

SHREWSBURY COLLEGES GROUP

MINUTES

Group :	SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE	Date:	31/01/2018
Location:	PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE, WELSH BRIDGE CAMPUS, SHREWSBURY	Time:	5.30 p.m.
Membership:	Andy Allen, Gordon Channon (Chair of the Board), Richard Heath, James Staniforth (Principal/Chief Executive) and Mike Willmot.		
IN ATTENDANCE:	Clerk to the Board, Tracy Cottee Chris Davies, Chair of the Quality, Standards & Curriculum Committee		
APOLOGIES:	None.		

01/18. Declarations of Interest

R. Heath declared a standing interest as an employee of Harper Adams University.

02/18. Minutes of the Meetings held 04 October 2017 (Appendices – Agenda item 3).

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 04 October 2017, were approved and signed as a true record.

03/18. Matters Arising

None.

04/18. Committee Vacancies and Succession Planning (Appendix – Agenda Item 4)

The Committee reviewed the current position regarding current Governor Terms, vacancies and opportunities (previously circulated).

The Clerk reported that the Board had confirmed the re-appointments of Andy Allen and Nigel Merchant (Parent Governor) at its meeting on 18 December 2017 (Board Min No. 63/17 refers).

The Board was entering a relatively stable position with respect to vacancy management with one vacancy for an Independent Governor. Two individuals had expressed an interest in the vacancy and the Committee directed the Clerk to follow-up. Although four of the five most recent appointments, although not Independent Governors, were either currently in teaching or learning or had this skills-set, the Chair of the Q, S & C Committee (who had requested to attend the meeting) considered that it was pertinent to secure an additional independent governor with a teaching and learning skills-set. The Clerk commented that the Board's Skills Audit was now 18 months old and due an update and suggested that this could be done in March 2018, when governors would be invited to update

their Register of Interests. The Committee AGREED that the Clerk undertake a revised Skills Audit before the next Committee meeting.

All Staff and Student Governors were now in post and had either completed or were near the end of their Inductions which had been evaluated positively. The Clerk reported that the Academic Staff Governor (LR) was undertaking additional CPD in her own time using the Education and Training Foundation staff governor mentor scheme. She had proved so successful in this that she had been offered the opportunity to act as a scheme mentor. The Committee commended this achievement and agreed that a letter of congratulations be sent to her.

The Clerk reported that, despite a number of promising 'leads', the vacancy for an Audit Committee co-opted committee member remained unfilled. Two prominent local accountancy firms had been actively promoting the vacancy through their networks to no avail. The Clerk had sent a 'cold call' letter to firms, seeking interest; she would also follow-up if any firms that had employees undertaking the AAT through the College, or had apprentices, would be willing to support the Board.

Anne Dokov had been appointed as a co-opted Human Resources Committee member in February 2017 (S&G Min No 17/17 refers). As directed by the Committee at its last meeting, the Clerk had enquired whether Mrs Dokov wished to continue. Mrs Dokov has confirmed that she was, subject to the Committee's consideration, happy to continue as a co-opted member of the Committee into 2017 – 2018, or for the remaining life of the Committee.

The Chair of Board also reported that he had spoken to Iain Gilmour regarding his wishes going forward as he reached the end of his Term. He had indicated that he wished to remain on the Board.

The Committee considered these indications, based on an assessment of prior performance and contribution in the roles, individual skills and qualities in light of the current Board skills base and the Governor Person Specification and Job Description.

The Committee unanimously considered that, in both instances, the individuals' previous experience, particularly in the field of human resources remained beneficial and

Resolved:

1. That all governors be invited to update the Board Skills Audit in March 2018, when updating their Register of Interests; and

Recommend to Board that:

2. having considered the skills analysis audit, attendance record and contribution to the work of the Human Resources Committee of Anne Dokov, she be re-appointed as a co-opted Human Resources Committee member into 2017 – 2018, or for the remaining life of the Committee; and
3. having considered the skills analysis audit, attendance record and contribution to the work of the Board of Iain Gilmour, his Term as an Independent Governor be extended for a further one year with effect from 14 October 2018.

ACTION: Clerk to contact candidates and item to Board.

05/18. Governor Development

Learning Walks Programme

The most recent Governor Learning Walk had been conducted in Engineering & Motor Vehicle in December 2018. Five governors had attended and had evaluated

positively. The Committee was advised that the next Walk would be in Art & Design at the English Bridge Campus after Half Term.

The Committee debated the Learning Walk format, agreeing that the next event should be timed to allow governors to visit and engage with a wide variety of students and staff in their learning environments as this had been much appreciated on the most recent Walk. Following extensive discussion, the Committee re-affirmed that the purpose of walks going forward was to inform and update governors not to assess teaching.

The Committee made a number of suggestions regarding a Learning Walk for the Summer Term. It proposed Maths & Sciences and that the Walk should be conducted at the Welsh Bridge Campus.

Governance Supporting Higher Education – QAA Review

The Committee confirmed the arrangements for governors supporting the upcoming QAA Review: -

- Mike Willmot - HE Lead Governor, Jae Evans - HE Student Governor and Chris Davies as Chair of Q,S & C Committee, to support the Group Vice-Principal, Quality & Curriculum Management and HE Lead;
- Standing item on HE at every Q, S & C Committee;
- Governance Element of QAA Review Submission being prepared.

The Committee recognised and supported that governors would receive additional development and briefings leading up to the QAA Review. R. Heath commented that he had a contact who was a QAA Reviewer and would enquire on how governors could further prepare for the Review.

Mandatory Development Modules

The Clerk reported that –

- All governors were required to submit certificate evidence that they had completed their on-line development modules for Safeguarding and PREVENT before the Internal Audit commencing 05 February 2018;
- All governors would be required to complete the on-line development module 'Equality Essential's during Half Term.

The Chair of Board referred to the point he had raised at the recent Strategy Event regarding governor development to support the College to 'outstanding'. He again asked how the Board would know that it was 'outstanding'. The Committee discussed the role of the Board in setting the strategic direction of the College and supporting, enabling and challenging the Principal. The Board would continue to use self-assessment as a tool for improvement.

06/18. Governance Self-Assessment – Action Plan – Progress (Appendix Agenda Item 6)

As requested by the Committee (S&G Min No. 37/17 refers), the Board Chair and Clerk have drawn up a 'two-tier' Action Plan, setting out the top-level, strategic actions and the lower-level 'operational' improvements. This was presented to the Committee for consideration (previously circulated).

The Committee Chair invited the Clerk to revisit the evidence criteria for the 'Board level' action 'implementing effective protocols' to ensure KPIs were not measures of actions which, in the wrong circumstances, could be undesirable.

Regarding the timely receipt of committee papers and reports, the Principal/CEO requested monitoring of the percentage of agendas and reports received on time. He acknowledged that report style still required improvement. The Committee supported his work to move to focussed, timely reports.

07/18. Finance & Business Operations Committee Dates (Appendix - Agenda item 7)

The Committee considered a report (previously circulated) seeking agreement to amendments to meetings of the Finance & Business Operations Committee (F&BO) for the rest of 2017 – 2018 Academic Year.

There had been acceptance that some governor meetings might have to change when Board agreed the Calendar of Meetings 2017 – 2018, to accommodate new reporting arrangements implemented after the arrival of the Principal/CEO and Finance Director (FD). The Clerk has met with the FD to assess how F&BO Committee dates would better 'fit' with the financial reporting cycle.

Resolved: That changes to meetings of the Finance & Business Operations Committee for the rest of 2017 – 2018 Academic Year be made as follows -

Current Date	Proposed Date and Time
Tuesday, 06 February 2018 @ 5.45 p.m.	Wednesday, 14 March 2018 @ 5.30 p.m.
Tuesday, 08 May 2018 @ 5.45 p.m.	Tuesday, 15 May 2018 @ 5.30 p.m.
Tuesday, 12 June 2018 @ 5.45 p.m.	Tuesday, 26 June 2018 @ 5.30 p.m.

08/18. Risk

As part of the discussions on the College's Risk Register and Board Assurance Framework agreed at the last Board meeting (Board Min No. 67/17 refers), the Audit Committee had requested that each committee, at each meeting, examine those risks within its remit and ensure that they had either been identified or adequately discussed at the meeting.

The Committee concluded that the risks identified were adequate and that there had been sufficient discussion of the issues at the meeting.

09/18. Date of Next Scheduled Meeting – TO BE CONFIRMED as the Chair requested that the scheduled date – 09 May 2018 at 6.00 p.m. – be changed to 2 May 2018 at 5.30 p.m.

The meeting concluded at 7.10 p.m.