

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

SEARCH & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 06 October 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

576 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

577 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

578 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Search and Governance meeting held on 02 June 2015 were agreed and approved as an accurate record.

579 Matters arising from the minutes

579.1 To consider and approve the Standing Orders for Harlow College Further Education Corporation for use in 2015/16 (minute 572.1 refers)

The Search and Governance Committee agreed that it would still be advantageous to have a second governor on the Health and Safety Committee and this could perhaps be undertaken by a student governor.

580 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 were informed that Mrs D Palmer had resigned as a governor of Harlow College Further Education Corporation due to work commitments. Governors wished to thank Mrs Palmer for her contribution to the Corporation.

M Prodger, K Spencer and D Sheridan have met with a potential new governor, who is a director of a local light engineering company. He is involved in the employer advisory board for the Advanced Manufacturing Centre and is highly experienced in apprenticeships. M Prodger proposed to recommend his appointment to the Corporation and this was endorsed by the other members of the Search and Governance Committee.

The Committee noted that Mr Thorne and Mr Christofides' terms of office expire in December 2015. Having agreed their skills, commitment and values are acknowledged by the Board, it was agreed for the Clerk to approach Mr Thorne to see if he would be willing to continue as a governor until his retirement at Easter 2016 and to approach Mr Christofides to see if he is willing to be reappointed.

The attendance figures for 2014 – 2015 were discussed and noted by the Committee and governors noted that attendance at Corporation meetings had improved however there had been a slight decline in attendance at Committee meetings.

The Search and Governance Committee noted the paper.

581 Governor Training and Development

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the report of Governor Training and Development, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation and R Lucas, Deputy Clerk to the Corporation.

R Lucas gave an overview of the academy walk-throughs during 2014-2015 and governors that seventeen walk-throughs had taken place by thirteen governors. Governors noted the feedback in the report, highlighting what the College is doing well and issues that were raised.

K Spencer provided the Committee with an update on the following issues which were identified:

- IT - The College has since upgraded its Wi-Fi and all 16-18 learners are receiving an iPad to enhance their learning experience. The College is investing less money in the iPad than it has invested in previous years in its IT hardware. There are still some issues with fixed technology however, the College is trying to move away from this type of technology where possible.
- English and Maths - The main issue around English and Maths was the students' and parents' understanding of the requirement to study English and Maths. The I-Zone has now become a focal area for English and Maths. There was a big challenge last year to organise the classes, however this has been addressed this year.
- Football Academy – there is no funding for the Football Academy and, as the Sport team has changed, there was an identified wish to deliver different courses. Football, along with a number of other sports, is offered as an enrichment activity to all College students.

Governors reported that they felt the scheme had worked well and their learning walk-throughs had been a positive experience.

The Search and Governance Committee agreed to continue with the scheme for 2015-2016 and continue with existing team pairings where possible. Governors expressed their wish to start the walks as soon as possible.

Other training being planned for governors include an Ofsted twilight session, PREVENT training and ACER Governor Induction training session, hosted by the College, in February 2016.

K Spencer informed the Committee that former student governor, Nishall Garala, has won one of the top three prizes in the Association of Colleges' Student of the Year competition. The overall winner will be announced at the AoC conference in November 2015.

The Search and Governance Committee noted the report on Governor Training and Development.

582 Quality Improvement Plan for Governance

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 second 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.*

Attendance at Corporation meetings has improved, however attendance at Committee meetings has dipped slightly. Attendance will continue to be closely monitored by the Search and Governance Committee.

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

The academy walks-throughs went well and have been a positive experience for governors.

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

A new Common Inspection Framework was introduced in September 2015 and governors will receive training on this.

- 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 was further briefed on this at the Corporation meeting on 2 July 2015.

The Committee agreed that the Government's agenda for further education should be added into the QIP and noted that a new QIP will be derived following on from the self-assessment of the Corporation (see agenda item 583).

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

583 Self-Assessment of the Year 2014-2015

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the report on Self-Assessment of the Year 2014-2015, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the

Corporation.

Governors were presented with a proposed self-assessment questionnaire and noted that some of the issues raised in the FE Commissioner's report have been added into the questionnaire along with some of the common themes from the academy walk-throughs.

The Committee requested that some questions on the national strategic situation for further education colleges be included at the start of the questionnaire and that in question 4 the word "right" be replaced with the word "searching". A detailed discussion was held around how to undertake the self-assessment of the Corporation and how to undertaken individual self-assessment.

The Search and Governance Committee approved the self-assessment questionnaire subject to the amendments above and agreed to use Survey Monkey to complete the questionnaire, with paper copies also available for governors to complete.

584 Whistleblowing Policy

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the Whistleblowing Policy, presented by D Sheridan, Clerk to the Corporation.

Governors were informed that the College is required by law to have a Whistleblowing Policy and that the AoC model policy has been used and adapted for use by Harlow College. The AoC, in developing the model policy, has had discussions nationally with the trade unions. Governors noted that once the policy is approved, it is placed in the staff directory on the intranet and all staff are alerted when new versions of any policy has been uploaded.

Following on from a discussion around the Policy, the Search and Governance Committee approved the Whistleblowing Policy.

585 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

586 Dates of future meetings

Autumn Term	Tuesday 26 November 2015	8.30am
Spring Term	Tuesday 02 February 2016	8.30am
Summer Term	Tuesday 14 June 2016	8.30am