

MOULTON COLLEGE

SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 24th October 2019

Present: Mr C Matts (in the Chair), Mr A Clarkson, Mrs C Harris, Mr A Thomson and Mr T Neville

In attendance: Mrs G M Hulley

19/42 Apologies for absence (Agenda item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr D McVean.

19/43 Declarations of interest (Agenda item 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

19/44 Minutes of the last meeting (Agenda item 3, Paper A)

The minutes of the last meeting held on the 4th July 2019 had been circulated previously. The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

19/45 Actions from the last meeting (Agenda item 4, Paper B)

There were no actions outstanding.

19/46 Governance 2018-19 (Agenda item 5, Paper C)

The outcomes the Corporation's achievement towards its key performance indicators for 2018-19 were discussed (Appendix 1). Eighteen of the 20 indicators had been achieved. No significant problems were identified. The Committee agreed with a recommendation from the Committee self-assessment to review the KPIs by the end of December 2019 in order to ensure they remained fit for purpose. (**Action 19** – Clerk, 31st December 2019)

There had been a 100% response rate to the annual Committee self-assessment (Appendix 2). The Committee agreed that the feedback offered an honest reflection of the actions that needed further consideration specifically in relation to 3 aspects of governance: recruitment; training; and KPIs. Any planned training for governors should be effective. As corporate governance was subject to an internal audit in January 2020, the Committee agreed to a proposal that the governance self-assessment report should be completed in time for this audit. Although this would result in a slight delay to the usual timeline for the self-assessment process, any recommendations from the internal audit would provide a clear direction for any further governance actions that were required as well as an external validation (**Action 20** – Clerk, 6th January 2020). The Principal reported that a new innovation, 'Buzz the SLT' had provided a request for more opportunities to be found to meet with governors.

Resolved:

- The report on Governance KPIs 2018-19 was received.
- All committees should re-complete the self-assessment in order to measure 'distance travelled'.
- The report on the Search and Governance Committee self-assessment was received.

19/47

Governance 2019-20 (Agenda item 6, Paper D)

Overall attendance at all meetings during 2018-19 was 85% (87%) which was above the sector benchmark. The current spreadsheet (Appendix 1) also reported on attendance at Board meetings (85%) and Committee meetings (86%). Based on a survey of 115 other colleges who had recently shared their 2018-19 data, the mean average attendance rate for overall attendance was 81.47%. One of the 3 governors with attendance of less than 75% had left the Board and the remaining two had mitigating circumstances.

The report (Appendix 2) outlined the latest situation in relation to actions that had been taken to date in relation to governor recruitment. The recent FE Commissioner stock-take report had highlighted 3 priority areas for recruitment: higher education, further education and quality; and human resources.

The Clerk reported that:

- Two education and quality specialists had been identified and letters sent to them inviting them to an interview. The Clerk would follow up both invitations via telephone (**Action 21** – Clerk, 31st October 2019).
- The current vacancy for a business support and commercial (staff governor) vacancy had been advertised with a closing date of 30th October 2019.
- A potential individual from the University of Northampton had registered an interest in becoming a co-opted member of a Committee. Details would be sent to the Clerk who in turn would make contact.
- Two other individuals had been identified with a background in HR. Details would be sent to the Clerk who in turn would make contact.
- Two individuals who had registered an interest in becoming governors had been invited to interview but had since confirmed they no longer wished to be considered. One was a qualified accountant and the other had a background in equality, diversity and inclusion.

In a wider discussion around other prospective candidates from existing professional networks that could be contacted, a further 4 individuals were identified. The Committee also recommended the potential to recruit from College alumni. The Clerk would write to each individual (**Action 22** – Clerk, 31st October 2019). It was also agreed that the Clerk should contact Landex and the Association of Colleges to explore any potential recruitment opportunities (**Action 23** – Clerk, 31st October 2019).

Resolved:

- The report on Governance attendance 2018-19 was received.
- The reports on Governor recruitment and allocations to committees 2019-20 were received.

19/48

Governor Professional Development (Agenda item 7, Paper E)

The Governor Professional Development Plan (PDP) 2019-20 was considered. The report (Appendix 1) reflected development activity that: was required for new governors; responded to feedback from external agencies; was based on specific requests from governors; and, would help to further develop the skills and expertise of those involved in the activities. Members

asked that regional employer representative bodies should be contacted to find out if any part of their PDP offer would be relevant to governors. (**Action 24** – Clerk, 31st October 2019. A copy of the Governor PDP should be circulated to all governors (**Action 25** – Clerk, 31st October 2019).

The dates of the Governor Development days had been changed to 31st January 2020 and 30th April 2020 to enable attendance by all governors. There was also Governor training day planned for the 28th November 2019. This event was planned to respond to a number of priorities in relation to analysis of datasets and KPIs; triangulation of evidence through governor learning walks; and, developing an in-depth understanding of 3 school areas. There would also be an opportunity to start an initial review the College Strategic Plan 2016-21. A copy of the programme should be sent to governors and the ESFA (**Action 26** – Clerk, 31st October 2019).

Resolved:

- The report on Governance attendance 2018-19 was received.
- The reports on Governor recruitment and allocations to committees 2019-20 were received.

19/49

Any other business (Agenda item 8, Paper F – Tabled)

In his absence, the Chair of Corporation had circulated a paper for consideration. It was agreed that:

- a. **Overall governance:** Work would continue to ensure that the Corporation meetings focused on key priorities with Committees scrutinising detailed reports produced by the College Executive. The Committee Chair's report would provide details of any decisions taken at the Committee meeting or any recommendations requiring ratification by the Corporation. A copy of the Chair's report would be circulated to all governors (**Action 27** – Clerk, post-Corporation meetings).
- b. **Governor data-book:** Work had already commenced on a review of risk management which would be considered at the next Audit Committee (Chief Finance Officer, 18th November 2019) and KPIs. Both elements would form the basis of a governor data-book together with any action plans. The data-book would reduce the need for the production of long papers at each Corporation meeting as well as allowing more time to interrogate risks around the delivery of KPIs. Final agreement about the essential elements of the data-book would be agreed at the next Search and Governance Committee (**Action 28** - Committee, 19th December 2019).
- c. **Corporation agenda:** Future agendas would be revised so that there was a section at the end of Part 1 for confidential items only. Elected staff and student members of the Board would withdraw before the start of the discussion around these confidential items. The standing orders would be amended to reflect the agreed changes. (**Action 29** – Clerk, 19th December 2019).
- d. **KPIs:** The Search and Governance Committee agreed with the proposal that the November Corporation meeting should continue to focus on the disposal of non-strategic assets and the College's financial position. This would enable the Corporation to determine whether the College was a going concern and that student numbers and finances for 2020-21 provided a sufficient safety gap from insolvency. (**Action 30** – Clerk, 28th November 2019).

19/50

Date of next meeting (Agenda item 9)

Thursday, 19th December 2019 at 8.30 am in Creaton at the management centre.