

SANDWELL COLLEGE

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Search & Governance Committee
held virtually on Monday 5 February 2024, 1.00pm**

Present: J Tew (Independent) (Chair)
J Uddin (Independent)
G Pennington (Principal)

Apologies: Alan Taylor (Independent)

In Attendance: E Scotford (Clerk to the Corporation)

		Action
S24.1	<u>Welcome and Apologies</u>	
	The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies were received from Alan Taylor.	
	RESOLVED THAT: apologies were accepted by Governors.	
S24.2	<u>Declarations of Interest</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest.	
S24.3	<u>Minutes of the Meeting of the Search & Governance Committee held on 6 November 2023</u>	
	RESOLVED THAT: Governors approved the minutes of the meeting of the Search & Governance Committee held on 6 November 2023.	
S24.4	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
4.1	Minute No. 23.12.1 – ETF update – the Governance Development Programme was now operational and guidance on which modules to prioritise had been provided, including the safeguarding module. Governors recognised the need to be realistic about the demands on Governors’ time for training commitments. A Governor had asked whether his previous training would be accepted in place of some of the modules. Details had been requested to identify if there were any matches or overlaps. Quality and finance update training session to take place. One hour training session on safeguarding and quality to be scheduled to precede the March Board meeting.	Princ Clerk
4.2	23.12.1 – College Environmental Strategy – the Committee Chair was taking the lead on behalf of the Board and liaising with Jeremy Taylor, the College lead who would take things forward. There were pockets of action underway following the AoC roadmap. It would take some time for the strategy to evolve and develop but it was in train. Further updates would be given.	JT
S24.5	<u>Board of Governors – Vacancies/Forthcoming Vacancies/Committee Vacancies</u>	
5.1	Discussion took place based on the Clerk to the Corporation’s report detailing vacancies, forthcoming vacancies and committee vacancies which currently were:	

	<p>4 vacancies existed on the Board for Independent members. Update given on steps to recruit a female candidate from the education sector.</p> <p>Three vacancies would arise during the academic year 2024/25:</p> <p>Neil Makin – 9 December 2024 - Neil Makin – Chair of Performance & Remuneration Committee and Interim Chair of LQCC</p> <p>John Tew - 10 March 2025 - Vice Chair, Chair of Search & Governance Committee, member of the Audit, LQCC and Performance & Remuneration Committees, interim Safeguarding Link Governor</p> <p>Tony Sharma - 13 March 2025 - Chair of the Audit Committee</p> <p>Mr Makin and Mr Tew would both have served 2 terms of office.</p> <p>Mr Makin and Mr Tew had confirmed they would stand down at the end of their respective terms of office.</p> <p>Mr Sharma would have served one term of office.</p> <p>Current committee vacancies were noted: Audit Committee x 2; Finance & Strategy x 2; LQCC x 3.</p> <p>The role of LQCC Committee Chair was being covered on an interim basis by Neil Makin.</p> <p>Discussion took place on potential recruitment avenues. It was decided that: the College would explore their networks; the possibility of social media advertising would be researched – the Committee Chair would include this in his meeting with the Exec Director, HR and OD, planned for 20 February; a Governor with local authority connections had been asked to consider potential candidates in his network; specialist recruitment agency costings had been researched by the Clerk and were shared, the use of specialist recruitment agencies would be put on hold for the time being but the committee would bear in mind FE Associates connection with the College if it did pursue that route.</p> <p>Skills and experience needed had been identified as: education, business and safeguarding; as well as addressing the gender balance.</p> <p>Governors noted the importance of succession planning given that John Tew and Neil Makin were due to leave within the next 12 months.</p>	Princ JT
5.2	<p>Governors discussed the engagement of Governor, SL, in the role since his appointment. He had not able to commit to committee membership since his joining. The Committee Chair would contact him about training and his availability as well as a wider conversation about the role.</p>	JT
5.3	<p>RESOLVED THAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors monitored and discussed Board membership and vacancies and action to be taken. • Governors noted the need to be mindful of succession planning and equalities, diversity and inclusion in new appointments. 	
S24.6	<p><u>External Governance Review</u></p>	
6.1	<p>The background to the process and the selection of the AoC as the service provider was given. The deadline for completion of external governance reviews was 31 July 2024.</p>	

6.2	<p>The progress to date and the approach to be taken to the review were discussed in depth and a template of the layout of the AoC report was noted.</p> <p>The scoping meeting had taken place involving the AoC, the former Chair, Vice Chair, Principal and Clerk and the outline for the review had been determined.</p> <p>An online questionnaire for completion by all Governors was due to be sent out.</p> <p>A range of meetings including 1-1 and group sessions with the Reviewer were being arranged.</p> <p>The Board meeting on 11 March 2024 would be observed by the Reviewer, after which the draft report would be prepared for moderation and consideration by the Committee before the final version was recommended for approval at the July Board meeting. Governors discussed the possibility of the final report being presented at an earlier date but the timing of the July Board meeting was felt to be appropriate.</p> <p>The Committee recognised that some Governors were newer and less experienced than others so appropriate support would be provided where that would be helpful.</p> <p>The Clerk had prepared a repository of useful information for Governors on Governor Hub. Clerk to circulate an index of what was included in governance folder.</p> <p>Governors welcomed that Principal and SLT taking an appropriate role in the organisation and planning of the review as it is about governance across the College as whole and in view of their input and experience in such matters.</p>	Clerk
6.3	RESOLVED THAT: Governors noted the update on the External Governance Review.	
S24.7	<u>Policies/procedures</u>	
	There were no policies/procedures to review/approve.	
S24.8	<u>Any Other Business</u>	
	There was no other business.	
S24.9	<u>Determination of Confidential Items</u>	
	There were no confidential items.	
S24.10	<u>Date and time of next meeting</u> Monday 20 May 2024, 1.00pm Meeting to be rearranged.	

Meeting ended at 2.30pm