

CORPORATION OF HILLS ROAD SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Minutes of the Meeting of the Search & Governance Committee held on 14 October 2015

Present: Johnnie Sam (Chair), Edna Murphy, Linda Sinclair (Principal),
Peter Southwick

Clerking Services: Robert Smith (Clerk to the Corporation)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Frankie Williams.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – 6 May 2015

The minutes were approved as correct and a *prima facie* record of the proceedings to which they relate.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

None.

5 Appointment of Independent Members of the Corporation

Members noted existing and prospective vacancies. It was also noted that the Corporation does not at present have a qualified finance professional in membership. The 'schools-facing' orientation of the College was considered in the context of filling the said vacancies, as was the need for a perspective on local employer engagement.

Potential candidates were proposed and it was agreed that Committee members will explore their interest.

6 Self-Assessment of Governance

Members received and considered a paper prepared by the Clerk to the Corporation together with appendices: Governance Self-Assessment 2015, Meeting Attendance 2014-15.

Members identified a range of measures to confirm that the College is achieving high and improving success rates, is oversubscribed (i.e. a measure of its attractiveness to potential students), fulfills the financial criteria for a going concern, has alumni who are achieving success after leaving the College, and is a cohesive and positive working community. Whilst College success does not automatically imply an effective Corporation, members were able to identify the measures deriving from the Corporation which had contributed to these levels of success.

The self-assessment questionnaire completed by all members of the Corporation (though some members did not answer every question) had identified explicit areas of Corporation strength, particularly the effective monitoring of academic performance, financial status and the oversight of risk management. It was also noted that the Corporation effectively determines and reviews the College's mission and educational character, demonstrates ownership of the Strategic Plan, and identifies and monitors the College's areas for improvement.

Aspects of governance which may require increased attention are the Corporation's explicit monitoring of the way in which staff and students are consulted over the College's strategic direction, and of how equality and diversity policies are operated, though it is not implied that in either case policies are not being properly followed.

It was noted that members assessed themselves as participating actively in meetings by asking challenging questions, and use their professional expertise relevantly in this regard.

Two areas identified as less positive were attendance at Corporation meetings which, though satisfactory, could be improved, and participation in the Governor Link Scheme. Concerning the former it was held that the effectiveness of meetings had not been vitiated by the attendance level, and in the latter regard it was recognised that because the activity takes place during the working day the ability of members to engage in it will be inherently variable.

The Committee concluded that members of the Corporation had correctly identified its considerable areas of strength, and had demonstrated an awareness of those areas in which improvement might be made.

The Committee recommended a self-assessed grade of Outstanding, which will be fed into the College Self-Assessment Report for consideration at the Corporation meeting being held on 2 December 2015.

7 Business for the Corporation

To note agenda 6 as competent business for the Corporation meeting to be held on 2 December 2015.

8 Any Other Competent Business

None

9 Date and Time of Next meeting

Wednesday 20 January 2016 at 6.30pm