SANDWELL COLLEGE

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Search Committee
held on Monday 9th July 2012,
in Room 6F/39 at the Central Campus,
commencing at 3.00 p.m.

Present:-

Mrs. D. Gagnon (Independent) (in the Chair)
Ms. V. Bailey (Principal)
Mr. R. Nock (Staff Member)
Mr. J. Tew (Independent)

Also in Attendance:-
Miss J. Berry Corporation Secretary

S12.26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

S12.27 Apologies

No apologies were received.

S12.28 Meeting with Applicant 12/01

The Committee discussed the application received from applicant 12/01 (MB) and agreed the questions they would ask during their meeting with him. MB was invited to join the meeting. The Chairman thanked MB for attending the meeting and explained that although MB had served on the Board of Governors previously, it was important that the Search Committee followed its procedures for the appointment of members.

The Chairman informed MB of the College’s current staff and student numbers, the composition of the Board of Governors, its responsibilities and committee structure, together with the new freedoms and flexibilities granted to colleges under the Education Act 2011. The requirement for new members to undertake induction and training was highlighted, together with the need for members to undertake an enhanced CRB check. MB was informed that following a review of the members’ skills, the Committee was seeking members with a variety of skills, expertise and experience to join the Board of Governors.

MB was aware that the College had had financial difficulties. The Chairman explained that the financial position was now more stable and that at the March 2011 OfSTED inspection all provision had been graded satisfactory or above.

Members of the Search Committee were aware that prior to his meeting with the Committee MB had met with the Chairman of the Board of Governors.

MB reminded members that he had been Director of Finance in a health authority/primary care trust and that he had also worked as Deputy Chief Executive with a wider range of responsibilities. MB had experience of working at a strategic level in the areas of business and governance, and at senior board level. MB explained the reasons why he had found it necessary to resign from the Board of Governors in 2007 and informed members that since his retirement he had been considering initiatives with which he could become involved.

In response to a query, the Principal informed MB of the changes to the funding bodies that had taken place since 2007 and of the College’s relationship with the Skills Funding Agency.
MB was informed of the current position with regard to the Financial Notice to Improve that had been served on the College by the former Learning and Skills Council and the current funding position with the Skills Funding Agency. Changes to the funding streams were also outlined.

The Chairman of the Board of Governors explained that following the completion of the new build it was important for the College to continue to move forward. The development of the sixth form provision was outlined, together with learner applications and enrolments for 2012/13.

In response to a query, MB confirmed that he would be interested in being appointed to serve as an External Co-Opted Member of a committee, if a position on the Board itself was not available.

The Chairman thanked MB for meeting with the Search Committee and explained that the committee's recommendations would be considered by the Board of Governors.

MB left the meeting.

MB’s experience of working at a strategic level in a very large public sector organisation, together with his skills in finance, governance and business were discussed, together with his experience of working in a Deputy Chief Executive’s role.

The Search Committee agreed to recommend to the Board of Governors that MB be appointed to serve as an Independent Member on the Board of Governors for a term of office of three years, commencing 1st August 2012 and ceasing on 31st July 2015. It was also agreed to recommend to the Board of Governors that MB be appointed to serve as a member of the Audit Committee with effect from 1st August 2012.

The Search Committee agreed that a verbal report of its recommendations regarding MB should be made to the meeting of the Board of Governors taking place later in the day.

A further discussion took place during which the Chairman of the Search Committee informed members that when her term of office ceased on 28th February 2014 she would not wish to be considered for re-appointment to the Board of Governors. During the intervening period, the Committee might, therefore, wish to consider the appointment of an Independent Member with human resources experience and expertise.

RESOLVED:

That the Search Committee recommend to the Board of Governors:-

a) that applicant 12/01 be appointed to serve as an Independent Member on the Board of Governors for a term of office of three years, commencing 1st August 2012 and ceasing on 31st July 2015.

b) that applicant 12/01 be appointed to serve as a member of the Audit Committee with effect from 1st August 2012.

c) that the verbal report be received.

Members received a report from the Corporation Secretary reminding them that the Board of Governors had agreed that each of its committees should undertake an annual review of its own performance and its terms of reference.
Members considered and completed a self-assessment checklist. During its discussion the Committee agreed to explore avenues by which it could appoint a person from the wider community to serve as a member of the Search Committee.

Upon completion of the checklist, the Committee agreed that on a scale of 1-4 where 1 was "outstanding" and 4 was "inadequate"; the Committee should be graded 2, "good". The Corporation Secretary was asked to amend the grading scale for future years in line with the new OfSTED Inspection framework.

It was also agreed that the following additional self-assessment point should be included in the checklist “Do the Committee’s discussions reflect the current and forward looking strategies of the College when consideration is being given to the appointment of members to the Board of Governors?”.

A review of the Committee’s terms of reference was undertaken. The Committee agreed to recommend to the Board of Governors that the post of Principal should be an ex-officio member of the Search Committee irrespective of the number of years he/she served on the Committee.

It was further agreed that reference to the ‘Oldbury Campus’ should be amended to read ‘Central Campus’.

RESOLVED:

a) that the Search Committee explore avenues by which it could appoint a person from the wider community to serve as a member of the Committee.

b) that the Search Committee, having completed a self-assessment checklist of its own performance, considered that the Committee should be graded 2 “good”.

c) that the Corporation Secretary amend the self-assessment checklist grading scale for future years in line with the new OfSTED Inspection framework.

d) that the self-assessment checklist be amended to include the following point “Do the Committee’s discussions reflect the current and forward looking strategies of the College when consideration is being given to the appointment of members to the Board of Governors?”.

e) that the Search Committee recommend to the Board of Governors that the post of Principal be an ex-officio member of the Search Committee irrespective of the number of years he/she served on the Committee.

f) that reference to the ‘Oldbury Campus’ within the terms of reference be amended to read ‘Central Campus’

g) that the report be received.

Determination of Confidential Items

The Search Committee agreed that none of its discussions should be minuted confidentially, however, applicants for membership of the Board of Governors would be identified only by their initials.

RESOLVED: that none of the Committee’s discussions be minuted confidentially.
The next meeting of the Search Committee was scheduled to take place on Monday 17th September 2012 at 3.30 p.m. at Central Campus.

The meeting terminated at 3.55 p.m.