



Minutes of a Search and Governance Committee Meeting held on 4th February 2019 at 12.00pm

Held in the Boardroom at City Campus

Present: Peter Brammall (Principal)
Anne Brennan (Independent Governor)
Peter Matthews (Independent Governor)
Tony Minhas (Independent Governor)
Sue Noyes (Independent Governor) (Chair)

In Attendance: Faye Grundy, Head of Governance

S12/19 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

S13/19 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

S14/19 Terms of Reference

1. The Head of Governance presented the terms of reference for the Search and Governance Committee, which had previously been approved by the Corporation at its meeting on 6th March 2018.
2. Governors requested that the Committee membership be drafted to provide further clarity as to the four independent members and the Principal.
3. It was also agreed that clauses 2.11 and 2.15 be re worded to provide clarity as to the operations of the Committee.
4. Governors resolved:-
 - i) to recommend the revised terms of reference to the Corporation for approval at its meeting on 6th March 2019 **Action: Head of Governance**

S15/19 FE Commissioner Governance Feedback

1. The Principal provided Governors with an overview of the feedback that been received verbally from the FE Commissioner's diagnostic visit and explained that verbal feedback was being provided at this point given that the College would not receive the formal written feedback for a further three to six weeks.
2. The Principal explained that there had been some recommendations received and that some of those recommendations endorses the College's existing thinking and

work which had already embarked upon, such as a Quality Unit and the appointment of the Vice-Principal Standards and Quality.

3. The Principal provided a thorough explanation of his understanding of the vote of no confidence which originated from one of the recognised Unions and was still at a rumour level. He advised that it would have been preferable to have advised Governors and the Chair of this development but that given the levels of informality and speculation around this, he had not done so. Governors agreed that they should have been informed of the issue. It was agreed that Union relationships needed to be resolved at Executive level but that Governors needed to have oversight. Governors also asked that they be informed of any other relationship management issues with third parties. **ACTION: Principal**
4. Governors questioned what had halted the College's pace of change as identified by the FE Commissioner. It was reported that the change in Vice-Principal had come at a critical point and this had led to a lack of planning and short termism. None of the feedback received was critical of the plans in place and the pace had improved since the Ofsted visit. It was noted that the plans needed to be recalibrated to focus on quality improvement but that growth should not be sacrificed.
5. Governors asked for information as to the operational effectiveness of the Senior Leadership Team and who within the team has responsibility for planning and analysing progress in the KPI and ensuring that the plans are delivering. It was confirmed that this is undertaken as a team and not one individual's responsibility and it was recognised that some plans are further evolved than others.
6. Governors expressed concern as to the College's Grade 2 ambition given that the College did not appear to be on an upward trajectory yet in terms of outcomes. Governors were positive as to the pace of change but not as to the impact that will be achieved. Additionally, Governors expressed concern that the College had been too positive about certain areas, such as Apprenticeships. Governors were advised that this area had seen some improvements and that there were still dips but the College was confident as to the plans and milestones agreed.
7. The Principal advised that the revised Ofsted framework would be a positive development for the College. The College would be driving hard for marginal increases in outcomes. The College would be undertaking thorough forecasting, striving for improving student outcomes, and equipping for the future.
8. Governors queried how the quality agenda and the pace of the change agenda would be financed. The Principal advised that the books will balance and that the focus would be on not destabilising the quality agenda despite the shortfall in student numbers. It was agreed that the modelling work be shared with the Committee. The Committee expressed concern that a £1 million shortfall raised a significant question that the College would start to chase turnover. **Action: Principal**
9. Governors resolved:-
 - i) to note the FE Commissioner feedback. **Action: Clerk to the Corporation**
 - ii) to agree that the Principal needed to develop a balanced message to deliver to staff which focused on building and consolidation on what is already in place within the College to ensure staff morale is not lost with an emphasis on the whole being greater than the sum. **Action: Principal**
 - ii) to agree that strategic plan strands to be required for all Committees. **Action: Head of Governance**

- iii) To agree that scenario planning be presented at Resources Committee and Governors to be informed of redirection of resources. **Action: VP Finance and Resources**
- iv) To agree that Governors be provided with oversight of JNC discussions. **Action: Principal**
- v) To agree that Governors be advised of any relationship management issues with any third parties. **Action: Principal**
- vi) To agree that a team development plan was required for the Senior Leadership Team. **Action: Principal**

S16/19 Senior Post Holder Review

1. The Principal presented a review of the senior post holder structure. It was noted that the Chair had not been aware that the role of Vice-Principal Finance and Resources was a senior post holder.
2. It was proposed that the role of Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality should also be a senior post holder. This would ensure that the right skills were in the right place and are responsible to the Governing Body. It was agreed that the Committee needed further advice and guidance as to what senior post holder means in practice within the sector and the duties then owed to the senior post holders by the Board.
3. After due consideration, Governors resolved:-
 - i) to agree that the role of Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality be designated as a senior post holder subject to advice received as to timing and process of the designation; **Action: Principal**

S17/19 Senior Leadership Team Permanent Appointments

1. The Special Committee received a report as to the recruitment status of the Vice-Principal Curriculum and Quality. It was agreed by Governors that the post holder be confirmed as permanent as opposed to interim subject to advice as to the process to achieve this without destabilising the position. **Action: Principal**
2. The Special Committee received details of the work undertaken by Gill Banks following her appointment in term 1. It was reported that the established view was that a Head of Quality post was required which would provide increased capacity for the quality agenda and that this role will be undertaken on an interim basis by Gill Banks. Governors queried how the VP Curriculum and Quality role would interact with the Interim Head of Quality role and line management. It was agreed that a report be provided at Remuneration Committee. **Action: Principal**
3. Governors resolved:-
 - i) to note the report provided and agree actions;

S19/19 Any Other Business

1. The Chair provided the Special Committee with an update in relation to new Governor recruitment and noted that the College needed to commence a cycle for recruitment.
2. It was reported that the College had commenced discussed with a potential candidate from Bluecoat School and an alumni of the College who was working in a digital company.
3. Governors received confirmation that the Vice-Chair had agreed to continue his term of office until the end of the calendar year to provide continuity.

S20/19 Publication of Documents

The publication of documents was approved without exception.

The Principal and Head of Governance left the room for the Independent Governors' private discussion in accordance with the Agenda.

Meeting commenced 12.00pm
Meeting closed 1.20pm

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