

Plumpton College

**Minutes of the Search Committee
meeting held on Tuesday 22nd September 2009**

Present:	Mike Atkinson David James Christine Howe Des Lambert Bob Tidy	Governor / Chairman Governor / Vice Chairman Governor Governor / Principal Co-opted Member
In attendance:	Jenny Brooker	Clerk to the Corporation
Apologies:	John Evans Denise Stokoe	Governor Governor

Meeting started: 3.30pm

Minute		Action by whom	Action by when
SC/09/15	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 28th April 2009</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.</p>		
SC/09/16	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>On behalf of the committee the Chairman congratulated Mr Tidy on his re-election as a Councillor of East Sussex County Council.</p> <p>SC/09/8: A letter requesting expressions of interest in the position of chair designate would be circulated to Governors within the next 10 days. It was hoped a chair designate would be appointed at the Corporation meeting on 15th December 2009.</p> <p>SC/09/8: The recommendation that a Governor be granted a new four year term of office when initially appointed as Chair of the Corporation had been endorsed by the Corporation and the Standing Orders updated accordingly.</p> <p>SC/09/8: Mr Howard Wood had advised the Principal that he may be interested in further involvement with the College on his retirement but that was not imminent.</p> <p>Agreed: The Chairman and Principal to meet with Mr Wood at a future date to discuss the possibility of him becoming a member of the Governing Body.</p>	MA/Clerk	02.10.09
		MA/DPL	

	<p>SC/09/08: The Chairman had written to John Morrison at WSCC and provided him with a copy of the College 2008 Annual Report, and Peter Griffiths the Chairman of West Sussex LEA had visited the College and been invited to nominate a WSCC contact. He had not received any responses.</p> <p>Agreed: Council officials to be invited to the College once further details were available on the new funding and commissioning arrangements.</p> <p>SC/09/9: Ms Christine Howe had been re-appointed for a further two year term of office commencing 26th November 2009. Mrs Vicary had retired from the Governing Body due to family and work commitments. Mr Bryan Stevens term of office ended on 29 Sep 09 and he would be retiring from the Governing Body.</p> <p>SC/09/10: An open invitation had been provided via Sussex Clerks for Governors of other Colleges to attend the non-confidential section of Corporation and committee meetings.</p>	MA/DPL	
SC/09/17	<p>Determination of Corporation Membership</p> <p><i>Number of Corporation Members</i> The Committee noted a paper by the Chairman on the determination of Corporation membership. Under the Instrument of Government the Corporation had the flexibility to determine the number of its members provided that the number was between 12 and 20 and the Corporation had a requirement to fill vacancies as soon as practicable.</p> <p>The Corporation had agreed in April 2008 that the membership of the Corporation be 19 but to prevent the Corporation being rushed into appointing Governors the Chairman proposed that the membership of the Corporation be re-determined on a daily basis.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the proposal and it was agreed that the minimum number of Corporation members should be more than 12. In response to the Chair, the Clerk advised that although the formula did not strictly breach any rules it may not necessarily be welcomed by inspectoral bodies. The Chair agreed to continue to lobby DBIS official to remove the determination and vacancy provisions from the Instrument of Government.</p> <p>Agreed to Recommend: The number of Corporation members be re-determined on a daily basis in line with the actual numbers of Governors in post on that day, subject to the number determined being between 15 and 20.</p>	MA/Clerk	29.09.09

	<p>Possible New Governor</p> <p>The farming expertise on the Corporation needed to be strengthened as a result of the retirement of Mrs Vicary from the Corporation, the work commitments of Mr Courtney and the need to develop the College's non-academic businesses. One possible candidate that had been put forward by Mr Courtney was Mr Jeff Trunkfield.</p> <p>Mr Trunkfield had extensive farming experience, was a former student of the College and was a great supporter of it.</p> <p>Other potential appointments, apart from Mr Wood, might best be considered afresh in the light of the machinery of government changes and their implementation.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>The Clerk arrange for the Chairman and Principal to meet with Mr Trunkfield to discuss his suitability as a potential member of the Corporation.</p>	Clerk	31.10.09
SC/09/18	<p>Informal Activities of Governors</p> <p>Link Governor Scheme</p> <p>The Committee noted a paper by the Chair on the informal activities of Governors and the establishment of working groups.</p> <p>The link governor scheme had been useful but its purpose was not entirely clear. The scheme had originally been established to extend governors' knowledge of operational areas but it had gradually moved to a position where Governors were linked to areas they had industry experience and knowledge of. Governors were therefore a source of advice to the HoD of their link area. There should be no expectation that Governors should be linked to only one area; it was quite possible that a governor might be able to make a valuable contribution in two or three areas.</p> <p>The committee discussed the importance of Governors understanding the work of departments but it was identified this could best be done as part of the governor induction/further development programmes rather than through the link governor scheme.</p> <p>It was agreed that the governor induction programme should include participation in the Chair and Vice Chair's rolling programme of HoD meetings and that the relevant link governor should continue to be invited to participate in these meeting.</p> <p>The importance of the scheme not being a lobbying channel for HoDs was discussed and it was identified that</p>		

	<p>issues Governors had with regard to their link area should be discussed with the Principal rather than being raised directly with the Governing Body.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>(a) The link governor scheme be retained but its focus be on deploying Governors' individual experience and expertise where it can most help management.</p> <p>(b) The proposed scheme purpose, link arrangements and expectations of link governors, as set out at Appendix 2 of the 'Informal Activities of Governors' paper be adopted.</p> <p>(c) The following Governor appointments to link areas be confirmed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms Stokoe - 14-16/Schools/Outcentres • Mr James – HE • Mrs Foster - Horticulture • Ms Howe – Animal Care & Equine • Mr Atkinson – Health & Safety • Mr Courtney - Farm and Agricultural Machinery <p>(d) Subject to his appointment to the Corporation, Mr Trunkfield be appointed, alongside Mr Courtney, as link governor for engineering and machinery, as well as a member of the Buildings & Farm Working Group</p> <p>(e) Governors be asked annually whether there were additional areas to which they felt they could contribute.</p> <p>Advisory & Working Groups</p> <p>There was a need for Governors to focus on generating additional cash from non-academic activities including residential/catering and the farm/winery. Due to the F&GP agenda remaining heavily overloaded the Chairman proposed that this work be carried out through working groups reporting to F&GP.</p> <p>It was proposed that a Residential working group be established and the Buildings Sub Committee extend its remit to cover the physical and financial performance of the farm.</p> <p>After expressing an interest in becoming a link governor for student welfare, Dr Stanier had been approached regarding the possible establishment of a Residential working group and had indicated he would be willing to Chair such a group.</p>	Clerk	
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	<p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Buildings Sub Committee be altered to the Buildings and Farm Working Group and its terms of reference be amended accordingly for consideration by the Buildings Sub Committee and F&GP Committee. b) A residential working group be established and Chaired by Dr Stanier. c) The proposed terms of reference of the residential working group, as set out in Appendix 3 of the 'Informal Activities of Governors' paper be considered by Dr Stanier before being submitted to F&GP Committee for approval. d) Dr Stanier should be consulted on the membership of the Residential working group which should be ideally be limited to three members (plus one former Governor if required). e) The Environmental Advisory Group continue its work reporting to F&GP Committee. f) The Chairman and Principal put proposals to the next strategic Workshop on how Governors might effectively oversee a co-ordinated management of the College's knowledge transfer activity. <p>Disciplinary Appeal Panels</p> <p>The committee gave consideration to ways Governors involvement in student and staff disciplinary panels could be reduced. The Clerk advised that as the senior post holder, the Principal was the only member of staff whom could suspend or dismiss a student or a member of staff under the Articles of Government. This meant that unless another member of staff was appointed a senior post holder, appeals should be heard by a panel of Governors.</p> <p>The Principal advised that additional focus was being placed on the management of staff and students to reduce the likelihood of dismissals and appeals. There remained a need however for a small group of Governors to have skills and experience of appeals who could be called upon should the need for an appeal panel arise.</p> <p>Agreed:</p> <p>Consideration be given to three members who could regularly form an appeal panel should one be required and to providing at least one of the Group with the relevant HR background skills.</p> <p>Representational and Networking Activity</p> <p>Consideration was given to whether there should be an expectation on Governors to attend College events and be involved in networking activity on behalf of the College.</p> <p>The committee agreed that it was a reasonable expectation that Governors should attend the annual Open Day and Prize Giving Ceremony and be asked to</p>	<p>Clerk/MA</p> <p>Clerk/SS</p> <p>Clerk/SS</p> <p>SS</p> <p>MA/DPL</p> <p>MA/Clerk</p>	<p>17.11.09</p> <p>17.11.09</p> <p>17.11.09</p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>31.10.09</p>
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	<p>take responsibility for looking after sponsors and VIPs. They should also have an opportunity to socialise with one another.</p> <p>Agreed: Governors be reminded of the dates of the annual open day and prize giving events and a room for socialising to be allocated to Governors at such events.</p>	Clerk	31.01.10
SC/09/19	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Clerk advised that two candidates had put their names forward for the position of HE Student Governor and an election would be held in October where all HE students would be entitled to vote for their chosen candidate. The successful candidate would be appointed at the Corporation meeting on 15th December 2009.</p> <p>In response to Ms Howe, the Clerk advised that there was no way in which the appointment of HE Student Governor could be brought forward but candidates could routinely be invited to attend Corporation meetings in advance of the election.</p> <p>Agreed: Candidates for the position of HE Student Governor be invited to attend the Corporation meeting on 29 September 2009.</p>	Clerk	23.09.09
SC/09/20	<p>Date of Next meeting</p> <p>It was agreed that the next committee meeting scheduled to take place on Tuesday 24th November 2009 was no longer required. The next meeting of the committee was therefore scheduled to take place on Tuesday 8th June 2010 at 2.30pm but an earlier meeting would be arranged if required. There being no further business the meeting ended at 5.00pm</p>		

JKB 23/9/09

Signed.....*Chairman*) Dated.....