

**WALSALL COLLEGE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SEARCH & GOVERNANCE STANDARDS
COMMITTEE
HELD ON MONDAY 10 OCTOBER 2022 AT 1230 HRS
VENUE: A339 (BOARDROOM, WISEMORE CAMPUS)**

Attendance Present: **Attendees**
Charlotte Bosworth - Chair
Dave Wheeler
Jat Sharma - Principal
Graham Ward
Jaswinder Dhillon
Stuart Pedley-Smith (on teams)

Together with: **Alison Buick – Head of Governance**

Apologies: **None.**

Item	Subject	Who
01.23	<p>CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS It was agreed that Charlotte Bosworth would chair the meeting as Alan Woods had resigned as Chair in July 2022. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and welcomed all to the meeting.</p>	
02.23	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None.</p>	
03.23	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST The Principal noted that he was now a Board member at AOC Sport.</p>	
04.23	<p>MINUTES The minutes of the meeting held on 10 May 2022, having been circulated, were taken as read and approved.</p>	
05.23	<p>MATTERS ARISING The Action Points Record was reviewed and the following updates were noted:</p> <p><u>Item 05.21</u> Governor testimonial videos were now on the college website.</p> <p><u>Item 30.22</u> Student learning logs were unable to be adapted for recording Governor training.</p> <p><u>Item 31.22.1</u> Mary Mahoney had joined the Remuneration Committee.</p> <p><u>Item 31.22.2</u> The Audit Committee vacancy for a full External Governor had been filled by Nick Tomkys' change of status.</p> <p><u>Item 31.22.3</u> Website information on being a Governor was still to be reviewed.</p> <p><u>Item 31.22.4</u> Link Governors would be discussed later in the agenda.</p>	

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06.23	<p><u>Item 33.22</u> Risk management would be discussed later in the agenda.</p> <p>CORPORATION MEMBERSHIP The Head of Governance referred Governors to her written report and the following was discussed:</p> <p><u>Terms of Office</u> Governors noted the Governor terms of office set out in the written report.</p> <p>There was currently a vacancy for both Chair and an External Governor due to the resignation of Alan Woods in the summer. The names of three individuals had been put forward but none had responded to requests for initial meetings, so it was not proposed to pursue these.</p> <p>The appointment of a new Chair would be considered at the Corporation meeting on 20 October.</p> <p>Three Governors had terms of office ending this academic year – Aisling McGowan, Mary Mahoney and Jaswinder Dhillon. The Support Staff Governor position held by Aisling would be subject to a nominations and elections process for eligible staff. Jaswinder would have completed three terms of office in July 2023. Governors considered the skills that would need to be replaced when she stepped down.</p> <p>There was a discussion about current and future vacancies. It was identified that particular skills in FE, HE, HR and business would be beneficial, as there was a vacancy for Finance and Resources Committee. Committee members would consider any suitable contacts they may have.</p> <p>The Principal noted other contacts to be approached.</p> <p><u>Committee Memberships</u> The draft Committee Memberships for 2022/23 were noted. There were minimal changes, and as noted earlier, vacancies had been created by the resignation of Alan Woods and would in some areas be filled by the new Chair when appointed.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Committee Memberships be recommended for Corporation approval.</p> <p><u>Skills Audit Analysis</u> The last Skills Audit had been issued in April 2022. Analysis had not identified any areas of significant concern and it was not proposed to repeat the exercise during this year.</p> <p>Governors discussed the skills audit, noting that it had been completed just after three new Governors had been appointed and that the response rate had been 61%. The skills audit was one element of identifying missing skills or training needs, but there were others. It was agreed that the exercise did not need to be repeated this year.</p> <p><u>Link Governors</u></p>	

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	<p>The Link Governor proposals had been included with the written report and there were several changes, which were discussed. Governors agreed to the proposals as set out, with the exception of Learning Services. The Link Governor for this area felt that this continued to be important but that it had not operated as successfully in the last year. The teaching and learning element had been missing since the retirement of the former Assistant Principal. The Principal suggested adding the current line manager of the area, the Director of Operations and Resources, as the primary link at Exec level. It was therefore agreed to continue with this link role, but with a new Exec level lead.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Link Governor roles be recommended for Corporation approval.</p> <p>Governors resolved to receive the Corporation Membership report.</p>	
07.23	<p>GOVERNOR TRAINING : POLICY, PLANS AND PROGRESS</p> <p>The Head of Governance introduced the paper, which noted the training that had taken place in 2021/22 and outlined the plans for 2022/23.</p> <p>Governor training in 2021/22 had been less affected by the coronavirus pandemic. The AOC had continued to support a number of update webinars and other events for Governors. The College had also continued to hold termly Governor Training events.</p> <p>For 2021/22 the Clerk had enrolled for an ETF programme that allowed all Governors to access a range of training resources. Details of how to log in had been provided to all in July 2021. It was not possible to see how many Governors had engaged in this or in what topics.</p> <p>The Governor Training Policy had been agreed as appropriate for review once every three years. The last full review had taken place in summer 2021 so was not due again this year.</p> <p>The Skills and Post 16 Education Act required boards to report in their annual reports on activity undertaken in year to develop governors and clerks, including reference to the training policy and the expected impact of training on governance performance. This would be added to the governance narrative in this year's statutory accounts.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the termly Governor Training events and it was noted that historically attendance was lower in the summer term. It was suggested that the date be brought forward into May to see whether this prompted higher attendance.</p> <p>Governors resolved to receive the Governor Training report.</p>	Head of Governance
08.23	<p>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR THE WORK OF THE CORPORATION</p> <p>The Head of Governance introduced the item and explained that the supporting paper was for information.</p> <p>The two areas that were felt to merit some further discussion were Governor attendance and the EDI characteristics of the Corporation as a whole.</p>	

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	<p>Attendance was 75% for 2021/22, down from 87% in the previous year and below both the college target of 80% and the sector average of 82.49% for the year.</p> <p>The drop was largely explained by particularly poor attendance by one Student Governor and one Staff Governor. It was also the case that for other Governors, their attendance may have been affected by a return to a more 'normal' pattern of working in their own employment and the fact that the college resumed face to face meetings for most meetings from January 2022.</p> <p>The EDI characteristics were noted. This year there were fewer female Governors but more BAME Governors. The age profile was more weighted towards those aged 51 and over, which was in line with the historical profile.</p> <p>It was agreed that EDI was a factor to be considered when recruiting new Governors, but that this was not the overriding priority. The skills brought by Governors were always the most important consideration.</p> <p>Governors resolved to accept the report and to note the performance indicators data.</p>	
09.23	<p>GOVERNANCE SAR AND QIP</p> <p>The Head of Governance gave an update on the current position for the Governance SAR and QIP. It was to be confirmed whether a validation was to take place with the Assistant Principal Quality and HE. The document had been drafted and passed to the Vice Chair for comment.</p> <p>Governors suggested that a validation of the SAR and QIP form part of the external governance review to be commissioned. This would be considered.</p> <p>It was resolved that Governors received the Governance Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan update.</p>	
10.23	<p>RISK REGISTER</p> <p>The Head of Governance outlined work since the last committee meeting to further develop the risk management process in college. This was being supported by RSM, the College internal auditors.</p> <p>Governance risk was now recorded as Operational Risk 5 – Accountability – The Governors fail to effectively hold the SMT to account.</p> <p>This linked to Strategic Pledge 2 – Build a culture that celebrates and prioritises excellence and innovation in Teaching, Learning and Assessment.</p> <p>The reasons why the risk may materialise, and the controls to mitigate and manage them, had been recorded as set out in the written paper.</p> <p>The college was using the 4Risk online system, and the information recorded on this in relation to the governance risk showed that the risk identified was being managed. It would be reviewed at least every quarter, in line with the requirements to keep 4Risk up to date.</p>	

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11.23	<p>EXTERNAL GOVERNANCE REVIEW</p> <p>Governors were reminded of the requirements and that the first review needed to be completed by 31 July 2024.</p> <p>It was agreed that some action needed to be completed on this and that ideally a scope needed to have been drafted by Christmas. Governors suggested that the appointment of a new Chair and the outcome of the ONS review of the classification of colleges should be completed first, and then a meeting of the Chairs should be scheduled to consider the scope in some more detail.</p> <p>There was overall agreement that governance was strong and that the type of broad reviews that had taken place in colleges involved with the pilot work may not provide a meaningful action plan. A more specifically focused scope for the work was felt to be more beneficial.</p> <p>It was resolved that Governors received the External Governance Review report.</p>	Head of Governance
12.23	<p>GOVERNANCE UPDATES</p> <p>The Head of Governance referred to her report which covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Government Ministers; • AOC President; • Ofsted Handbook Changes; • AOC Events; • ONS College Classification Review; • Funding and Accountability Consultation; and • FE Governance Guide. <p>Governors resolved to receive the Governance Updates.</p>	
13.23	<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>It was resolved that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 24 January 2023 at 1000 hrs.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 1435 hrs.</p>	

Item	How governors challenged management

Item	Impact of meeting on college
06.23	Agreed to recommend Committee Membership and Link Governor proposals for Corporation approval.

09.23	Agreed Governance SAR and QIP