

SPARSHOLT COLLEGE HAMPSHIRE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SEARCH COMMITTEE
held on 27 September 2017 at 1.00 pm

¹PRESENT Mr M Coombes (E); Mr A Hoad (E); Mr T Jackson (P).

In attendance: Mr N Hopkins (Vice Chairman)
Mrs S Willson (Clerk to the Corporation)

MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE

51 The Committee noted that A Hoad had joined the Committee for this meeting as a Member and that N Hopkins had been invited to attend as a guest to contribute to discussions of ongoing business from the previous meeting of the Search Committee.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

52 There were no interests to declare.

MINUTES

53 **Resolved** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April (Parts 1 and 2) and 21 June 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

REVIEW OF BOARD MEMBERSHIP

54 The Committee had received the report from the Clerk providing an update on the annual review of membership of the Board of Governors, including committees.

55 Noting that a vacancy would arise on the Board from 12 December (when Roger Fawcett completed his second term of office of four years, as previously reported to the Board), the Committee considered whether to recommend to the Board the appointment of one of the candidates confirmed as “also appointable” following interviews in June. The four candidates concerned had each indicated shortly after the interviews that they would be interested in joining the Board, or being co-opted to a committee, if a suitable vacancy arose during the next 12 months. The Committee discussed the candidates’ skills and experience and agreed that there were two individuals who would best fit the requirements of the Board from December, providing that they remained interested in and available to perform the role of governor.

56 The Committee agreed that the Principal and Clerk contact the candidates to confirm their interest in joining the Board and that the lead candidate possibly be invited for an informal meeting with the Chairman and Principal in order to ascertain that there were no relevant factors which had changed since the interview.

57 **Resolved** – that a recommendation be presented to the Board of Governors once the availability and continued suitability of the candidate had been confirmed.

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

Chairman and Vice Chairman

- 58 The Committee noted the Chairman is required to retire at the end of his term of office of Chairman on 31 July 2018 and that the Vice Chairman would also complete his term of office as Vice Chairman on the same date. The Committee discussed the timing of the nominations process for both roles given that the Board's succession plan policy required that the selection process for the Chairman be completed before nominations were sought for Vice Chairman.
- 59 The Committee agreed that the process should begin in the Autumn term to avoid a prolonged period of uncertainty and in order that both roles be appointed in advance of July 2018.
- 60 **Resolved** – that the Clerk commence the process of inviting nominations for Chairman in the Autumn term, after the October meeting of the Board, and subsequently seek nominations for Vice Chairman once the process for appointing the Chairman was completed.

Student Governor

- 61 The Clerk noted that Amy Robbins completed her term of office as Student Governor for the Sparsholt College campus on 30 September and that attempts to encourage nominations during the previous Spring and Summer terms had been unsuccessful. The Clerk was again working with the SLT and the Dean of Higher Education to seek nominations, via the Student Councils.
- 62 The Committee noted that Student Governors received a letter of thanks from the Chairman and the offer of a personal reference from the Clerk, on behalf of the Board.

Committee membership

- 63 The Committee discussed the vacancy for a Co-opted Member which was due to arise on the Audit Committee in December when Nigel Beck retired and the value of having co-opted members with financial and/or accountancy experience on the Committee. It was noted that the other Co-opted Member, who was a qualified accountant, had a further two years of his current term of office and that, while it was not therefore essential to appoint another Co-opted Member, having a second Co-opted Member was a good way of maintaining a relevant mix of skills on the Committee. If a suitable new Co-opted Member could not be identified, the Board might however wish to consider changing the composition of the Committee.
- 64 The Committee discussed one the "also appointable" external governor candidates, whose background included accountancy, and agreed that she be invited to consider the role and that membership of the Audit Committee could also provide a means of gaining experience as a potential future Member of the Board.
- 65 **Resolved** – that the Clerk contact the candidate to confirm her interest in joining the Audit Committee as a Co-opted Member and consult with the Chair of the Audit Committee regarding whether to bring a recommendation to the Board for appointment.
- 66 The Vice Chairman confirmed the view he had previously reported to the Board that the effective performance of the Quality & Standards Committee (Q&S) would be strengthened by having a third external governor member (as was the case for the Curriculum, Employers & Marketing Requirements Committee and where the Resources Committee currently had for external governor members). The Committee discussed

whether one of the external governors might be prepared to be a member of two substantive committees or whether revisions should be made to the membership of other committees. It was noted that changes to the membership of the Board and the process for agreeing the Chairman and Vice Chairman post-holders could also provide opportunities to revisit current committee membership. The structure of committees and governors' development were also areas covered by the Board's annual performance evaluation.

Andover Town Football Club Limited

- 67 The Committee noted that the Board of Governors representative on the Andover Town Football Club Limited (ATFC Ltd) Board of Directors was currently Roger Fawcett but that he would not be able to continue to fill this position when he retired from the Board of Governors. It was noted with gratitude that Roger Fawcett had contributed a great deal to the development of the Club and had taken an active involvement in its activities. A knowledge of football was not an essential pre-requisite for the post-holder. The aim of having a governor on the ATFC Board was to bring a College perspective to its discussions and to ensuring that the direction of the Club remained in line with its strategic objectives and the time commitment was usually three Board meeting per annum.
- 68 **Resolved** – that external Members of the Board be invited to express an interest in taking on a directorship of ATFC Ltd in the capacity of representing the Board of Governors.

SENIOR POST HOLDERS

- 69 The Committee had received the report of the Clerk on the recruitment plans for the role of Deputy Principal, including proposals from the Principal relating to the Senior Post Holders on the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT).
- 70 The Committee noted that the Deputy Principal had written to the Principal to confirm that his last day in post would be 31 July 2018.
- 71 The Committee endorsed the proposed recruitment timetable which involved advertising the post from 20 October with the Board making an appointment in December. This timetable allowed for a second round of recruitment in the Spring term, should the first round be unsuccessful in identifying a suitable candidate.
- 72 The Committee also endorsed the proposals that the recruitment and selection process be supporting by the College's HR Manager, in liaison with the Clerk, and that it was not necessary to commission external recruitment advisors on this occasion.
- 73 Under the Instruments & Articles (Article 10), the Committee noted that the Board was required to appoint a Selection Panel of the Principal and at least three other Board members and that the panel decides the arrangements for selecting applicants, interviews applicants and makes recommendations to the Board. The Committee discussed the membership of the panel, suggesting that the Chairman and/or Vice Chairman should be on the panel together with one or two other external governors. The Chairman explained that, as his term of office ended next July, he would be content not to be a formal member of the panel and for another governor who had longer to serve on the Board to take part. While the Committee noted that it would be preferable to include a gender mix and a mix of experience on the panel, it was acknowledged that the selection of governors would also need to take into account availability.
- 74 The Committee noted that the timetable required the selection panel to meet on or soon after the day of the October Board meeting in order to agree the dates of the

- interviews/assessment and other information to be issued with the advertisement of the role. Asked about the shortlisting of applications, the Principal explained that in the past he had reviewed applications and providing applications pre-sorted to the Selection Panel for its consideration. This was a matter for the Selection Panel to decide.
- 75 The Committee also asked that the interview/assessment days included a tour and/or activities on both the Sparsholt and Andover campuses.
- 76 The Committee reviewed the proposed approach and costs of advertising, taking into account where potential candidates were most likely to come across or look for job opportunities, and agreed to a hard copy quarter page advert in FE Week and to a range of online advertising. The Principal would also ask Landex to disseminate the vacancy to its members.
- 77 The Committee discussed the Principal's proposal to categorise another member of the SLT as a designated Senior Post Holder and to revise the titles of the two posts so that both performed the role of deputy to the Principal, one with a corporate lead and one with a curriculum lead. It was suggested that the Principal would need to put in place an agreement as to which of the deputies had senior decision-making responsibility in the absence of the Principal and that this could be implemented on, for example, a six monthly rotating basis.
- 78 The Committee also discussed the proposed Job Description and Person Specification for the Deputy Principal (Curriculum) with regard to succession planning for the Principal and the extent to which the Board was seeking to appoint a Deputy Principal who had the potential to be Principal in due course.
- 79 It was noted that the Board would receive proposals regarding remuneration. The Committee suggested that these and the Job Description needed to include a clear proposal regarding whether the Deputy Principal (Curriculum) would be required to live on campus, how this requirement linked to the responsibilities of the role (for example, as the statutory Designated Safeguarding Lead) and to ensure there were no issues in relation to equal pay or tax liabilities. The agreed position would need to be reflected in the advertising for the post.

PERFORMANCE OF THE COMMITTEE 2016/17

- 80 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 2016/17 and proposed an amendment to the Committee's terms of reference.
- 81 Members noted that the Committee had met four times in 2016/17 and had supported the Board in the successful recruitment of two new external governors.
- 82 The Committee agreed that the proposed revision to the terms of reference was in line with the decision by the Board to comply with the annual reporting requirements in the Code of Good Governance through the provision of the minutes of the Committee.
- 83 **Resolved** – that the Board of Governors be recommended to agree that the terms of reference of the Committee be amended to add - "To provide an annual report to the Board of the work of the Committee, including in relation to recruitment and equality and diversity, which may be in the form of the minutes of the Committee."
- 84 The meeting closed at 2.40 pm.