experience of attending the Support Staff Governors' Network. She reflected on the role of Staff Governors and staff voice. There was some discussion regarding whether Staff Governors should be elected. It was concluded that Staff Governors were not representing staff but provided a staff voice and perspective at the Governing Body.

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 11.00am – College Business Centre