

## SANDWELL COLLEGE

### Minutes of a Meeting of the Search & Governance Committee held virtually on Monday 7 November 2022, 1.00pm

Present: J Tew (Independent) (Chair)  
K Ellis (Independent)  
G Pennington (Principal)

Apologies: J Uddin (Independent)

In Attendance: E Scotford (Clerk to the Corporation)

		Action
S22.24	<b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b>	
	The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Jalal Uddin and <b>accepted by Governors.</b>	
S22.25	<b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
S22.26	<b><u>Minutes of the Meeting of the Search &amp; Governance Committee held on 26 June 2022</u></b>	
	RESOLVED THAT: <b>Governors approved</b> the minutes of the meeting of the Search & Governance Committee held on 26 June 2022 for signing by the Chair.	
S22.27	<b><u>Matters Arising</u></b>	
27.1	Minute No. 15.1.5 – ETF Governance Development Programme – Clerk to check if Governors were now able to access the newly relaunched platform – actioned.	
27.2	Minute No. 15.1.6 – Clerk to circulate list of link areas from the Annual Strategy Forum to Committee members – actioned. Clerk to recirculate the list to Governors, as a reminder together with the protocol for link visits.	Clerk
27.3	Minute No. 16.2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Principal to approach senior contact in the Greater Birmingham LEP – actioned.</li> <li>- Chair to contact former Governor (JF) to see if she could offer any suggestions for Governor candidates in BCC – actioned but no potential Governors suggested.</li> <li>- Chair to contact the local Chief Superintendent again – work in progress - there had been a change in personnel – the Chair would make contact with the new Chief Superintendent.</li> </ul>	Chair
27.4	Minute No. 17.7 – Code of Good Governance – the Internal Auditors review of the Code had been postponed to March 2023. Draft work would commence on compliance with the Code in advance of news on the potential impact of the ONS review. The Audit Committee would ask for an update from the Internal Auditors at the November meeting.	
27.6	Minute No. 22.20 – Governors would complete and return the committee effectiveness questionnaire to the Clerk – actioned, with an overall grading of Outstanding.	

S22.28	<b><u>Board of Governors – Vacancies/Forthcoming Vacancies/Committee Vacancies</u></b>	
28.1	<p>Discussion took place based on the Clerk to the Corporation's report detailing vacancies, forthcoming vacancies and committee vacancies which currently were:</p> <p>Five vacancies for Independent members. It was noted that this number of vacancies could risk affecting the quoracy of some meetings so a concentrated recruitment drive was now necessary.</p> <p>The election process had concluded for the Staff Governor, Cadbury, vacancy and the appointment would be confirmed at the December Board meeting.</p> <p>The process was underway to recruit to the 2 Student Governor vacancies for confirmation at the December Board meeting.</p> <p>One Governor's term of office was due to expire during the academic year 2022/23 – AT – 8 March 2023. The Chair would speak to the Governor to establish his willingness to be appointed for a further term of office. The Committee discussed the skills, experience and value the Governor continued to add to the Board.</p> <p>Committee vacancies were discussed: Audit Committee x 3; Finance &amp; Strategy x 1; LQCC x 3. It was noted these would be filled on recruitment to the Independent member vacancies.</p> <p>The role of Audit Committee Chair was vacant on the resignation of Noel Grace. The Committee discussed, and would recommend to Board for approval, that John Tew be appointed as interim Audit Committee Chair to provide continuity for the Committee, and that the other committee member be approached by the S&amp;G Committee Chair with a view to them taking on the substantive Committee Chair role.</p> <p>The role of LQCC Chair was being covered on an interim basis by Ken Ellis.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>S&amp;GChair</p>
28.2	<p><b>Governors discussed</b> the current skills needs of the Board and possible recruitment routes. Governors preferred for the time being to pursue non-cost methods so the Board and College networks would be pursued for potential candidates.</p> <p>Recruitment advert letter to be drafted and sent to the Principal for circulation through the College's networks. Initial suggestions to approach were accountancy firms; Business Ambassadors; Sandwell and BCC LA Finance departments; Chambers of Commerce; Midland Met Head of Training and Skills; recruitment agencies the College deals with. SLT and business staff would also be asked for suggestions.</p> <p><b>Governors discussed</b> approaching the new CEO of Sandwell LA but, as there was already a local councillor on the Board, <b>considered</b> it would not be appropriate to have a councillor and officer from the LA on the Board as this could prove to be a conflict of interest.</p> <p>Chair to personally write to individual Governors to request that they explore their own networks and advise of any potential candidates to approach.</p> <p>Skills which needed to be targeted at this time were identified as: finance/audit, legal, business and education. <b>Governors noted</b> that availability, time and commitment to the role were important characteristics too in potential candidates.</p> <p>Chair to send copy of the Ofsted report to former Governor (JF) thanking her for her contribution to the successful inspection and also asking for suggestions for her replacement from BCC.</p> <p>Governors set a target to recruit 2-3 new Governors by the next meeting. If this had not</p>	<p>Chair/VC/ Clerk/ Princ</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>Chair</p>

	<p>been possible then the costed recruitment routes, including recruitment agencies, would be pursued.</p> <p>Governors noted that free support was available from the DfE through the new FE governor recruitment service but there was a strict criteria for using this service and it was more targeted at colleges in need.</p>	
28.3	<p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governors monitored and discussed</b> Board membership and vacancies and action to be taken.</li> <li>• <b>Governors noted</b> the need to be mindful of succession planning and equalities, diversity and inclusion in new appointments.</li> </ul>	
S22.29	<b><u>Evaluation of Performance of the Board of Governors 2021/22</u></b>	
29.1	<p>The Evaluation of Performance of the Board of Governors 2021/22 was considered in comparison to the previous year.</p> <p><b>Governors identified</b> that the key issues were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender balance – the balance of membership in terms of gender had moved to a majority male representation in comparison to the previous year because of resignations and ends of terms of office during the year. Future recruitment would continue to be mindful of diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>• Attendance rates – there had been an improvement in overall Governor attendance on the previous year up from 75% to 81%, compared to the sector average of 82.35%.</li> <li>• No meetings were inquorate during the year.</li> <li>• The Governance Development Programme navigation and expectations of time commitment were being explored with ETF by the Clerk for clarity as this was proving to be more challenging than initially anticipated. JT to summarise his experience of the ETF training platform.</li> <li>• The outcome of the self-assessment questionnaire remained positive with the majority of responses being in the 'strongly agree' and 'agree' category and none in the 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' categories. Some knowledge which could be further strengthened would be areas of focus for the Annual Strategy Day. The overall grading of the Board self-assessment was 1 - Outstanding.</li> </ul>	Clerk JT
29.2	<p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governors received and monitored</b> the Board evaluation report 2021/22.</li> </ul>	
S22.30	<b><u>Register of Members' Interests</u></b>	
	RESOLVED THAT: The Register was now complete and would be circulated to the Committee outside the meeting.	Clerk
S22.31	<b><u>Skills and Knowledge Analysis</u></b>	
31.1	<p><b>Governors noted</b> that the Board was well served with a wide range of skills and experience. The skills needs which would be targeted in new Governor recruitment were: finance/audit, legal, business and education.</p> <p><b>Governors noted</b> that Governor recruitment continued to be a challenge nationwide.</p>	
31.2	RESOLVED THAT: <b>Governors received</b> the Skills and Knowledge Analysis.	

S22.32	<b><u>Any Other Business</u></b>	
	There was no other business.	
S22.33	<b><u>Determination of Confidential Items</u></b>	
	There were no confidential items.	
S22.34	<b><u>Date and time of next meeting</u></b> <b>Monday 6 February 2023, 1.00pm</b>	

Meeting ended at 1.35pm