

SWINDON COLLEGE CORPORATION

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2017

Members Present

Rob Beale (Chair), Peter Wells (Vice Chair), Steve Wain, Ian Larrard, Sarah Garrett, Kathy Newman, Julie McLeod, Maria Zarola

Also Present:

Ruth Paisley, Interim Deputy Principal
Lynne Plested, Vice Principal Quality
David Francis, Vice Principal Development and Progression
Meryl Hamilton, Health and Safety Manager
Darylin Francis, Clerk to the Corporation

The meeting commenced at 1630hrs in room P100 in the Phoenix Building

Rob Beale (RB) welcomed Maria Zarola (MZ) and Ruth Paisley (RP) to their first meeting of the Governing Body.

213-17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Teresa Johnson, Mutsai Hove Bird, Marc Bayley and Fiona Millar.

214-17 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

MZ declared a conflict of interest in Agenda Item No. 226-17. It was agreed that MZ would not be in attendance for this item.

217-17 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

This item was taken out of sequence.

Members agreed that Ian Larrard (ITL) would act as Chair for this item.

Rob Beale and Peter Wells left the meeting at this stage.

ITL explained that one nomination for each of the posts of Chair and Vice Chair has been received. Following discussion it was agreed Rob Beale should be reappointed Chair of Governors and Peter Wells (PW) reappointed Vice Chair

It was proposed by Ian Larrard that Rob Beale is reappointed Chair of Governors for 2017/18. This was seconded by Sarah Garrett. All members voted in favour.

It was also proposed by Ian Larrard that Peter Wells is reappointed Vice Chair of Governors for 2017/18. This was seconded by Sarah Garrett. All members voted in favour.

Rob Beale and Peter Wells re-joined the meeting.

215-17 MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Document No. 17/215 refers. The minutes of the meeting held on 12th July 2017 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair, Rob Beale.

216-17 MATTERS ARISING AND OUTSTANDING ACTIONS REPORT

Document No. 17/216 refers. It was agreed that all requests and actions had either been undertaken or would be discussed further within substantive items on the agenda.

RP advised the college is in the process of finalising contracts for the installation of the new boilers. She explained the delay was brought about by the college originally putting out to tender the replacement of the oil boilers, however, it was recognised the cost of moving to gas could result in savings in running costs in the longer term. Following Steve Wain's (SW) query regarding a potential loss of service, RP confirmed that plans are in place to have the oil boilers up and running after the half term break and remain in place until the gas boilers have been fully installed.

218-17 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17 AND HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY 2017/18

Document No. 17/218 refers. Meryl Hamilton (MH) explained that all policies and procedures have been reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee and members of the Leadership Team across the year. The fire risk assessment was also reviewed following concerns regarding external cladding and the view was the risk was tolerable and the evacuation process robust.

In answer to Julie McLeod's (JMC) query around health and safety accountability in respect of apprentices in the workplace, MH confirmed the responsibility would be that of the employer in the work place and Swindon College whilst the apprentice is on site. It was agreed clarification on this point should be added to the policy.

Also in answer to queries around whether Health and Safety training should be a mandatory requirement for staff and form part of the staff development programme, it was agreed that MH would take this recommendation forward to the next Health and Safety Committee meeting.

Action: MH

Peter Wells proposed the Governing Body approves the Health and Safety Policy, subject to minor amendments. This was seconded by Sarah Garrett. All members voted in favour.

MH also highlighted the key points within the Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17. A discussion took place around the requirement of a Health and Safety Statement of Intent and it was agreed the procedure would be reviewed by MH.

Action: MH

Meryl Hamilton left the meeting at this stage

219-17 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

a) Management Accounts Period 12 (July) 2016/17

Document No. 17/216b refers. RP highlighted the key points within the Management Accounts Period 12 (July) 2016/17. RP also advised that whilst the figures are subject to material audit adjustments before the accounts are finalised, it is anticipated the college should receive a 'Good' financial health rating.

b) Risk Management Summary Report

Document No. 17/219c refers. RP reported as at the end of the 2016/17 academic year the college had 25 risks on the Risk Register of which 1 was severe, with 15 classified as substantial.

It was the opinion that no risks became unmanageable in the year. It was suggested that RP and Sarah Garrett (SG) meet to discuss the Risk Register before it is presented at each Board meeting.

SG also reported that the Audit Committee, at its meeting on 2nd October, requested future Risk Reports include a 1 page commentary, which the Board would find useful.

c) Third Party Contracts and Tenders Received.

RP gave a verbal update and explained that three projects were put out to tender over the summer period:

- Renewal of the boilers
- Hair and Beauty salon creation
- Emergency repair work to the front of Pegasus

220-17 CURRICULUM/QUALITY MONITORING

a) Student Enrolment Progress Report.

SW presented an enrolment updated for 2017. It was noted that full-time FE and part-time HE enrolments are slightly down on the same time last year, however, there has been a slight increase in HE full-time. Apprenticeships are currently running at 84% of enrolments in the last academic year, it is recognised these are in their early stages. SW also reported that at the end of the academic year Wilkes Academy stated they were not looking to renew their contract with Swindon College for 2017/18. It is felt this could present the college with other opportunities going forward

b) The Student Voice.

Document No. 17/220b refers. David Francis (DF) explained work is in progress to implement the new student voice model. The Student Council will be held once every half term and every student is invited to raise and discuss issues or changes they think should be made. The Council is chaired by the Student Council Executive Committee, with the support of the Student Engagement Team.

In answer to JMC's query DF confirmed the HE student voice could be delivered through Moodle as a stand-alone forum.

c) Safeguarding/PREVENT Action Plan.

Document No. 17/220c refers. DF explained the safeguarding action plan is designed to ensure the college meets its statutory duty under the safeguarding guidance. Whilst PREVENT is dealt with under the same umbrella, a process is in place to ensure statutory duties are adhered to. A discussion ensued and mainly focussed around risks with either a medium or high rating.

JMC queried whether training is made available to the wider student body and it was agreed the plan would be amended to include both face-to-face and on-line training.

Action: DF

SG raised concern over the IT monitoring outstanding action, particularly in view of the recent Computer Services report to the Audit Committee where this was not mentioned. JMC proposed the college may wish to make contact with Oxford Brookes University to discuss the practices they have in place. It was agreed that RP would follow this up with the Head of Computer Services.

Action: RP

d) Marketing Strategy and Action Plan.

Document No. 17/220d refers. The Marketing Strategy and Action Plan was noted and it was agreed it would be further explored at the Governor Strategy Event scheduled to take place on 24th November 2017.

Action: DF

221-17 COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN 2017

Document No. 17/221 refers. SW advised that following approval of the Strategic Plan 2017 at the strategy event in June 2017, consultation has taken place with members of staff where there were no negative issues raised. The Strategic Plan will also form part of the strategy event on 24th November.

SG reported that the Audit Committee, at its meeting on 2nd October 2017, were asked to consider three options in respect of the Apprenticeship Training Agency and it was the recommendation of the committee that the Governing Body gives consideration to the winding-up of the Swindon Apprenticeship Solutions. Following discussion this was agreed by governors.

It was proposed by Sarah Garrett that the college look to wind-up Swindon Apprenticeship Solutions. This was seconded by Rob Beale. All members voted in favour.

222-17 ANNUAL HEFCE QUALITY ASSESSMENT RETURN

Document No. 17/222 refers. Lynne Plested (LP) explained the report is aimed at providing information for governors regarding the quality of the HE provision for 2016/17 in preparation for the annual HEFCE Quality Assessment return due to be presented in December 2017.

JMC explained that whilst the report gave assurance, monitoring on continued performance should be undertaken by the Board in the form of a regular verbal update at each Governing Body meeting and it was agreed this should be added to the standing items.

Action: LP/DBF

223-17 REGULARITY SELF-ASSESSMENT 2016/17

Document No. 17/223 refers. SG explained it was the recommendation of the Audit Committee, at its meeting on 2nd October 2017, the Board approves the Regularity Self-Assessment 2016/17. Following discussion this was agreed.

Sarah Garrett proposed the Governing Body approves the Regularity Self-Assessment 2016/17. This was seconded by Kathy Newman. All members voted in favour.

224-17 GOVERNING BODY SELF-ASSESSMENT AND RESULTING ACTION PLAN

Document No. 17/224 refers. The Governing Body reviewed its performance during 2016/17. Discussions focussed on the number of external vacancies and it was agreed the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee would work closely with the Clerk to prepare a recruitment action plan for 2017/18.

The Board agreed the self-assessment grading should be rated as 'Good'.

Rob Beale proposed the Governing Body grade its self-assessment as Good. This was seconded by Ian Larrard. All members voted in favour.

225-17 UNADOPTED MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

a) Search and Governance Committee Meeting 22 September 2017

Documents No. 17/225 and 17/225a refers. The Governing Body noted the unadopted minutes of the Search and Governance Committee held on 22nd September 2017. ITL advised the committee had discussed the replacement of the Clerk once she retires in April 2018 and are exploring options.

ITL also explained that the committee had reviewed its performance against its Terms of Reference and had made a recommendation to amend the Terms of Reference to better reflect the governance responsibilities of the committee.

Ian Larrard proposed the Board approves the changes to the Search and Governance Committee Terms of Reference. This was seconded by Julie McLeod. All members voted in favour.

b) Audit Committee Meeting 2 October 2017

Document No. 17/225b refers. Sarah Garrett (SG) gave a verbal update from the Audit Committee meeting which took place on 2nd October 2017. She advised the committee is currently focussing on the new General Data Protection Regulations due to come into effect in May 2018. Caron Edwards, Head of CIS attended the meeting to update members on the GDPR Action Plan, where concern was raised over the lack of contingency. CE was invited back to the December Audit Committee meeting to give an update

The Audit Committee also reviewed its performance against its Terms of Reference. SG reported that whilst the meetings calendar 2017/18 originally planned for three meetings throughout the year, a further meeting scheduled for March 2018 has been added to the calendar.

The Audit Committee also discussed the performance of RSM as internal auditors. The committee felt their reports gave added value and a good insight into operations and were happy to recommend the reappointment of RSM as internal auditors for the academic year 2017/18.

Sarah Garrett recommended the Governing Body approve the appointment of RSM as internal auditors for academic year 2017/18. This was seconded by Rob Beale. All members voted in favour.

Maria Zarola left the meeting at this stage.

226-17 BUSINESS FIRST REVIEW

Confidential Item.

227-17 LOOKING AHEAD

There were no further items requested.

228-17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Governing Body Strategy Event is scheduled to take place on 24 November 2017.

The next meeting of the Governing Body is scheduled to take place on 12 December 2017.

229-17 ITEMS NOT FOR PUBLICATION

There were no further items identified as being Not for Publication.

The meeting closed at 1935hrs.