

SPARSHOLT COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SEARCH COMMITTEE
held on 9 September 2016 at 1.30 pm

¹PRESENT Mr M Coombes (E); Mr T Jackson (P); Mr R Palmer (E).

In attendance: Mrs S Willson, Clerk to the Corporation

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

42 There were no interests to declare.

MINUTES

43 **Resolved** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Succession Planning (ref minute 7/15)

44 The Clerk confirmed governors would be offered an individual development discussion with the Chairman during the Autumn term.

Appointments (ref minute 15/16 & 31/16)

45 The Clerk confirmed that the procedures for appointing the Chairman and for appointing the chairs of committees would be reviewed during 2016/17.

RECRUITMENT

46 The Committee had received the report of the Clerk proposing actions required to recruit an external member of the Board to fill the vacancy which would arise when Peter Lloyd completed his third term of office in December 2016.

Person Specification

47 The Committee considered the draft Person Specification and the skills and experience which would be beneficial to the Board and its committees, taking into account the current mix of skills on the Board and the impact of Peter Lloyd's future departure, succession planning and the strategic context for the College.

48 Members concluded that identifying candidates with the scope and seniority of experience to contribute effectively and get up to speed quickly was a priority at the current time, given the challenges for the College in the next few years. It was recognised that Peter Lloyd brought a wide range of knowledge and experience to the Board and that, although legal expertise in a relevant field would be beneficial, so would familiarity with financial oversight. While acknowledging that a qualified accountant could offer relevant insights and challenge, members concluded that the essential criteria should be kept more open so as not to exclude possible candidates from being shortlisted who had other relevant financial skills.

¹ (E) = External; (P) = Principal; (S) = Staff; (St) = Student; (C) = Co-opted Committee Member

- 49 Members also agreed that the personal attributes of the individual which related to working effectively as a Board member were essential to emphasise in the Person Specification and test at interview.
- 50 *Action* – the Clerk to review the draft Person Specification to reflect the points agreed in discussion.
- 51 **Resolved** – that the revised Person Specification be recommended to the Board of Governors for approval.

Role Description

- 52 The Committee considered a proposed revised Role Description for governors which the Clerk explained was intended to provide more clarity about the role, with the addition of specific mention under governors' responsibilities of the Prevent Duty and British Value and of mandatory Safeguarding and Prevent training. Sections had been added on support, remuneration (expenses) and term of office in line with best practice.
- 53 **Resolved** – that the revised Role Description be recommended to the Board of Governors for approval.

Recruitment Process

- 54 The Committee discussed the recruitment process with a view to ensuring an open and transparent process and attracting the best possible candidates.
- 55 Members considered the equality and diversity on the Board in the context of comparative data from the FE sector and feedback from the Principal about diversity of the College's learners and their communities. Various ways of highlighting the recruitment in these communities was discussed and it was agreed that the Clerk investigate advertising in the Andover area, as well as in the Hampshire Chronicle, as the latter tended to be Winchester centric. The role would also be advertised via the College's website, FE Jobs and relevant free or low cost online sites.
- 56 To ensure that potential candidates were not limited in applying by their personal financial means, it was also agreed that the Clerk include the reference to payment of reasonable interview expenses. The Clerk confirmed that all candidates were offered the opportunity of an informal chat with the Clerk to ask any questions about the role.
- 57 It was agreed that the Search Committee interview panel be made up of the Chairman, the Principal and one or two other external or staff governors, subject to availability. If possible given governors' availability, the panel would include a gender mix.
- 58 The Committee agreed that, subject to the approval by the Board of Governors at its meeting on 6 October of the Person Specification and Role Description, the recruitment timetable should be based on making an appointment at the December meeting of the Board of Governors.

PERFORMANCE OF THE COMMITTEE 2015/16

- 59 The Committee had received the report of the Clerk which posed a series of questions to prompt members in discussing the Committee's performance in 2015/16 and provided an assessment of the College's approach to provisions in the Code of Good Governance which related to succession planning, recruitment and appointments.
- 60 Members discussed the provision in the Code that search committees "should" produce an annual report which describes the work of the committee, considering what benefits would

be provided to the effective governance of the College by the addition of a new formal report and whether the minutes of the Search Committee meetings and a verbal report by the Chairman, based on holding one main meeting per year which would cover key policies and practices, would be sufficient to deliver the same benefits.

- 61 **Resolved** – that comments be invited from other members of the Board of Governors on reporting from the Search Committee.
- 62 Members also discussed the Committee’s terms of reference and whether they remained fit for purpose, following the establishment of the Committee in March 2015. It was suggested that there may be times at which having the additional specialist knowledge of a co-opted member might be useful to the Committee and/or to interview panels. It was agreed to keep this under review and to also consider inviting expert input to specific agenda items if needed.
- 63 **Resolved** – that the Board of Governors be recommended to agree revisions to the Terms of Reference to reflect the Committee’s role in the appointment of co-opted committee members and the recently reintroduced position of Vice President.
- 64 The meeting closed at 2.30 pm.