

HARLOW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on MS Teams at 2pm on Thursday 13 February 2025

Membership *Ray Levy
 *Lily Lin (Chair)
 *Karen Spencer

*denotes present

In attendance Paul Whitehead, Vice-Principal
 Deanne Morgan, Executive Director – Finance
 Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance

1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 26 November 2024 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes (not mentioned elsewhere on the agenda)

4.1 Register of Membership (minute 5 refers)

The Search and Governance Committee noted that Vic Goddard was appointed as the lead governor for safeguarding and SEND at the Corporation meeting held on 19 December 2024.

5 Register of Membership

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6 Membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the Register of Membership and update on the membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

The Search and Governance Committee received the biography of Ian Tompkins from the Integrated Care Board. The Head of Governance reported that a meeting had been held with Ian Tompkins, the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee and the Principal. The Search and Governance Committee considered Ian's appointment to the Corporation and agreed that his expertise and background links into one of the College's key strategic development areas – healthcare – and meets one of the recommendations in the External Governance Review undertaken in Spring 2024. The Search and

Governance Committee unanimously agreed to recommend Ian's appointment to the Corporation for ratification on 26 March 2025 and agreed to recommend that he becomes a member of the Audit Committee and the Search and Governance Committee.

The Search and Governance Committee noted that Paul Taylor's term of office expires on 4 April 2025. The Search and Governance Committee discussed the value and expertise that Paul Taylor brings to the Corporation and unanimously agreed to recommend his reappointment to the Corporation at its meeting on 26 March 2025.

The Search and Governance Committee noted that Julia Filary's term of office expires on 7 July 2025 and asked the Head of Governance to approach Julia to see if she would consider being reappointed. The Committee noted the expertise Julia has brought to the Corporation and agreed that they would like to reappoint Julia as a Governor.

The Committee noted that there is currently one vacancy and initial discussions were held by the Committee on targeting someone in the construction or aviation sector in line with the recommendation in the External Governance Review.

Deanne Morgan highlighted the need to look at the male and female balance on the Corporation. The Head of Governance reported that the Committee takes equality and diversity factors into consideration when looking to recruit new governors however the gender balance is something to be continually mindful of.

The Search and Governance Committee noted that Michael Travers' term of office as a staff governor expires on 20 March 2025 and that a staff governor election would take place after February half term.

The Search and Governance Committee noted the Register of Membership and update on the membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation, and recommended the following to the Corporation for approval at its meeting on 26 March 2025:

- The appointment of Ian Tompkins as a Governor of Harlow College Further Education Corporation for a period of four years and for him to sit on the Audit Committee and the Search and Governance Committee.
- The reappointment of Paul Taylor as a Governor of Harlow College Further Education Corporation for a period of four years.

7 Governance KPIs and Improvement Plan 2024 – 2025

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the report on Governance KPIs 2024 – 2025 and Improvement Plan, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Ruth Lucas provided the Committee with progress to date on the KPIs and the Improvement Plan, which has been developed from the External Governance Review and the mapping of compliance against the AoC's Further Education Code of Good Governance.

A discussion was held around the KPIs and the actions in the Improvement Plan. The Committee agreed that KPI 6 should be RAG rated green and not amber.

A detailed discussion was held around Section 9 – Board Questions in the Improvement Plan. It was agreed that Governors provide the right mix of support and challenge and that diversity of experience on the Board will determine areas in which Governors feel more confident in challenging. Meetings are strong and Governors participate well. The Search and Governance Committee, having reviewed the feedback and how meetings operate, agreed that this action should be closed off.

The Search and Governance Committee noted and approved the Governance KPIs 2024 – 2025 and Improvement Plan, subject to the amendments above.

8 Annual Report of the Further Education Commissioner 2023 – 2024

The Search and Governance Committee received and considered the Annual Report of the Further Education Commissioner 2023 – 2024, presented by Ruth Lucas, Head of Governance.

Karen Spencer reported that the College's Annual Strategic Conversation with the ESFA and FE Commissioner's Office took place on 12 February 2025 and was attended by the Chair of the Corporation and the Chair of the Audit Committee. The main focus of the meeting was the College's strategy and funding. The FE Commissioner's Office highlighted the range of support the FE Commissioner's Team can offer as detailed in the Annual Report of the Further Education Commissioner 2023 – 2024. The Committee agreed that a review of the offer should be undertaken to determine if there is any value to the College in accessing the support on offer. It was agreed that this will be a discussion item at the next Search and Governance Committee meeting.

Karen Spencer reported that the College has attended a number of the FE Commissioner's Just One More Thing events which have been beneficial.

The Search and Governance Committee noted the Annual Report of the Further Education Commissioner 2023 – 2024.

9 Any Other Business

There were no items of any other business.

10 Dates of Next Meetings

Summer Term 2025	Wednesday 07 May 2025	1.30pm
	Monday 23 June 2025	10am

Key Points From The Meeting For Corporation:

- 1. Membership of Harlow College Further Education Corporation**
To ratify the recommendations of the Search and Governance Committee.
- 2. Annual Report of the Further Education Commissioner 2023 – 2024**
To receive and note the Annual Report of the Further Education Commissioner 2023 – 2024.