

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2011 AT 5.30pm**

PRESENT:

Carol Parkinson – Chair
David Nelson
Geoff Hall

IN ATTENDANCE:

Claire Kay – Clerk to the Corporation

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

The Clerk reported that Delroy Brown had attended for the meeting but was unable to access the building at 5.20pm whilst the other members had been engaged in an interview and had returned home.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no personal interests in the agenda items.

3. **MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2010 were approved and signed.

4. **MATTERS ARISING**

Item 5: The Clerk had not been directed to any Asian business groups through contact with GOEM or EMDA only Business Champions. Members suggested making contact with “Nottingham Equal” a group promoting BME representation locally. The Clerk had also established a link to a disability group. It was agreed that neither contact should be made currently as there were no vacancies but should be contacted as vacancies occur.

5. **DIVERSITY PROFILE**

The report outlined the skills, ethnicity, age, gender and disability profile of governors for 2010/11.

Members noted the improvement in the skills mix following the new appointments for 2010/11 and the increase in strategic skills. Members discussed the skills sets monitored through the skills audit and agreed that “strategic thinkers” with business skills would be important for the board moving forward. Although the Committee did not see a need to review the skills sets specifically, future recommendations on appointments should focus on strategic skills.

Members noted the gender, ethnicity and age profile. The additional benchmark data provided in the report was found to be helpful as a comparative source.

Members noted the report.

6. **ATTENDANCE STATISTICS**

Members received a report on the year to date attendance statistics which demonstrated a good improvement in overall Corporation attendance following the move to monthly meetings. Members continued to send apologies with reasons when they were unable to attend. It was noted by the Committee that Ofsted considered 75% attendance at corporation meetings to be satisfactory, the Corporation had moved from 75% for 2009/10 to 84% in the current year.

Members considered there was no requirement for further action to be taken in accordance with the guidance on attendance, and noted the report.

7. **RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS**

Composition

The Committee discussed the composition of the governing body given the new governance structure and the emerging FE climate and considered how the board composition would best serve the learners of Nottingham. They concluded that retaining an open and transparent recruitment process which did not specify stakeholder groups other than those required under the Instrument and Articles of Government, would ensure an independent Corporation working in the best interests of the College.

Members agreed that a reduced number of members would be beneficial considering a Board of 17 members to be too large. Members discussed the impact of reducing the overall composition in relation to managing the diversity profile and quoracy of meetings. It was concluded a recommendation would be put to the Board to manage a process of reducing the overall composition to 15 through natural wastage, recognising this may require retaining a higher number of members to ensure the diversity profile was not negatively affected.

The Committee passed the following resolution:

The Committee recommend the management of the composition of the Corporation to 15 members, taking into account the comments noted above.

Recruitment Activity

The Committee discussed the activity undertaken since the last meeting and reviewed the succession schedule noting the possibility of future vacancies. Members consider the 8 "live" applications for the position of governor and specific actions were noted in a confidential minute. In conclusion the Committee considered it was not appropriate to retain applicants given there were no vacancies currently and that the recommendation to the Board was to reduce the overall number of governors.

8. **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

Members reviewed the paper presented on the progress of the new governance structure. Members agreed that the contribution of governors had improved, helped by the regularity of meetings but also the focus and input from governors themselves. The feedback from meetings so far was noted and the work to be developed in support of the effectiveness of governance.

Members considered the development of a clear scheme of delegation was very important for the organisation especially with an incoming new Principal. The development of this would be led by the Clerk in association with the management team, it was agreed that a report on progress would be returned to the May meeting.

The Committee agreed that a definitive timeline was needed for the outline strategic objectives/ strategic plan to return to Board. Noting that all the information on government policy into the future would not be available until March, it was suggested May might be realistic but would be kept under review.

Members considered that the impact of discussions on learners and the Learner Voice was not strong enough at Corporation and targets on destinations were necessary. These would be followed up with the Executive Team.

Members considered that papers were more manageable and agreed with the feedback from Corporation meetings that there were too many items for noting, the Clerk would work with the Executive Team to differentiate between information papers and reporting to demonstrate the Board are undertaking their responsibilities.

A further progress report on the governance structure would be considered in May.

9. GOVERNOR TRAINING UPDATE 2009/10 AND FUTURE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Members reviewed the paper presented outlining the training undertaken by the Board in 2009/10 and noted the contents. The Chair of the Corporation agreed to write to each governor who had still not undertaken the on-line Safeguarding training. Members also agreed that if training was scheduled into the annual calendar it should be completed and not superseded by other priorities.

Members discussed the future development of training for governors and agreed that the requirement of a CPD log would not add value in itself and did not improve the effectiveness of the Board. Members agreed that training should be categorised as mandatory, strategic or developmental;

- Mandatory training would include Safeguarding and E&D training and would be compulsory for all Governors with regular updates required.
- Strategic Training may be through briefings, presentations or invitations to stakeholders to present at board meetings. This area of training would be considered fundamental to the role of Governors and relate to the core business of the College. Members requested that invitations should be extended to both the County and City Councils to present to a future Board meeting their commissioning strategies and strategic objectives relating to the provision of skills and education.
- Developmental training would be relevant to the individual and may involve attending internal or external training events. A training needs analysis was requested by the Committee to be undertaken on behalf of the governors. It was agreed that in house resources could be used for this and the Principal agreed to action this with the ncn at Work team. A series of events would be developed following the outcomes of this work.

Members discussed the opportunities available to governors to understand the curriculum, and concluded that in order to promote the impact the Governing Body has on the learner required a better understanding of the curriculum and core business. Members considered the introduction of "Curriculum Links" for governors noting the positive and negative experiences of this in the past and concluded, having reflecting on the Ministerial favour of localism and colleges working with their communities, that linking up to 3 governors to each of the four main campuses would improve understanding of curriculum issues, estates issues and stakeholder groups.

The Committee passed the following resolution:

The Committee recommend the development of a "Campus Link" programme for governors.

10. COLLEGE CODE OF GOVERNANCE

Members reviewed the documentation presented on the Code of Governance and the process proposed for adoption. Members considered the reasoning for the implementation to be sound and saw the content to be, on the whole, non-contentious. A report would be presented to the Committee at its meeting in May outlining any actions required to be implemented to comply with the Code.

Members suggested that Thulani Molifie be approached to attend the Code Development Event on behalf of the Board.

11. **CONFIDENTIALITY OF BUSINESS**

The Recruitment and Appointment of Governors report and discussion under item 6 would remain confidential sine die due to the contents referring to named individuals.

10. **DATES OF NEXT MEETING:**

The next scheduled meeting was 25 May 2011.

The Chair closed the meeting at 19:30pm

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____