

Meeting of the Governance and Search Committee

Venue: Conference Room 1, South Tyneside College

Date: Wednesday 4 November 2015

Time: 4.00pm – 6.00pm

Present: Peter Davidson
Malcolm Grady
Les Watson (in the Chair)
Lindsey Whiterod

In Attendance: Neil Longstaff – Clerk to the Board

ITEM NO.	ISSUES	ACTION
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>The Committee approved an apology for absence received from Mark Overton after having considered the reasons for his absence.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Members were reminded to declare any conflict of interest as they arose on the agenda.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of Previous Meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2015 were approved and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Matters arising</p> <p>3.1 <u>Any other business</u></p> <p>The Chair informed governors that as he was already Chair of a committee of the Board he felt that he should step aside and offer the position of Chair to another governor. The Vice-Chair had been approached and indicated that he would be willing to take on this role.</p> <p>Resolved: That the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair be an item on the agenda of the next meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>3.2 <u>Review of Governance Structure</u></p> <p>It was confirmed that the following documents had been presented to the Board and were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Composition and Membership • Terms of Reference • Schedule of Meetings 2015-16 • Business Planner 2015-16 	NL

It was noted that GC had been asked about his views as to where he thought his skills would give most value to the College, Audit or F&R and he had decided to serve on the F&R Committee.

3.3 Governance QIP and new Code of Good Governance for English Colleges

The Clerk confirmed that the new Code of Good Governance was circulated to governors well in advance of the Board meeting and then approved at the Board on 8 July 2015.

It was commented that governance of the College had been rated good at the last inspection but was even better now.

3.4 Members Attendance

Monitoring was being undertaken as previously indicated and the Attendance Policy had been amended as requested and approved by the Board.

3.5 Annual Review of Code of Conduct & Standing Orders

It was confirmed that the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders had been approved by the Board.

3.6 Ofsted Inspection/FE Commissioners Judgements (overview)

It was reported that the areas of governance that might require further improvement where to be covered as part of the governance position paper.

It was felt that only a governance papers falling within the scope of Ofsted should require an estimated grade in line with the Ofsted framework.

Resolved: That the above mentioned requirement are agreed.

3.7 Training

The Development Event took place as planned and included Prevent training.

The Clerk reported that several governors had yet to complete the online training modules.

Resolved: That the Clerk is to contact governors to ask them to complete their online training by the end of November 2015.

3.8 Review of Chair of Board's performance

The Clerk informed the Committee that the Chair's Performance survey had been issued, as requested, and considered by governors.

3.9 Access to Governors' Meetings and Publication of Minutes and Papers of the Board and Committees Policy

The Access to Governors' Meetings and Publication of Minutes and Papers of the Board and Committees Policy had been approved by the Board and posted to the website.

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	<p>3.10 <u>Succession Planning – consideration of re-appointments</u></p> <p>Governors were informed that proposed reappointments had been agreed by the Board and all records had been updated.</p>	
4.	<p>Committee Workplan 2015-16</p> <p>The Clerk presented the Workplan 2015/16 as approved by the Board, which took into account changes made at the previous Committee meeting.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Workplan 2015/16, as presented, is received.</p>	
5.	<p>Review of Committee Performance against Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Clerk reported on the outcome of the self-assessment survey that had been circulated for members to complete. It was noted that there had been a 100% return.</p> <p>Members considered how best to use these responses and in particular, address any issues that had been highlighted.</p> <p>Questions where a score of ‘Partially effective’ were discussed and the Clerk responded to questions from governors. It was confirmed that the self-assessment process had been extended beyond the Board and its statutory committees and also included members of SEG, where appropriate.</p> <p>Governors were pleased to read that there were no areas identified as being ineffective.</p> <p>Resolved: That the committee agree to receive the informative report.</p>	
6.	<p>Succession Planning – Consideration of Re-appointments</p> <p>Confidential item.</p>	
7.	<p>Governance position paper</p> <p>The Clerk introduced the report explaining that the governance position paper was based on a self-assessment and it was being presented to seek the views of the Committee on the comments and judgements made.</p> <p>In summary the key points were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft position paper was produced in preparation for an Ofsted Inspection and took into account previous requests/comments by the Board and G&S Committee Members. • Each section of the position paper had been graded similar to Ofsted categories. • A review of recent Ofsted Inspection reports and the FE Commissioners judgements, identified areas of governance that might require further improvement; these were detailed within the updated Action Plan. • An initial overall judgement of ‘Good’ has been made for the governance of the College. • The College’s self-assessment programme received the highest grading by Auditors (Good). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the past 6 years the College’s financial health has been graded "Outstanding" from the SFA <p>Q. Why not outstanding? LW explained that as the College overall would not yet be graded as outstanding the governance element could not achieve this rating (limiting factor).</p> <p>Governors discussed a proposal to create link governors, have governor representation at the Learner Forums and governor participation in observations of teaching and learning and college wide self-assessment activities.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>i. That the position paper is agreed and that it be presented to the Board for information.</p> <p>ii. That the Governor Training Action Plan is to be added as an appendix to the paper.</p> <p>iii. That the Committee agree to create Link Governors in the following areas and that nominations be sought from the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes for Learning Personal Behaviour and Welfare Teaching and Learning Leadership and Management <p>iv. That the Quality Committees be asked to nominate a governor from their committee to participate in Learner Forums and provide feedback to the Quality Committees.</p> <p>v. That the Link Governors are to fulfil the roles of participating in observations of teaching and learning and college wide self-assessment activities.</p>	<p>NL</p> <p>NL</p> <p>NL</p> <p>NL</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Foundation Code of Governance</p> <p>The Clerk updated governors on the progress made with the draft Action Plan to address areas of non-compliance and that this was to be presented to the next meeting.</p> <p>Resolved: That the progress on the Action Plan is received and noted.</p>	<p>NL</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Members attendance 2014/15</p> <p>The Clerk presented a report on governors attendance at meetings of the Board and its committees covering 2014/15.</p> <p>Individual targets were also identified in the report.</p> <p>It was reported that a survey was undertaken through the Clerks Network to determine governors' attendance rates for 2014/2015. The results were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of colleges responded – 130 (previous years 103 and 113) Average attendance – 79.52% (79.78 and 79.54) 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual college attendance rates ranging from 63% to 92% (65.14 to 93.75 and 67 to 91) <p>Note: (2013/14 and 2012/2013 figures shown in brackets)</p> <p>It was reported that at South Tyneside College average attendance was 82.6% (84.66% and 82.2%).</p> <p>Members' attention was drawn to those attendances falling below the target levels.</p> <p>Members felt that overall attendance was good and acknowledged that any issues would be raised by the Chair of the Board at the 1-1 interviews. Governors were made aware that Des Young had indicated that the level of time and commitment for college activities was not sustainable with his employment. Therefore he was likely to focus on Board meetings and withdraw from committees. This matter was to be explored further with the Chair of the Board as part of the 1-1 meeting.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>i. That the report is received and agreed.</p> <p>ii. That the committee support the decision of Des Young.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Training</p> <p>This report aimed to inform governors of the Training Plan 2015/16 and training opportunities for the members of the Board.</p> <p>The Clerk sought governor views on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The draft Training Plan 2015/16. The revised Induction Programme. Training opportunities available through a ranges of sources Whether they wished to seek further support from a National Leader of FE College Governance (NLG) or National Subject Specialist (NSS). <p>Feedback from those governors attending the new induction session was excellent. The Clerk reported that the induction session for new governors had since been revised to include Prevent training.</p> <p>Governors stated that the weekly circulation of the AoC's Chief Executive letter was very informative.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <p>i. That the report is accepted and governors acknowledge the range of training opportunities available.</p> <p>ii. That the Training Plan 2015/16 is agreed and that future requests for training by members of the Board are to be considered and agreed by the Chair of G&S in consultation with the Clerk.</p> <p>iii. That the revised Induction Programme for new Governors is approved.</p>	

11.	<p>Audit report: Corporate Governance</p> <p>The members of the committee were informed that the Internal Audit Report - Corporate Governance was being presented on the recommendation of Audit Committee for information.</p> <p>The Clerk indicated that the Audit Committee were of the view that it was important that there was a link between audit and other committees of the Board and that members were aware of the recommendations by auditors and the proposed action to address them.</p> <p>From the work performed on Corporate Governance, auditors considered the system of internal control to be 'Good' (highest rating).</p> <p>Governors were informed that auditors had been impressed with the work undertaken which they felt clearly demonstrated that governors took their role seriously.</p> <p>Resolved: That members accept the report.</p>	
12.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p>	
13.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next Committee meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 27 January 2016 at 4.00pm.</p>	
14.	<p>Identification of Confidential Items</p> <p>Resolved: That Item 6 – Succession Planning is to remain confidential.</p>	

Signed:

Date: