

## CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COLLEGE

### Minutes of the meeting of the Search and Governance Committee of the Board of Governors held on Monday 21 November 2011 in the Principal's Office, Paget Road

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#### **PRESENT**

Dr V Wylie (Chair)      Mr I Millard  
Mr C Crosdale          Mr D Swingwood

Ms S Meddings (Clerk)

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence. Mr C Crosdale sent notification of late arrival.

#### **27/11            MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 26 SEPTEMBER 2011**

##### **Resolved:**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 September 2011 be approved as a correct record.

#### **28/11            MATTERS ARISING – CURRENT VACANCIES**

Arising on Minute No 23/11, the Clerk reported that the prospective appointee to the external co-opted vacancy on this Committee had withdrawn his expression of interest.

The Committee agreed to discuss the vacancy under agenda item 4 – current vacancies.

#### **29/11            MATTERS ARISING – GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT**

Arising on Minute No 26/11 the Vice Chair reported back on the interview held with the remaining governor applicant from the recent recruitment drive.

The applicant, Ms Susan Lawrence, was interviewed by the Vice Chair, the Principal and the Clerk on 18 October 2011 and it was agreed that Ms Lawrence's background and experience in Finance would be a useful addition to the skills and experience of the Board of Governors.

However, given that there were no current vacancies on the Board of Governors, the Principal was requested to look at whether there were vacancies on the Academy Trust Board Academy Schools' local governing bodies as a potential succession planning route.

*Mr C Crosdale joined the meeting.*

30/11

**CORRESPONDENCE – FOUNDATION CODE OF GOVERNANCE**

The Committee noted copies of correspondence from the Chair and Chief Executive of the AoC addressed to Chairs and Principals of all English Colleges enclosing the first copy of the Foundation Code of Governance.

The Clerk reported that copies of the Code for distribution to Governing Bodies were expected during the coming weeks and that Governing Bodies would be expected to discuss and consider the Code prior to adoption at some point during 2011/12 academic year.

In noting the timeframe the Committee requested the Clerk to bring back a report to the next Committee meeting in January 2012 identifying which areas of the Code the College is currently compliant.

The Committee further agreed that the Foundation Code should be submitted for discussion and consideration to the Board of Governors meeting in the Spring term 2012 where time would be set aside for the required discussions and by which time further guidance would have been received.

31/11

**CORRESPONDENCE – AOC BRIEFING 04/11 – POSSIBLE CHANGES IN THE REGULATION OF COLLEGES**

The Committee noted a copy of the AoC Governors Briefing 04/11 on the possible changes in the regulation of colleges arising from Baroness Sharp's amendments to the Education Bill.

In noting that the Board of Governors would require a comprehensive Briefing on the implications once the details were clarified, the Committee agreed to revisit the item at the next Committee meeting in the New Year.

32/11

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND ITS COMMITTEES – CURRENT VACANCIES**

In respect of the current membership of the Board of Governors and its committees, the Committee noted that there was one vacancy for an external co-opted member of the Search and Governance Committee.

The Clerk reported that the role of the co-opted member introduces an independent element into the Search Committee's membership and helps to ensure that the Committee operates openly and transparently to ensure that the Board is properly responsive to stakeholder interests in respect of its composition arrangements.

Previous appointees to the role had included a retired Professor of Law and a member of the Scrutiny Panel from the Local Authority.

After discussion the Committee agreed to revisit this vacancy in the New Year and requested the Clerk to research and report back to the Committee on the practice of other Governing Bodies.

33/11

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS AND ITS COMMITTEES –  
FORTHCOMING VACANCIES**

The Committee noted that the terms of office of three Governors were due to expire on 31 March 2012, namely:

Ms Carol Boughton  
Mrs Jane Kitchen  
Mr David Swingwood

The Committee agreed to consider these forthcoming vacancies, including any potential re-appointments at its next meeting on 23 January 2012.

It was reiterated that re-appointments to the Board would be considered in the context of both the skills and experience required as indicated by the skills audit matrix and the individual governor's contribution to the work of the Board and to the College. In this context, the Committee agreed to use the re-appointment questionnaire (introduced the previous year) to provide evidence of scrutiny by the Committee prior to recommendations to the Board on re-appointment.

In the interim, the Clerk was requested to write to the three governors to ascertain their interest in serving the Board of Governors for a further term and to remind the Committee at the next meeting of the applicants from the Governor recruitment drive who were as yet unplaced.

The Committee revisited the discussion from a previous committee meeting on the Principal's proposal around the establishment of stakeholder advisory groups.

The Principal had suggested that the establishment of advisory councils/consultative forums could be a way of engaging prospective governors with the College and also enabling governors to retain links with the College when leaving the governing body.

The Committee agreed that this was an interesting proposal and requested that the Principal submit a paper to the Committee outlining structures and terms of reference and the relationship of the proposed forums to the College's Executive Leadership Team.

34/11

**GOVERNOR PERFORMANCE**

The Committee received a report on Governor Performance which included:

- The summary return of the Governors' annual self-assessment questionnaires completed by governors in respect of the 2010/11 academic year together with benchmarking data providing a comparison with six other colleges.
- The first draft of the Governance section of the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2010/11.

- The summary evaluation and feedback from the Strategic Forum held on 7 November 2011.

It was reported that the 2010/11 Governors' self-assessment of performance was based on a questionnaire (piloted for the 2009/10 review) taken from the evaluative questions from the Common Inspection Framework cross referenced to the Good Governance Standards for Public Services. The aim was to develop more synergy with the Governance section of the College's Self-Assessment Report.

The summary of the information was based on 14 completed questionnaires. It was noted that the overall assessment of the College's governance arrangements was graded as Good.

The Clerk reported that given that 6 members of the Board were fairly recent appointments, the questionnaire also enabled identification of areas of training and development to be addressed.

The Committee considered the draft Governance SAR and agreed to endorse the Grade 2 (i.e. Good).

The Committee further noted the summary feedback from the Strategic Forum held on 7 November 2011.

35/11

#### **ANNUAL REVIEW OF REGISTER OF CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

The Committee noted the outcome of the review of the 2009/10 register of confidential items undertaken by the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Clerk.