

THE CORPORATION

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SEARCH AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2009

Present:

Ms K Clifford		Principal	Present
Mr J Hedges	Chair of Committee	Co-opted member	Present
Mr N A Hudson	Vice-Chair of Committee	Co-opted member	Present (from 7.40pm)
Mr P L Leighton	Chair of Corporation	Business member	Present
Ms S Medd		Support Staff member	Present

Clerk to the Corporation:

Mr C Bond

Also Present:

Dr T Street Assistant Principal HR

Minute MS/29/09 (6.55 pm)

Declarations of Interest

There were none.

Minute MS/30/09 (6.56 pm)

Apologies for Absence

There were none.

Minute MS/31/09 (7.00 pm)

Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Search and Governance Committee

James Hedges was elected unopposed to serve as Chair of the committee until the end of the academic year 2009-10.

Noel Hudson was elected unopposed to serve as Vice-Chair of the committee until the end of the academic year 2009-10.

Minute MS/32/09 (7.05pm)

Safeguarding Policy

Document DS/27/09

Dr Tina Street, Assistant Principal HR, presented the paper. The committee were supportive of the processes and procedures detailed in the policy. Members however were unclear as to the contractual status of an individual who had been employed on a conditional basis by the college and who after having taken up their post was found to be in breach of the conditions upon which the employment had been offered. Members were also unclear as to whether a withdrawal of an offer of employment during a probationary period would count as a dismissal, thus triggering an automatic right of appeal. It was proposed and accepted that the committee request that the Corporation authorise the Principal and

Assistant Principal, HR to seek appropriate legal advice on this issue, using if necessary the services of a senior employment lawyer.

Minute MS/33/09 (7.28pm)

Amendments to the Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business

Document DS/28/09

The Clerk presented proposed amendments to two sections of the Standing Orders for the Conduct of Business.

Section 3: Appointment of Members to the Corporation

The proposed amendments introduced into the Standing Orders the provision for Safeguarding checks to be made before the appointment of Corporation Members was confirmed.

Section 21: Appeals by Members of Staff Against Action Taken By the Principal

The proposed amendments revised and clarified the procedures for conducting an appeal made to the Corporation. There was detailed discussion about the proposed amendments. Members wished to determine whether an appeal should constitute a re-hearing or whether the corporation should only hear appeals if they were satisfied that the appellant had sufficient grounds on which to appeal. It was resolved that given recent ACAS (2009) guidelines, it should be left to the discretion of the appeals panel to decide on the way in which each individual appeal should be heard. The committee also resolved that the amendment should include the provision for the Clerk or an appropriate legal advisor to be present at the hearing to give procedural or legal advice. The committee also noted that recent case law had extended to certain appellants the right to legal representation in appeals. In some this would call for a wider definition of the term friend than that currently in use.

The committee asked the Clerk to incorporate the suggested changes in the amendments and to submit them to the Corporation for approval.

Minute MS/34/09 (8.06 pm)

Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meetings of the Search and Governance Committee held on 2 June 2009 and 3 July 2009

Documents DS/20/09 and DS/22/09

The minutes were approved unanimously by the Committee and signed by the Chair.

Minute MS/35/09 (8.08 pm)

Matters Arising from the Confirmed Minutes of Meetings of the Search and Governance Committee held on 2 June 2009 and 2 July 2009 which were not the Subject of Separate Items on this Agenda

a) 2 June 2009

Minute MS/18/09

The Chair reported that on 29 September four Corporation members and the Clerk had met Stephen Bennion, an Ofsted inspector and consultant to the college. Mr Bennion had been impressed with the grasp of the details of governance shown by members.

Minute MS/20/09

The Clerk reported that he would be making further contact with Roger Hawkins, Clerk to the Corporation of Havering Sixth Form College, with a view to continuing the Peer Review work.

b) 3 July 2009

There were none

Minute MS/36/09 (8.11pm)

Membership of the Corporation

The Clerk reported that there were at present two outstanding vacancies, one for an Independent member and one for a Parent member. The committee noted that the Corporation had resolved not to appoint an

Independent member until the work on the Impact Assessment on the Corporation's Policy on the Attraction, Recruitment and Selection of Members had been concluded.

The Clerk reported that in the next mailing to parents he would be seeking the nomination of a Parent member, but that it was unlikely that a Parent member could be nominated, elected and appointed before the meeting scheduled for 16 December 2009.

The committee were asked to note that the Academic Staff had nominated by secret ballot, Ayoola Dixon for the post of Teaching Staff Member. Ms Dixon teaches Law in the Social Studies department. The committee also noted that Hiba Hassan, who had been nominated by the students as a Student Member, had since left the college and that the students had nominated in her place Sandra Annan. Ms Dixon and Ms Annan would attend a special meeting of the Search and Governance Committee immediately prior to the Corporation meeting on 21 October.

Minute MS/37/09 (8.14 pm)

Impact Assessment on the Attraction, Recruitment and Selection of Members

Documents S/02/04, DS/24/09, DS/25/09

1. **Joint Advertising for Members.** The Clerk reported that he had spoken to Val Bartlett, Clerk to the Corporations of Leyton Sixth Form College and Waltham Forest College. Both colleges were still keen to proceed with the project but were awaiting formal administrative approval before they could proceed further
2. **Person Specification.** The committee examined the document *The Personal Qualities that the Corporation Seeks in its Members*, which had been adopted by the Corporation in 2004. Members resolved to adopt this as the Corporation's formal Person Specification to be used when appointing Independent Members.
3. **Questions at Interview.** The committee considered the proposed questions to be put to applicants for membership of the Corporation. The Principal reminded members that the Corporation had agreed at the meeting on 3 July 2009 to adopt the scoring system used to appoint members of staff in the college. The committee endorsed this policy.
4. **Induction Policy.** The committee considered the Corporations current induction policy and agreed that other than some minor technical adjustments to wording, no major amendments were required.

None of the above items require ratification by the Corporation as they do not amend policies already determined by the Corporation on previous occasions.

Minute MS/38/09 (8.23pm)

Skills Audit

The Clerk reported that he had received insufficient responses to the mailing to enable him to compile the required document. This was particularly disappointing to the committee as it noted that the need for a skills audit was a recommendation from the internal auditors and that the target date for completion was 31 October 2009. It was agreed that all members would be asked to complete the skills audit form at the meeting on 21 October 2009 with a view to presenting the completed document to the Corporation on 16 December 2009.

Given that the Impact Assessment on Attraction, Recruitment and Selection of Members is complete, the Corporation may now appoint an Independent Member under the terms of the revised procedure. Members however should consider whether they wish to defer the appointment to the vacancy until the Skills Audit is complete.

Minutes MS/39/09 (8.27pm)

Analysis of Corporation Members' Attendance at Meetings 2008-09

Document DS/26/09

The committee noted that the overall attendance figure (87%) was extremely healthy and the Clerk reported that this compared very favourably with data he had seen from other colleges and against national benchmarks.

Minute MS/40/09 (8.29pm)

Arrangements for the Appraisal of the Chair by Members

After discussion the committee resolved to ask the Clerk to investigate how this process is undertaken in similar institutions and to report to the meeting scheduled for 3 February 2010.

Minute MS/41/09 (8.33pm)

Proposed Budget 2009-10

Document DS/29/09

The committee approved the proposed budget for 2009-10

Minute MS/42/09 (8.35pm)

Any Other Business

There was none.

Minute MS/43/09 (8.36pm)

Future Items for the Agenda

None were proposed

Minute MS/44/09 (8.36pm)

Confidential Items

There were none.

Minute MS/45/09 (8.37pm)

Dates and Time of Next Meeting

It was agreed that there was no requirement for a November meeting and that the next scheduled meeting would take place on Wednesday 3 February 2010 at 7.00pm. In addition there would be a special meeting held immediately prior to the Corporation meeting on Wednesday 21 October 2009 at 6.30pm to meet the nominated Academic Staff and Student members.

The meeting concluded at 8.38 pm. No item was to be the subject of a separate, confidential minute.