

**HARROW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SEARCH & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MONDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2007**

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Attendance & Apologies For Absence

Membership: Dr B Field (Principal)
Ms M Harrison (Chair)
Mr D Pearson

In Attendance: Ms J Chaplin (Clerk)

1.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest declared.

1.3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2 July 2007 were confirmed as a correct record, and were signed by the Chair.

1.4 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

2 CORPORATION MEMBERSHIP

2.1 Report on current and forthcoming vacancies

A report was received from the Clerk on the current and forthcoming Corporation vacancies.

Members were advised that:

2.1.1 The Instrument and Articles of Government stated that a term of office should be four years.

2.1.2 At its meeting on 31 October 2006, the Committee had considered a report regarding a potential limitation on period of office, in response to a provision in the new Instrument and Articles of Government that empowered Corporations to limit the number of periods of office for which a member could continuously serve. Members were reminded that it was considered at the meeting that this was a potentially controversial issue and that any limitation should be introduced gradually. It was noted that Members had agreed that a limitation could be introduced immediately for new members, but that for existing members the period of any limitation should commence on their next reappointment subject to their agreement.

With regard to current and forthcoming vacancies it was reported that that:

2.1.3 Student Governor - The Corporation had been advised at its last meeting that Mr Shuaib Ali, one of the two Joint Student Union (SU) Presidents elected as student governor at the student elections, had decided not to return to studies and had resigned his post as the College's Student Governor accordingly. It was

reported that Ms Maryum Rahim, the other Joint SU President had been invited to attend Corporation meetings pending the outcome of a further election scheduled to take place in mid-November 2007. The Committee noted that further details on the outcome of the student election will be provided at the December meeting of the Corporation.

- 2.1.4 Local Authority Nominee – The Local Authority nominee, Brenda Rayson, had retired during the summer and that the Corporation had agreed at the July meeting that a candidate with similar curriculum expertise and experience was required. It was noted that it was understood that the Local Authority had a candidate possessing such skills and experience.
- 2.1.5 The terms of office of Co-opted member, Mr John Steady, and Business member, Mr Clifford Hurst, were due to end in March and April 2008 respectively. It was noted that at the end of their terms of office both Mr Steady and Mr Hurst would have completed two terms of office.

There was a discussion of the candidate's respective contributions to the Corporation, their skills and experience and attendance during their terms in office. It was noted that, with other commitments on his time, attendance had been problematic for Mr Steady.

Members considered the current and forthcoming vacancies and the matter of succession planning for future vacancies generally.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**:

- 2.1.6 To **NOTE** the report.
- 2.1.7 To **REQUEST** that the Clerk write to the Local Authority to ascertain the details of the candidate possessing the skills and experience outlined that the Local Authority intended to put forward.
- 2.1.8 That the Chair of the Corporation would talk both to Mr Steady and Mr Hurst concerning their intentions with regard to seeking re-appointment.
- 2.1.9 That with regard to future vacancies, advertisements should be prepared and published with the IoD and the local Chamber of Commerce.

3 GOVERNANCE MATTERS

3.1 Report on the outcome of the Governance Review

A report was received from the Clerk on the outcome of the Governance Review conducted during the summer.

It was reported that the new Clerkship Service, that commenced in August 2007, had undertaken a review at the College of the governance frameworks specifically and clerkship generally in order to:

- 3.1.1 Confirm that the basics of governance and clerkship were in place in accordance with requirements on the College under statute, Learning & Skills Council (LSC) requirements and important areas of best practice.
- 3.1.2 Provide a framework within which improvement objectives could be set in the first period of the Clerkship contract and facilitate a smooth transition from the former regime to the new one.
- 3.1.3 Undertake the preparation for the subsequent completion of the LSC Governance and Self-Assessment Report Questionnaire (SARQ) for Colleges 2007/08.

It was reported that some work was required to bring about full compliance with important areas of best practice but that many of the changes suggested were mainly cosmetic and included:

- 3.1.4 Improving the dispatch of papers to ensure that they are circulated in a timely manner, in accordance with the requirements of the Instruments & Articles of Government.
- 3.1.5 The simplification of the dispatch of papers, returning to dispatch in paper copy and the introduction of an internal electronic system to which key managers had access, with the exception of confidential matters, to facilitate access to documents as and when required.
- 3.1.6 General updating of forms to bring them in line with best practice.
- 3.1.7 Undertaking greater analysis of the details from the evaluation forms completed after each meeting to inform improvements to performance at future meeting practice.
- 3.1.8 The general review and updating of governance policies, procedures and terms of reference.

There was a discussion of the improvements suggested and in particular, the degree of success of the dispatch of papers electronically and the use of technology in meetings and the performance review cycle and the contribution of the SARQ to the self-assessment process.

After consideration it was **RESOLVED**:

- 3.1.9 To **NOTE** the report.
- 3.1.10 To **APPROVE** the recommendations made in the report.
- 3.1.11 To **REQUEST** that the Clerk liaise with the Vice Principal regarding the self assessment cycle to ensure that the Corporation review of performance was incorporated into the College Self Assessment Report in future.

3.2 Governance Development Report

A report was received from the Clerk on proposals for the development of governance within the College.

Members were advised that although all the foundations of good governance practice had been established some further enhancements could be made to improve governance practice.

It was noted that it was proposed that the improvements suggested could be introduced during the course of the next Academic Year and included the development of:

- 3.2.1 The Governance Section of the College Website.
- 3.2.2 A Governor Application Pack.
- 3.2.3 A New Governor Welcome Pack.
- 3.2.4 The Governor "Annual Return".

The content of the website was considered and in particular the extent to which the website could be developed further with the resources currently available.

The proposal to produce the annual return form was noted and in particular members welcomed the intention to combine a number of forms into one pre-completed form to avoid the need for members to provide the same information on an annual basis. It was agreed that capturing information in line with the College's student demographics was a positive way of demonstrating how the Corporation composition reflected its community.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

- 3.2.5 Note the report.
- 3.2.6 **APPROVE** the programme of governance development proposed subject to:

- The inclusion of a glossary in the handbook.
- Liaising with the Director of HR regarding the equal opportunities section of the Annual Return Form to ensure that the data to be collected was in line with current legislative requirements.

3.3 Report on the proposed amendments to the Corporation Standing Orders

A report was received from the Clerk on proposed amendments to the Corporation Standing Orders.

It was reported that:

- 3.3.1 It was considered good practice for corporations to have standing orders that set out the parameters within which they may conduct business and that, following the appointment of the new clerkship service, a Governance Review had been undertaken to ensure that the College's governance frameworks, including its standing orders, remained in accordance with good practice.
- 3.3.2 Following the review it was considered that some amendments to the standing orders were needed to ensure that they met with important areas of best practice and changes to Corporation policy, including the limitation now placed on the number of terms of office a member may sit.

The detail of the proposed amendments were considered and after discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

- 3.3. **RECOMMEND** that the Corporation **APPROVE** the revised standing orders, subject to making minor amendments to the terminology used to ensure consistency.

3.4 Residential Seminar Consultation

There was a verbal discussion of plans for the residential seminar in 2008.

It was noted that:

- 3.4.1 Historically the seminar was held in March and that members had been canvassed about suitable dates.
- 3.4.2 The venue had been Derdent Court, which had been considered to have been successful.
- 3.4.3 The seminar usually commenced on Friday afternoon and ended on Saturday afternoon.

The subject matter for the seminar was discussed and it was agreed that strategic planning and collaboration and partnerships would be suitable topics for consideration.

After further consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

- 3.4.4 **REQUEST** the Clerk to liaise with the Principal's PA regarding the venue and to check availability.
- 3.4.5 **REQUEST** the Clerk to liaise with corporation members about suitable dates.

4 COMMITTEE BUSINESS

4.1 Committee Annual Report 2006/07

The annual report from the Search Committee to the Governing Body for the period 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2007 was received.

The Committee was advised that the report had been prepared to outline the work of the Committee during the year and to:

- 4.1.1 Provide the Corporation with a summary of work carried out during the year by the Committee, in the context of the wider College calendar; and
- 4.1.2 Assist the Corporation in its evaluation of its own performance during that period.

It was reported that during the year, the Committee had considered a number of issues concerned with the skills, appointment and re-appointment of Corporation members, the induction, training & development of members and the development and monitoring of corporate governance standards.

The Committee was advised that based on the review of the work conducted during the year, there was evidence to support the conclusion that the Committee had:

- 4.1.3 Substantially fulfilled its role as set out in the Committee's Terms of Reference.
- 4.1.4 Made an effective contribution to the work of the Corporation through its rigorous assessment of potential candidates to ensure that appointments were made that both met the skills identified and complemented the existing membership.

After discussion, the Committee **RESOLVED** to:

- 4.1.5 **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation the **APPROVAL** of the Committee Annual Report 2006/07, subject to the amendment of the report to:

- Include reference as to how the Committee had added value to the Corporation through the appointment process bringing forward members with appropriate skills and expertise and maintaining the membership numbers.
- Provide more detail on and an evaluation of the issues considered by the Committee during the academic year, such as attendance and the new policy limiting the number of terms of office.

4.2 Report on the proposed amendments to the Committee's Terms of Reference

A report was received from the Clerk on proposed amendments to the Committee's Terms of Reference.

Members were advised that:

- 4.2.1 It was considered good practice for corporations to have committee terms of reference that set out the parameters within which they may conduct business.
- 4.2.2 Following the appointment of the new clerkship service a Governance Review had been undertaken to confirm that the basics of governance and clerkship were in place and were in accordance with best practice, including the committees' Terms of Reference.

The amendments proposed were considered and after discussion, the Committee **RESOLVED**:

- 4.2.3 To **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation the **APPROVAL** of the Committee's Terms of Reference, subject to the correction of some minor typographical errors.

5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS & MEETING EVALUATION

5.1 Any other business

No other business was raised.

5.2 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 4 March 2008@ 5.00pm.

5.3 Meeting Evaluation

Members completed the meeting evaluation forms and the meeting closed.

M Hamon
11/6/2008