

SANDWELL COLLEGE

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Search Committee
held virtually on Monday 9 November 2020 at 1.00pm**

Present:	J Tew K Ellis G Pennington	(Independent) (Chair) (Independent) (Principal)
Apologies:	S Hackett	(Independent)
In Attendance:	E Scotford	(Clerk to the Corporation)

Action

S20.28 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Simon Hackett and were accepted by Governors.

S20.29 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

S20.30 **Minutes of the Meeting of the Search Committee held on Monday 22 June 2020**

The minutes of the meeting of the Search Committee held Monday 22 June 2020 were approved and signed by the Chair.

RESOLVED: that the minutes be approved.

S20.31 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

S20.32 **Board of Governors – Vacancies/Forthcoming Vacancies/Committee Vacancies**

20.32.1 Discussion took place based on the Clerk to the Corporation's report detailing vacancies, forthcoming vacancies and committee vacancies which currently were:

Two vacancies currently exist for Independent members including specific roles:
Vice Chair

One Staff Governor, Sandwell.

Two Student Governors (*since the report was written a Student Governor had been elected at Cadbury campus*).

Independent members reaching the end of their current terms of office during the academic year were:

Peta Murphy – 20 May 2021 (Chair of the LQCC)
Gurvinder Bassi – 20 May 2021 (Member of the Audit Committee)
Ken Ellis – 31 July 2021 (Chair of the Corporation and Interim Safeguarding Link Governor)

Current committee vacancies were outlined:

One vacancy on the Audit Committee to replace Kamran Shaikh.

One vacancy on the Learners Quality and Curriculum Committee which is held in abeyance.

Two vacancies on the new Finance & Strategy Committee.

- 20.32.2 The Committee Chair updated on his contact with the local accountancy firm for a potential Governor with finance/accounts experience. Unfortunately, there were no interested candidates. Interest and availability has been affected by the Covid-19 situation as potential candidates need to focus on their work commitments.

Governors recognised that, given the current situation, there may be benefits to seeking non-working candidates. The Committee Chair had contacted U3A but again Covid-19 was affecting the ability for the organisation to meet and raise such matters with their members. This avenue would be followed up again when the Covid-19 situation was resolved.

Governors believed it was important to attract candidates with a commitment to Sandwell, the College and its local community.

- 20.32.3 The Principal advised that he had approached the Sandwell and West Bromwich NHS Trust who were exploring their network for interested candidates from within the NHS Finance Department. The Principal would follow up. Princ
- 20.32.4 The Principal offered to contact Sandwell LA for potential candidates within their organisation with a finance/accounts background. Princ
- 20.32.5 The Principal would follow up with a Governor regarding potential contacts within his Business Ambassador network with a financial specialism. Princ
- 20.32.6 The Principal would contact his professional body for local or retired members who might be interested in the role. Princ
- 20.32.7 The Principal would speak to Sanjeev Gill who had contacts in local accountancy firms. Princ
- 20.32.8 Governors discussed the vacancy to replace RY, as a representative of the local police force. The Principal had recently met his replacement, Chief Supt Ian Green. KE to write to him as Chair of the Board inviting him to join or propose a senior colleague from his division. Chair
- 20.32.9 Governors considered the need for gender and diversity balance on the Board in its deliberations on Board membership, vacancies and recruitment.
- 20.32.10 The Chair would approach Governors direct at the next Board meeting regarding the Vice Chair position. JT was prepared to continue to support on an interim basis, without title, and act as a mentor to an incoming Vice Chair. Chair
- 20.32.11 The vacancy on the Audit Committee was noted. Recent attendance issues had been addressed with the reduction of the quorum to 2. Members' attendance issues were discussed and acknowledged.
- 20.32.12 Governors noted the vacancies on the Finance & Strategy Committee. Potential options were discussed. The Chair would approach a Governor to gauge their interest in joining the Committee. The other vacancy would be filled with the appointment of a new Governor with a finance/accounts specialism. Given upcoming projects, it would be beneficial for the vacancies to be filled. Chair
- 20.32.13 The Chair confirmed he had spoken to the Governor regarding attendance issues and had established he wished to continue to serve on the Board and his schedule would now enable him to increase his attendance at meetings.

20.32.14 RESOLVED:

That the Search Committee recommend to the Board of Governors:

- The Principal would follow up with the Sandwell and West Bromwich NHS Trust. Princ
- The Principal would contact Sandwell LA for potential candidates within their organisation with a finance/accounts background. Princ
- The Principal would follow up with a Governor regarding potential contacts within his Business Ambassador network with a financial specialism. Princ
- The Principal would contact his professional body for local or retired members who might be interested in the role. Princ
- The Principal would speak to Sanjeev Gill who had contacts in local accountancy firms Princ
- Chair of the Board to write to Chief Supt Green inviting him to join or propose a senior colleague from his division. Chair
- The Chair would approach Governors direct at the next Board meeting regarding the Vice Chair position. Chair
- The Chair would approach a Governor to gauge their interest in joining the Finance & Strategy Committee. Chair
- That the report be received.

S20.33 **Evaluation of Performance of the Board of Governors 2019/20**

20.33.1 The Evaluation of Performance of the Board of Governors 2019/20 was considered in comparison to the previous year.

Members identified that the key issues were:

- Gender balance - although the most up to date figures showed an improvement on the previous year from 10M/3F to 9M/3F. Future recruitment would be mindful of diversity.
- Attendance rates – it was acknowledged that attendance issues had been addressed by the Chair with the individual Governors concerned. There had been an improvement in overall Governor attendance on the previous year, although attendance was below target for some meetings and remained below target for some Governors.
- Members' response times – Governors' targets now include the need to respond by the requested deadline. Governors to be reminded of the importance of submitting their annual returns by the deadline. Comm Chair
- Governors to maximise their training, particularly with the expansion of online and virtual opportunities as a result of the Covid-19 situation, remembering to note any webinars or online sessions they attend. Knowledge updates circulated to Governors by the Clerk including: from the College (including the newly established Governance Matters publication), AoC, ESFA, and other agencies, to also be noted. Governor attendance at college events, when they were able to restart when the pandemic was over, should also recommence in line with Governor targets.
- The Self-Evaluation report format would be refreshed next year. The results would be discussed with Governors at the December Board meeting. Chair

20.33.2 RESOLVED THAT:

- Governors would be reminded of the importance of submitting their annual returns by the deadline.
- The Self-Evaluation report format would be refreshed next year. The results would be discussed with Governors at the December Board meeting.
- The report be received and noted.

Comm
Chair

Chair

S20.34 **Review of Register of Members' Interests**

Members received and noted the latest Members' declarations of interest.

RESOLVED THAT:

- The report be received and noted.

S20.35 **Skills and Knowledge Analysis – September 2020**

Members considered the Skills and Knowledge Analysis.

Members noted, from the responses received, that there continued to be a broad range of knowledge and experience on the Board. Governors' average score shows a working knowledge/experience in all areas.

RESOLVED THAT:

- The report be received and noted

S20.36 **Any Other Business**

There were no items of other business.

S20.37 **Determination of Confidential Items**

Any references to individuals would be treated confidentially.

S20.38 **Date of Next Meeting**
Monday 8 February 2021, 4.30pm

Meeting ended at 2.00pm