

**HARROW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SEARCH & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2008**

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Attendance & Apologies For Absence

Membership: Mr P Harding
Ms M Harrison (Chair)
Mr T Medhurst
Mr P O'Dwyer

In Attendance: Ms J Chaplin (Clerk)

Apologies: Ms J Radia

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 11 June and 15 July 2008 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 Membership Report

A report was received highlighting the key matters relating to the Corporation Board summarising the turnover, appointments, attendance and training and development during the 2007/08 Academic Year and updates members on current and forthcoming vacancies.

The highlights of the report were discussed including:

2.1.1 The level of attendance and absenteeism for the 2007/08. It was reported that the LSC set 70% as a reasonable attendance figure for governors and that the Corporation's agreed attendance target was 75%, 5% above the sector benchmark. It was noted that the Corporation had achieved an overall attendance figure of 76%, 6% above the sector benchmark and 1% above its own target.

2.2.2 Current and forthcoming Corporation vacancies. Members were advised that:

- There was currently one vacancy for which there was one candidate for consideration. It was noted that Arrangements for a meeting currently had been unsuccessful, but further attempts would be made to do so as quickly as possible.
- With regard to forthcoming vacancies it was reported that During the 2008/09 Academic Year there were two members, Marie Harrison and Jayshree Radia, with terms of office due to end in March 2009. It was noted that both members had been approached to ascertain whether they would wish to be considered for re-appointment, but that neither members were currently in a position to give a decision and would confirm nearer to that time.

2.2.3 The recently updated skills, the results of which, members were advised, could be used to assist the Committee in identifying potential new members with skills and experience to complement those of the current board.

Members were advised that the data highlighted a Corporation possessing a wide range of experience with predominant expertise in:

- General strategic management.
- Academic management experience/expertise.
- Academic non- teaching expertise.
- Audit accountancy and Human resources/personnel.

It was noted that other areas of expertise included:

- Property and estates development.
- Law and the small business sector; and
- Quality assurance.

It was reported that whilst the overall mix places the Corporation in a strong position to be able to fulfil its responsibilities effectively, following the latest review and with regard to future vacancies, the areas of expertise that the Corporation might now wish to consider to complement the Board's expertise were:

- Audit, to further strengthen membership of the Audit Committee
- Property and estates, to complement the existing expertise as the One Harrow project progressed
- Marketing, to provide a source of expertise currently absent from the Board.

2.2.4 The Corporation's diversity profile, the statistics for which it was noted had been compared with the staff and student data to provide an indication of the extent to which the Board reflected the College community.

It was noted that the Board had gone some way to reflect the College community particularly in respect of the gender and age mix, although with regard to future vacancies, areas remained where the Corporation might wish to consider seeking further representation

There was consideration of the report and in particular:

2.2.5 The diversity profile and the statistics in respect to ethnicity. The statistics were discussed and it was agreed that it would be helpful to also look at the College catchment area in order to consider the data in a wider context.

2.2.6 The data relating to disability, and the nature of the data that had been included, and the definition of disability and the descriptor used. It was agreed that:

- The descriptor "disabled people" would be a more appropriate and generic descriptor for future use.
- The statistics should be reviewed to ascertain whether LDD data had been included in the data range.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

2.2.7 **NOTE** report.

2.2.8 **APPROVE** proposals to seek members possessing skills/expertise in audit, property/estates and marketing.

2.2.9 **APPROVE** proposals to work to increase applications and appointments from ethnic minority groups and the disabled.

2.2 Corporation Residential Arrangements

A report was received updating members on the preparations for the forthcoming Corporation residential.

It was noted that a residential event had now been scheduled for 6/7 February 2009 and that, at the October meeting of the Corporation, the Principal had advised members that the focus of the event would be the review of the College's vision, mission and strategic objectives at the residential weekend.

It was noted that:

2.2.1 Further details of the agenda for the event would be circulated nearer to the time.

2.2.2 Following discussions at the June 2008 Search & Development Committee meeting and the feedback received on venues used to date, a range of venues were currently being considered.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

2.2.3 **NOTE** the report.

3 GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Governance Action Plan 2007/08 Update

A report was received updating the Committee on progress in the implementation of the Governance Action Plan 2007/08.

It was reported that the new Clerkship Service, upon commencing the service in August 2007, had conducted a review. It was noted that on the basis of the information available it was evident that the required governance frameworks had been established at the College, although areas were identified where there was room for further development to bring about full compliance with important areas of best practice, which had been set out in an Action Plan.

Members were advised that good progress had been made in the implementation of the 2007/08 Action Plan, with all objectives completed.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.1.1 **NOTE** the report.

3.2 Governance Development Plan 2008/09

A report was received outlining the Governance Development Plan for 2008/09.

It was reported that the report outlined objectives for further developing good governance within the College, set out in a governance development plan, progress against which it is proposed that the Committee would monitor during the year.

It was noted that the proposed objectives in governance development, were intended to further advance governance practice through:

- 3.2.1 The improvement of the governor application process and the broadening of governor recruitment practices to encourage a greater diversity of governor applications.
- 3.2.2 Improved support for new and existing governors.
- 3.2.3 The establishment of closer curriculum links and a greater understanding of the College and its learners through greater participation in the College community.

The proposed objectives were considered and there was a discussion of the proposed objectives and in particular the intention to develop members' involvement and links with the College curriculum areas.

It was agreed that it would be useful:

- 3.2.4 To receive a schedule of dates when such visits could take place
- 3.2.5 For members to provide feedback to the Corporation in a standard format, a template for which the Clerk would provide.

After consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.2.6 **NOTE** the report

3.2.7 **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation **APPROVAL** of the Governance Development Plan for 2008/09.

3.3 Governors: Continuing Support & Development

A report was received outlining proposed strategies for the continuing support for and development of Corporation members.

Members were advised that further to discussions at the last meeting, strategies had been developed for a variety of support initiatives for potential, new and existing governors.

It was reported that it was proposed to introduce:

3.3.1 For potential governors, including from under-represented groups within the community:

- Observer schemes, intended to engage potential members in attendance at board meetings as 'observers', and to sit on governing body subcommittees.
- Shadowing schemes, intended to provide an understanding of the role through the shadowing of governors
- Promotional events, to which potential members would be invited specifically designed to promote the work of the Corporation and to give potential members an insight into the role.

3.3.2 For new governors' induction, an introductory members' guide intended to direct new members through the key points of note in the early staged of membership.

3.3.3 For existing governors:

- Through email updates and the Corporation training, support and development programme, provide members with information about:
 - ◇ Members' curriculum links scheme – an opportunity for members to spend a day in College, "shadowing" a particular area of interest, meeting staff and students and finding out first hand about the work of the College.
 - ◇ The College's Continuing Professional Development Activities that members may wish to take advantage of during the year.
- A summary of key briefings, circulars & consultation events in the format of a summary report at each Corporation meeting.

The proposed initiatives were considered and there was a discussion of:

3.3.4 Introductory members' guide for new governors

3.3.5 The training, support and development programme for members and in particular the curriculum links scheme, which members were advised moved forward a policy previously considered by the Corporation. It was noted that the objective of the scheme to:

- Develop governors' knowledge of curriculum, business support and other areas of the College's operations.
- Encourage governors to use their existing skills and experience to benefit the College.
- Raise the profile of the Corporation by providing opportunities for staff and students to meet informally with governors.
- Familiarise governors with the College's physical environment.

There was consideration of the benefits of the scheme, including feedback to other members of the benefits gained from such visits. The format of the feedback was discussed and it was agreed that the Clerk would provide an appropriate template.

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

3.3.6 **APPROVE** the proposals as outlined.

3.4 Governor Recruitment

A report was received outlining proposed governor recruitment strategies.

It was reported that in the last academic year, the governor recruitment process had been strengthened through the introduction of a revised appointment process.

Members were reminded that at the 10 June 2008 meeting members had discussed future membership and vacancies, which at that time had also highlighted the need to introduce succession-planning strategies to minimise the potential for a number of vacancies to occur at any one time in the future.

It was noted that it had been agreed at the June meeting to make greater use of the facility for co-option on to committees, which would provide an opportunity to provide experience and better prepare potential members for the role.

It was reported that further strategies were now proposed to:

3.4.1 Attract candidates for co-opting on to the Corporation Committees; or

3.4.2 Maintain a database of candidates that would be interested in being considered for appointment in future.

The strategies proposed were discussed and after further consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

3.4.3 **ENDORSE** the proposals as outlined.

3.5 Proposed Amendments to the Corporation Standing Orders

A report was received outlining proposed amendments to the Corporation Standing Orders.

Members were reminded that the Standing Orders in place for the Corporation set out the remit and procedures to be followed.

It was noted that to ensure that they remain in line with good practice it is necessary to periodically review them to ensure that any inaccuracies or inconsistencies that may creep in following various revisions made over time were prevented and continued to reflect any changes in the Instruments & Articles of Government.

It was noted that after review, the following amendments were proposed:

3.5.1 The amendment of Paragraph 2.2 to include minimum attendance requirements.

3.5.2 The deletion of Paragraph 27 " Smoking at meetings"

3.5.3 The amendment of Paragraph 29 to reflect the independent, staff and student membership categories only.

3.5.4 An addition to Paragraph 30 (30.4) to reflect the Corporation's policy on limiting the number of terms of office a member may serve.

Subject to the correction of some minor typographical errors it was **RESOLVED**:

3.5.6 To **APPROVE** the amendments to the Corporation Standing Orders as outlined.

4 COMMITTEE BUSINESS

4.1 Committee Annual Report 2007/08

The Annual Report for the Search & Development Committee was received outlining the work of the Committee during the period 1 August 2007 to 31 July 2008.

Members were advised that the format of the report had been revised to include a statement from the Chair giving an overview of the main sector issues relevant to the Committee's work, along with the highlights of the business considered, which included:

4.1.1 Membership recruitment

- 4.1.2 The recruitment process
- 4.1.3 Succession planning
- 4.1.4 A report on the latest changes to the Instrument & Articles of Government and the action required by the Corporation in response to the changes
- 4.1.5 Sector research into the recruitment & retention of student governors and diversity and recruitment in the education sector

The contents of the report were discussed and the Committee's attendance rate for the year was noted. After discussion it was **RESOLVED** to:

- 4.1.6 **NOTE** the report.
- 4.1.7 **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation the approval of the Committee's Annual Report for 2007/08.

4.2 Proposed Amendments to the Committee's Terms of Reference

A report was received on proposed amendments to the Committee Terms of Reference.

Members were reminded that the Terms of Reference set out the remit and procedures to be followed by the Committee and that to ensure that the Terms of Reference remained in line with good practice it was necessary to periodically review them.

In reviewing the Committee's business and terms of reference, it was reported that amendments had been proposed to ensure that they continued to reflect the recent changes in the Instruments and Articles of Government relating to the publication of minutes and terms of reference on the College website for a minimum period of twelve months.

After consideration it was **RESOLVED** to:

- 4.2.1 **NOTE** the report.
- 4.2.2 **RECOMMEND** to the Corporation the approval of the Committee's Terms of Reference.

5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS & MEETING EVALUATION

5.1 Any other business

No other business was raised.

5.2 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 3 June 2009 @ 5.50pm

5.3 Meeting Evaluation

Members completed the meeting evaluation forms and the meeting closed.