

**VARNDEAN COLLEGE**  
**MINUTES OF**  
**THE SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD ON MONDAY 6<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2017**

Present: Randall Anderson, Phil Harland, Janice Robinson and Richard Seager

In Attendance: Louise Pennington

Apologies received: None

In the Chair: Janice Robinson

**1) Welcomes and Apologies for Absence**

As above.

**2) Declaration of Interests**

None.

**3) Minutes of Meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016**

The minutes of the meeting were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**4) Matters Arising – Action Point**

The Committee considered the various actions within Appendix 1 and apart from those items already completed, the items which were on-going were noted.

Louise Pennington agreed to revise the action points' schedule for the next meeting.

**ACTION:** Louise Pennington

**5) Corporation and Committee Membership Review**

The Committee considered and reviewed the membership and committee listings and made the following recommendations to Corporation:

**a) Terms of Office Review**

The Committee reviewed the Governor membership details, including the terms of office details, as given in the Membership schedule enclosed with the meeting papers and the following points were recorded:

- **External Governor Vacancy (Kevin Claxton retirement)** – Janice Robinson confirmed that she had met with Billy McNally (who had applied to the Parent Governor vacancy but advised that if someone else applied, he would not go forward

in the Parent Governor election process) but who remained interested in becoming a Governor at Varndean College. He is a Head Teacher of a specialist school in Broadstairs, Kent, but lives in Hove (and previously an engineer with ScotRail and has also worked abroad for various voluntary organisations). Although he usually spends three nights a week at the Special School, he indicated that he would be able to adjust his schedule to attend Governing Body meetings in most instances. The Committee discussed his application and also reviewed the skills and experience of the existing Governors. In conclusion, it was resolved to recommend to Corporation that he be appointed as a Governor for a four year term of office, with effect from the next Corporation meeting and Louise Pennington agreed to contact him to confirm his willingness for his name to be put forward. **ACTION: Janice Robinson/Louise Pennington**

- b) **Staff Governor (support category)** - Aldona Wheeler had attended the January Corporation meeting as an observer and had confirmed her interest in the Governor role. As she was the only candidate for this role, it was resolved that the Corporation should confirm her position on the Corporation at its next meeting in March, for a four year term of office. **ACTION: Janice Robinson/Louise Pennington**
- c) **Audit Committee – vacancy (Kevin Claxton retirement)** – the Committee discussed the vacancy and consulted Randall Anderson (Chair of Audit Committee) for his input. It was agreed that it would be possible for the Committee to continue with the four existing members (3 Governors and 1 co-optee member), but it was decided to recommend to Corporation that Jane Farrell be invited to join the Committee, subject to her agreement and Corporation approval. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**
- d) **End of Governor Term of office/Retirements etc:** The Committee was reminded that at the last meeting it had been resolved to recommend to Corporation that Ayas Fallon-Khan be reappointed as a Governor when his term of office ends in December 2017 and the Committee agreed that this recommendation should be made at the next Corporation meeting in March, noting also that Ayas had confirmed his willingness to continue to serve the governing body. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**
- e) **Designated Lead Safeguarding Governor:** The Committee re-visited an earlier discussion regarding this Governor role and it was resolved that in order to be independent and not be associated directly with the leadership team in terms of scrutiny and challenge, Katharine Travis should be invited to take on the role from Janice Robinson. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**

## 6) Review of Corporation Documentation

The Committee completed its annual review of the Corporation's key documents and the following changes were agreed and recommend to Corporation:

### a) Corporation Standing Orders

\* page 2 of document clause 2.1, add "in respect of Corporation meetings" at the end of sentence on attendance of the bracketed item re Clerk's attendance.

\* page 2 of document clause 2.6 delete clause "Any Associate Governor shall be entitled to attend all meetings of the Corporation", as no longer applicable.

\* page 3 item 4.3 – revise wording to reflect electronic meeting papers rather than hard copy papers being circulated to Governors.

\* page 4 of document clause 8.1, delete first part of clause “With effect from 2015/2016 academic year”....., regarding the appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

### **b) Corporation Committee Structure and Procedures (including Terms of Reference of Committees)**

page 2 of document clause 6) The Audit Committee, sub-clause (1) – add “and risk” at the end of the clause.

Page 3 of document clause 2.1 Election of Chairs of Committees – as agreed at the December Corporation meeting, the wording has been revised to reflect the fact that the Committee Chairs will be appointed by the Corporation (and wording reflecting previous procedure has been deleted, i.e. “The Committee Chairs will be elected annually at the first meeting of the Autumn Term by each Committee.....”. Each Committee terms of reference has also been revised to reflect this change.

**ACTION: Louise Pennington**

### **7) Governance Self-Assessment Action Plan - review**

The Committee reviewed the Quality Improvement Plan established in the Autumn Term and the following updates were recorded:

\* College Accommodation – The College will consider any further capital bid opportunities as they arise: The latest CIF bid application response is due on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and Philip Harland will advise Governors as soon as the College has been informed about the outcome of its application. It was also noted that the College has alternative plans available should the bid be unsuccessful, in respect of acquiring two additional mobile laboratories, subject to planning permission. **ACTION: Philip Harland**

\* Strategy – Review Strategic Planning Process etc: The Committee was reminded that the Chair and Principal has reviewed the strategic planning process and had reported this verbally at the December 2016 Corporation meeting. A further discussion will be held at the Strategic Planning Event on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017, involving Governors and Senior Staff.

\* Continuing process of ensuring adequacy of Corporation’s oversight of quality improvement: It was recorded that Governors would be brought up to date with the College’s various curriculum issues at the Strategic Planning Day on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

\* Review College Accommodation Strategy - Principal to present new Accommodation Strategy to Governors etc: It was noted that to date Governors had been presented with minor building works information at Corporation and that further updates would be made when available.

\*Corporation’s Commitment to strong leadership and management etc : Following a query from the Committee regarding the 2 member SLT (Philip Harland and Jill Arnold), Philip Harland confirmed that where occasionally neither he and Jill Arnold were on the College site, unless in an emergency situation, they would always be contactable by mobile phone.

Furthermore, there were various other senior members of staff who would be able to deal with any urgent matter e.g. curriculum issues – Peter Bailey, finance matters – Elaine French and with regard to safeguarding issues – there is a Safeguarding Team, but should there be an urgent Safeguarding matter, Jill Arnold and Philip Harland would be contactable by telephone. The Committee noted that the College’s Critical Incident Plan was due to be reviewed and brought to Audit Committee next term, and this issue would be taken into account then. **ACTION: Philip Harland/Randall Anderson**

**8) Date of Next Meeting**

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017 at 10.00 a.m.**

**9) Any Other Business**

The Committee recommended to Corporation that the Instrument and Articles should be revised to replace “nominated” with “self-nominated” in Instrument 2 Composition of the Corporation, sub-item e) regarding the election of parent governors. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

There was no other business

Chair.....

Date.....

Louise Pennington 6/03/17