

VARNDEAN COLLEGE
MINUTES OF
THE SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY 20th NOVEMBER 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 19th June 2017

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 noted those items which had been completed.

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 recorded the following:

- Forthcoming terms of office which are due to end. Further to last term's meeting and the discussions regarding Anton Pruden's retirement as a Governor in January 2018, Janice Robinson confirmed that Jane Farrell had agreed to be appointed as an external Governor in his place, once her term of office as a Parent Governor came to an end in December 2018; in the meantime there would be an External Governor vacancy until December 2018. Additionally Janice Robinson agreed to invite Jane Farrell to join the SPH Remuneration Committee in place of Anton Pruden. It was also resolved that subject to Jane Alderton's agreement, that she should be appointed as Chair of the SPH Remuneration Committee on Anton Pruden's

retirement too. It was agreed to recommend these changes to Corporation for approval at the December 2017 meeting. **ACTION: Janice Robinson** The Committee would keep under review potential successors to Anton in respect of his membership of the Finance Working Group, noting that any member of the Audit Committee would not be eligible to serve on the Finance Working Group. In this regard, Janice Robinson agreed to give this some consideration, consult certain Governors who were eligible and take this forward to Corporation for agreement, if resolved in time. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**

- In response to a query, it was agreed that the Corporation would not seek to appoint a Governor responsible for health and safety, noting that Kevin Claxton had held this position owing to interest and experience in this area.

6) Corporation Annual Reports

a) Attendance 2016-2017

The Committee noted the contents of the report in respect of Governors' attendance during 2016/2017 and that the required attendance disclosures in respect of Corporation meetings would be included in the Financial Statements. The few Governors achieving below benchmark attendance were discussed and their other non-Committee governance commitments and any other issues, were taken into account. The Committee also took into account that the exact benchmark percentage target of 70% could not be achieved based on the fact that there were six Corporation meetings per year.

b) Training 2016-2017

The training schedule was reviewed in respect of the 2016/2017 academic year and reference was also made to item 11 below.

c) Skills and Experience Audit 2016-2017

The contents of the audit record was noted by the Committee and it was agreed that when another Governor vacancy arose that someone with the "entrepreneurship" skills/experience would be a preferred requirement. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**

d) DBS Record for Existing Governors

The Committee noted the records held by the HR Department and it was agreed that an annual report to this Committee would be useful. It was resolved that any "not recorded" information in the schedule should be sought where possible, although it was noted that all DBS registration numbers had been recorded, in respect of all external Governors.

ACTION: Louise Pennington

7) Freedom of Information Review

The summary of requests made to the College over the last year was noted and compared to previous years (since 2012). It was resolved that in future only requests in respect of the previous academic year, should be reported to the Committee. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

At this point Philip Harland reported that in light of the new GDPR (EU's General Data Protection Regulation) due to be implemented next year, the College had decided to only allow staff to store up to 3 years' worth of e mails on the College systems. The Committee suggested that if SLT had not already check this action with the College's auditors, it should do so. **ACTION: Philip Harland**

The FOI Publication Scheme was reviewed and it was resolved to maintain the existing scheme on the website but noting that there may be further changes required in light of the new GDPR requirements. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

8) Confidentiality Review of Corporation and Committee Meeting Minutes and Meeting Papers

The Committee considered the Report and agreed the proposals therein regarding confidential aspects which were recommended to Corporation. It was agreed that with effect from next year, only the current academic year's report should be brought to the meeting.

ACTION: Louise Pennington

9) Self-Assessment

The Committee reviewed the various self-assessment documents and made the following comments:

a) Governance SAR

The revisions to the format of the SAR which significantly reduced the overall length of the document was welcomed by the Committee and it was resolved to recommend the SAR to Corporation for approval. It was also agreed that the SAR grade should be a grade 2 (Good) within the Ofsted criteria. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

b) Individual Governor Self-Assessment

The Committee discussed the responses given by those Governors who had participated. Regarding some of the responses, Janice Robinson agreed to follow up any issues raised or requiring further discussion (e.g. "contribute to some extent at meetings" and any Governors showing any aspiration to take on a chairing role at some point in the future etc), at her 1:1 meetings with Governors next year. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**

c) Committee Annual Assessment Summary

The comments were noted and it was agreed that no further action was necessary.

9) Governor Link Arrangements for 2017-2018

The Committee resolved to use the format introduced last year and Janice Robinson agreed to finalise a date via Janine Hatcher, after the meeting, with the intention of informing Governors prior to Corporation Meeting. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**

10) Governor Training Needs Analysis 2017/2018

The Committee welcomed the analysis prepared by Louise Pennington reflecting the feedback from Governors and also reviewed the considerations included in the meeting paper front sheet. The following actions were agreed:

- a) Training during this academic year would focus upon the most popular choices.
- b) FE Sector Update/Government Policy – Philip Harland should continue to include relevant information relating to this within his Corporation Meeting Principal's Report.
ACTION: Philip Harland
- c) The curriculum and guidance related training topics (Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), Understanding the Curriculum and Teaching Learning and Assessment Assurance should be dealt with either as pre-Corporation meeting training or included as subjects for future Mid-Term Seminars and subject to the respective SLT member's agreement, should be given by the relevant SLT member. The Committee suggested that in the first instance an overview of the College's curriculum would be useful to all Governors. **ACTION: Philip Harland/Peter Bailey**
- d) Ofsted Requirements – it was agreed that Jill Arnold's various reports and training prior to Ofsted visits had proved to be very useful in ensuring that Governors were fully informed and that this should continue once the next Ofsted visit is announced.
ACTION: Jill Arnold/SLT
- e) The various finance and audit training options listed (understanding the budget, understanding the financial forecast, understanding management accounts, understanding the funding regime, audit function – governors' responsibilities) were also discussed, noting that one Governor had already arranged a 1:1 with Elaine French (Business Director). It was suggested that subject to the agreement of Elaine French, Governors who requested training within this area, should be invited to agree a time to meet with her for a 1:1 session. **ACTION: Louise Pennington/Elaine French**
- f) Safeguarding – the on line safeguarding training course (1 hour reading through materials on line, followed by a 10 minute test and on completion resulting in a certificate being awarded), should be offered to all Governors, but particularly to those who have requested training in this area. Furthermore, along with Equality and Diversity, Governors should be reminded of the existing policies/procedures and any other relevant documentation, in place and re-circulated as necessary. The Committee was also reminded of the in-house pre-Corporation meeting Safeguarding training which was given to Governors on a regular basis. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**
- g) Use of Technology – E governance: it was resolved that for those Governors who have requested training, that a pre-governors' meeting training session could be arranged, subject to Martin Bentley's (IT Manager) availability and agreement.
ACTION: Louise Pennington
- h) The option of seeking assistance for Governors' training from S7 College was discussed, but it was thought that unless the training was on Varndean College's site, it was unlikely to be a popular option for Governors.

In conclusion, Janice Robinson agreed to update Governors on progress with the Governor training process, at the next Corporation meeting in December. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**

11) Succession Planning – the role of Governors

The Committee discussed various issues relating to the Governing Body’s role and involvement in any succession planning, including the comments made at the last Corporation meeting within Part II and Janice Robinson agreed to update Governors at the Corporation Meeting. **ACTION: Janice Robinson**

Louise Pennington agreed to investigate Governor training options regarding “safer recruitment”. **ACTION: Louise Pennington**

12) Date of Next Meeting – Monday 5th March 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

Monday 5th March 2018

13) Any Other Business

There was no other business

Chair.....

Date.....

Louise Pennington 20/11/17