

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 02 June 2015

Membership: *M Prodger (Chair)
*M Coleman
*R Locke
*K Spencer

** denotes present*

In attendance: D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation
R Lucas, Deputy Clerk to the Corporation

564 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

565 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

566 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Search and Governance meeting held on 03 February 2015 were agreed and approved as an accurate record.

567 Matters arising from the minutes

567.1 Membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation (minute 556 refers)

D Sheridan reported that she had been in contact with B Spencer who is considering standing for re-appointment.

568 Membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation

The Search and Governance Committee considered the register of membership and the governor attendance figures for 2014 – 2015, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

Governors discussed how to fill the vacancy on the Board. The potential governor with links to the New Engineering Foundation has informed the Clerk that this is a role she is unable to take on at present. A local engineering employer, a contact from the STEM strategy event and a local headteacher were discussed by Governors and the Committee agreed for the Principal and the Clerk to further explore these options.

The Committee noted that M Thorne and C Christofides' terms of office expire in December 2015 and, having agreed their skills, commitment and values are acknowledged by the Board, agreed for the Clerk to approach them to see if they are willing to be reappointed.

The attendance figures for 2014 – 2015 were discussed and noted by the Committee.

The Search and Governance Committee noted the paper.

569 Quality Improvement Plan for Governance 2014-2015

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for Governance 2014-2015, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

Governors noted that this is the first update of the QIP. The following four areas for development were discussed and progress agreed:

1. *Corporation members should not be satisfied with quorate attendance at Corporation meetings but achieve more challenging attendance targets.*

There has been an improvement in attendance at meetings and the attendance figures will be attached to the Search and Governance Committee minutes that are presented at the Corporation meeting.

2. *Governors wish to develop more ways to understand the views of its learners and maintain interaction with student body.*

The academy walks are going well and the Committee agreed that a summary report of the visits would be beneficial. R Lucas will produce this. The visits will be reported in the self-assessment report.

Work experience and e-learning across the College will also be focused on in governor visits next academic year.

3. *Governors recognise the need to be familiar and informed of all aspects of the Ofsted inspection procedure.*

Governors will receive the new Ofsted handbook once it has been published and governor training will be offered.

4. *Governors recognise the need to be informed of the implementation of the Strategic Plan.*

A strategic planning event has been held and the College is on target with the actions within the plan.

The Committee agreed that the issues identified in the FE Commissioner's Letter should also be included and monitored.

The Search and Governance Committee noted the Quality Improvement Plan for 2014-2015.

570 Foundation Code of Governance

The Search and Governance Committee received the report on the Foundation

Code of Governance, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

Governors noted that this is the third time that the Corporation has reported on performance against and compliance with the Foundation Code of Governance and that there is a requirement to report compliance against the Code annually.

The Search and Governance Committee approved the statement of compliance with the Foundation Code of Governance and recommended that it is presented at the Corporation meeting on 2 July 2015 for approval and inclusion in the Financial Statements 2014/15.

571 English Colleges' Code of Good Governance

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the report on the English Colleges' Code of Good Governance, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

A general discussion was held around the Code and Governors noted the following:

- The funding bodies expect colleges to have a statement of corporate governance.
- The Corporation submitted a response to the consultation on the Code of Good Governance.
- The Code was greatly modified following the consultation.
- The Corporation would be required to report against the Code on a 'comply or explain' basis.
- The College is already following good practice identified in the Code.
- It was agreed that the business plan and strategic plan should be reviewed to identify what practice already exists, aligned to the Code.
- The top ten principles detailed in the Code are the critical areas.
- There is a recommendation to produce an annual report to be shared with stakeholders and the wider community that could be used as a marketing tool.
- Partnerships and the shared services agreements with the UTC will need to be considered carefully.
- Some elements will need to be built into the College's business programme.

The Search and Governance Committee agreed to recommend the adoption of the English Colleges' Code of Good Governance to the Corporation meeting on 2 July 2015.

572 Standing Orders of the Corporation for 2015/16

572.1 To consider and approve the Standing Orders for Harlow College Further Education Corporation for use in 2015/16

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the Standing Orders for Harlow College Further Education Corporation for use in 2015/16, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

A discussion was held around the Standing Orders and it was agreed that two governors on the Health and Safety Committee would be advantageous.

The Search and Governance Committee approved the Standing Orders for Harlow College Further Education Corporation and recommended their adoption by the Corporation for 2015/16.

572.2 To consider and approve the Terms of Reference for the Search and Governance Committee for 2015/16.

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the Terms of Reference for the Search and Governance Committee for 2015/16, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

Under membership, Governors requested the wording be changed to “**up to three other members**”.

A non-delegated (advisory) power be added in concerning the English Colleges' Code of Good Governance.

Reference to the pair scheme should be replaced with “learning walks”.

The Search and Governance Committee approved the Terms of Reference for the Search and Governance Committee for 2015/16, subject to the three amendments listed above.

573 Self-Assessment of the Corporation

The Search and Governance Committee discussed proposals for the self-assessment of the Corporation for 2014/15.

A detailed discussion was held around how to undertake the self-assessment of the Corporation and how to undertaken individual self-assessment.

Governors agreed that the self-assessment process should comprise of the following:

- Individual self-assessment, using a pro-forma with tick boxes.
- The FE Commissioner's list of twenty warning signs for colleges and the College's response to these.
- Information and common themes gathered from the learning walks.

The Search and Governance Committee agreed that these three elements should be brought together into one self-assessment report, which would need to be compiled and completed in time for the self-assessment event in October 2015.

574 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

575 Dates of future meetings

The proposed dates of meetings for 2015/16 will be circulated by the Clerk / Deputy Clerk.