

BARNSELY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2013

PRESENT:

J Thirkell (Chair)	Governor
C Booth	Principal
S Pickering	Governor
C Price	Governor
R Pourali	Governor

IN ATTENDANCE: A J Oaks (Clerk to the Governors)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

13.54 Apologies for absence were received from C Field.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS IN ANY AGENDA ITEM

13.55 Members were reminded of the requirement to declare any interests. No interests were declared.

MINUTES

13.56 The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2013 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

13.57 The Chair referred to the actions arising, all of which had been completed.

ANALYSIS OF ATTENDANCE 2012/13

13.58 The Committee received a report which confirmed that the corporate target of 80% for attendance had been achieved. Individual governor attendance was well above target for the majority of Governors. Where this was not the case, the Committee sought further information in respect of individuals' attendance at the Committees of which they were members. It was recognised that membership determination resulted in some Governors being required to attend more meetings than others during the year and that this should be highlighted in the analysis. Attendance at Committees was noted, the impact of Governor absence impacting on overall targets.

13.59 The Chair commented that she had raised the matter of attendance during 1:1s but welcomed the views of the Committee with regard to how poor attendance should be addressed. Members agreed that in terms of Governors' contribution and commitment to the role, it was important that any external factors preventing Governors attending meetings on a regular basis should be discussed with the Chair. The Chair agreed to take this forward and report back to the next meeting. The Clerk was requested to provide a further, more detailed analysis of attendance to include committees.

- 13.60 Attendance at other events outside of formal meetings was noted. Members felt that Governor engagement could be improved to raise the profile of the Board within the College and the community. It was noted that attendance at the E&D and Safeguarding events had not been as high as expected and that clarification of Governors' statutory responsibilities and the impact of these in respect of key areas would have strengthened the sessions. It was agreed that alternative arrangements should be explored in terms of future E&D training for Governors, to include an external facilitator and access to an online module.
- 13.61 The Clerk referred to the benchmarking data which had been provided to assist the Committee in setting the target for 2013/14. Following consideration of the data in the context of the Board's commitments, it was agreed to recommend a target of 80% be maintained.

RESOLVED 13.62.1 To recommend a target of 80% for individual and corporate attendance for 2013/14

RESOLVED 13.62.2 that the Clerk present a further more comprehensive analysis of attendance to the next meeting.

BOARD PERFORMANCE

- 13.63 A review of the performance of the Chair undertaken in June indicated an overall judgement of excellent. Following feedback it was proposed an alternative method of measuring performance should be considered for the next review, and that methods adopted in other organisations should be explored for discussion at the next meeting.
- 13.64 Board performance had been reviewed through the 1:1s conducted by the Chair in July and August. The Chair provided verbal feedback to the Committee of the outcome of the 1:1s which had identified some clear strengths, areas for improvement and a number of training and development needs. Discussion took place with regard to how these could be addressed, including consideration of briefings for Governors on topics of interest, and continuing the opportunity for Governors to attend performance review meetings. Following discussion it was agreed that participation, contribution at meetings and governor involvement in college events were areas that could be strengthened.
- 13.65 A survey of the effectiveness of the Committees had been undertaken, based on the Terms of reference for each committee. Overall effectiveness for each committee was judged to be outstanding. Discussion took place with regard to measuring Board and Committee performance and it was agreed to use the data from the surveys as a benchmark for future performance.
- 13.66 Performance against other KPIs including link governor visits and attendance at the strategic seminar were noted. Discussion took place with regard to potential briefings, content, how these could be facilitated and ways in which greater participation from Governors at meetings could be encouraged. Governors views were shared. In terms of planning for the strategic seminar, it was agreed that Governors be given the opportunity to work with SMT on certain aspects to ensure the content was influenced and determined by the Board.

13.67 Strategic decisions that had been taken by the Board during the last year were considered. The Chair commented that it was clear from the summary that the College had been extremely innovative, and that the Board had taken some challenging but well-informed decisions in line with agreed strategy that had impacted positively on the College's overall performance.

RESOLVED 13.68.1 To note all targets and to explore alternative approaches for the review of the performance of the Chair.

RESOLVED 13.68.2 To use the data from 2012/13 as a benchmark for future analysis.

RESOLVED 13.68.3 To make arrangements for Governor briefings to address the outcomes of the Board evaluation and 1:1s

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

13.69 The Committee received a summary of business conducted during the last year and classed as confidential. The majority of items related to property matters where for reasons of commercial sensitivity they had been classed as confidential. Members reviewed the summary and determined which could be released into the public domain.

RESOLVED 13.69 To recommend the release of confidential information into the public domain where the requirement for confidentiality was no longer applicable.

GOVERNORS' EXPENSES

13.70 In line with the College's Financial Regulations, a report had been produced summarising expenses incurred by Governors and the Clerk in 2012/13. The report demonstrated the level of expenses to be reasonable and in line with the Financial Regulations. It was confirmed that in the event there may be any concerns regarding the level of expenses, the Chair/ Vice Chair should be informed by the Clerk. Members proposed the report should be produced on an annual basis.

RESOLVED 13.70.1 To note the expenses for 2012/13.

RESOLVED 13.70.2 To report on expenses annually.

VACANCIES ON THE BOARD AND COMMITTEES

External vacancies

13.71 It had been agreed at the last meeting to seek expressions of interest from legal firms and from the LEPs with regard to filling the two current vacancies on the Board. The Clerk had promoted the vacancies through targeted recruitment with local and regional law firms, SGOSS, and social networking sites. Expressions of interest from individuals with a financial background had also been sought via professional bodies for retaining a bank of interested individuals. Contact had also been made with the Leeds and Sheffield LEPs to promote the vacancies. Expressions of interest had been received from two individuals, both of whom were qualified Chartered Accountants.

13.72 The Committee were impressed with the background and experience of the individuals but agreed that they did not meet the criteria currently sought. The Clerk undertook to pursue a further recruitment campaign, by advertising in the media for a member with legal expertise and through various other organisations. In the meantime, it was proposed to retain the CV's and applications on file should a vacancy arise for an individual with audit/financial expertise.

RESOLVED 13.72 To launch a further recruitment campaign to seek an individual with legal expertise.

13.73 The Clerk reported that Matthew Cunningham, the Sabbatical Officer, had resigned from the Board following his appointment with the College in a different capacity. This had created a vacancy for a student member on the Board. The Clerk advised that following the transfer of UCB to the College it would be appropriate for student representation on the Board to include both FE and HE members. Governors were reminded of the process for nominating and electing student governors, and of the constitution which allowed for up to three student members. Following discussion it was agreed that the Board should maintain its constitution of two student members and that for this year it should seek to appoint an HE student member to fill the vacancy, and to seek a Sabbatical Officer when the current FE student member leaves the College. In terms of the election process, Governors were willing to act in an advisory capacity.

RESOLVED 13.73 To recommend the Board maintains its constitution of two student members, with representation from both FE and HE groups.

13.74 Membership of the Board's committees highlighting current vacancies had been circulated for information. Further to consideration of the skills and expertise amongst members the following recommendations were made regarding determination of membership.

RESOLVED 13.74.1 to recommend P Helm be appointed to the Audit Committee

RESOLVED 13.74.2 to recommend N Bowen be appointed to the Finance & Resources Committee.

RESOLVED 13.74.3 to recommend C Price be appointed Chair of the Remuneration Committee.

GOVERNANCE POLICIES

13.75 A review of Governance policies had taken place. The process for the nomination and appointment of student governors within the recruitment and selection of Governors policy was clarified. The Clerk undertook to include a review date in each of the Governance policies.

13.76 The Clerk had provided a summary of the induction process. Whilst there was no policy as such, the process was well established, comprehensive and relevant to new governors. Governors proposed the induction take part in two sessions, one prior to attending a Board meeting, to include a tour of the estate, which was essential, with a further session offered post-Board meeting. Further, that a follow up review be undertaken six months after appointment to assess any further support required.

RESOLVED 13.76 to amend the Induction process accordingly.

OWLs and LINK GOVERNOR VISITS

13.77 A programme for OWLs and link visits had been circulated to Governors. Three dates had been set aside during the year for Governors to attend College for an OWL and /or link visit, where possible linked to one of the strategic themes.

GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

13.78 Governor training and development had been discussed under Agenda item 6 (Minute 13.68 refers).

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 11 March 2014 at 4.00 pm.

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____