SEARCH, GOVERNANCE, AND REMUNERATION MINUTES
27 January 16.00
Committee Room, Moulsham Street Campus

Members: Trevor Bolton (Vice Chair), Rachael Cornwall, Richard Davidson, David Holmes, Christian Norman, Sheila Salmon; David Warnes

In attendance: Ra Hamilton-Burns

	COMMITTEE MATTERS	Action
1)	**Apologies for absence** David Holmes sent apologies.	
2)	**Declaration of Interest** David Warnes declared an interest in Item 10.	
3)	**To approve the minutes of the meeting of 7 October 2025** **AGREED: THE SEARCH, GOVERNANCE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE AGREED THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 OCTOBER 2025 WERE A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD.**	
4)	**Matters and actions arising from the minutes** All actions were completed. The Director of Governance reported that 17 members had completed the Board meetings date and time survey. The responses indicated that the preference is for Friday afternoons after 12 noon but before 18.00. **Meetings survey –** A full survey was undertaken with 15 responses. The first choice for the majority was for Friday afternoons any time after noon. **AGREED: BOARD MEETINGS SHOULD BE HELD ON FRIDAYS BETWEEN NOON AND SIX.** **ACTION: RHB and AS to draft meeting dates for Board and Committees for 2026/7 ready for review at the March 2026 Board meeting.** David Warnes advised that for IAG and Careers training, the Careers and Enterprise Company has a couple of free online courses for Governors, one on general CEIAG and one specifically on the Gatsby benchmarks, might these be suitable Governors: Introduction to Careers - The Careers & Enterprise Academy Understanding the Updates to the Gatsby Benchmarks - The Careers & Enterprise Academy	**RHB/AS**

	AGREED: THE COURSES WILL BE PUBLICIZED AT THE DEVELOPMENT DAY FOR GOVERNORS TO BOOK VIA AMY SIMMONDS. **Succession planning** – David Warnes presented a paper looking at each of the SPH roles. • **Principal and CEO** – the DP is currently undergoing the ETF 'preparing for CEO' programme to complete in summer 2026. • **COO** – a new position of 'Director of Finance' will be included in the budget for 2026-7 with recruitment starting at Easter. The JD will outline progression to the COO role in 2-3 years. This will be pitched between £65k-£80k. • **Deputy Principal** - A new 'Leadership Academy' has been launched for all current Directors and Heads, this includes internal and external training programmes to identify talent from within, with a view to developing the Wider Leadership Group for the next stage in their career. • **Middle leaders** - are attending a leadership academy programme which is a mix of internal and external leaders to prepare them for succession. This has programmes for directors. Governors advised that the skills and ability to take on nominee for Ofsted should be kept in mind when planning succession. ***Richard Davidson joined the meeting at 16.11.***	**RHB/SS**
5)	**Director of Governance signposting report.** The report had been drafted to support governors and enable them to focus on critical and strategic items on the agenda. It reminds members that the CEO report to the Board and the advice note on 8.i both offer sector content, trends and key areas on which to focus. For this agenda the key items of focus are: **Item 6 – Membership** • Vacancy to be created in August when Christian Norman leaves having reached the maximum terms he can serve. • Vacancy therefore for Quality and Learners' Committee Chair – can be one of the current members • Co-opted members – DW has a great reciprocal idea for this. **Item 7 – The External Board Review scope. T**he Committee should review and approve this and instruct the DoG to identify potential suppliers. **Item 10 – Senior Post Holder Performance.** The Committee should review and discuss progress against objectives for the Senior Post Holders in the closed session.	

	TO DISCUSS AND APPROVE/RECOMMEND	
6)	i. **Membership** Current governor membership, terms of office and structure to review and approve **AGREED: THE SGR COMMITTEE APPROVED THE CURRENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE.**	
	ii. **Review of co-opted members for each committee to support succession planning**	
	David Warnes had met with Kate Wills, CEO at Coastland College in Weymouth. She seeks, like Chelmsford College, to strengthen her Quality Committee. The proposal from this meeting is that either Kate or her Deputy become a co-opted member on our Quality Committee and either David Warnes or Debbie Garroway do the same for Coastland College.	
	Christian Norman supported the idea and had suggested to Sarah Atkinson that she become Chair of the Quality and Learners' Committee.	
	AGREED: THE SGR AGREED THAT THE PROPOSED 'SKILL EXCHANGE' ON THE QUALITY COMMITTEE FOR CHELMSFORD AND COASTLAND COLLEGE BE PROPOSED TO THE BOARD.	
	The DoG suggested that the idea might be expanded to other committees sharing governors with other colleges if the 'pilot' proved successful.	
	Action: RHB to contact Sarah Atkinson to explore the possibility that she become Chair of the Quality and Learners' Committee.	**RHB**
	The Committee agreed that co-opted members should receive PDF pack for the meetings and not have access to the GVO.	
	iii. **Development Day agenda** It was agreed that the format is appropriate for the day. The Vice Chairs will run the breakout sessions on governor expectations.	
	ACTION: RHB to create breakout session introductory slides and exercise	**RHB**
	One governor welcomed the chance to meet the same groups on the learning walks as before to enable the Board to monitor progress and growth. Others would like the chance to meet new groups. This will be accommodated according to expressed preferences.	
	ACTION: DW will produce a 'you said, we did' briefing which should be prepared for governors in order that they can report listening and where possible progress to learners.	**DW**
	ACTION: RHB to amend programme to: **12.30-13.30 lunch with staff council.** **13.00 Reflections back in the room.**	**RHB**

7)	**Governance improvement** **I. Governance self-assessment** The DoG reminded the Committee that they had approved the matrix of self-assessment activities for 2025-6. The activities are ongoing and a report will be made at year-end. **II. Governance improvement plan** This is updated for noting since the November Development Day. It will be sent to members with the February Development Day agenda and Sheila will report feedback. It was agreed that this document should be shorter and more focused. **Action: RHB to review the Governance Improvement Plan to summarise items and improve focus.** **III. External Board Review invitation to tender draft** **AGREED: THE SGR COMMITTEE AGREED THAT THE SCOPE FOR THE ERB INVITATION TO TENDER WAS APPROPRIATE AND INSTRUCTED THE DOG TO INVITE RESPONSES.** **ACTION: RHB to send the list of Board reviewers to SGR members for feedback.** Governors suggested that the scope should make clear that the Board has an intention to move from ‘good’ to ‘great’ and wishes to perform at a higher standard and support the institution on its journey to excellence. **ACTION: RHB to amend the EBR scope to include the additional phrases on aspiration of the Board to move from ‘good’ to ‘great’.** **Iv - Case study – confidentiality breach** Governors expressed concern that the ‘rumour’ centred on SPH pay was still being discussed in the College. DW said that the union was very open and only mentioned it once. They did not use it as leverage and acted professionally. A governor added that the information may not emanate from the College as the mainstream press often shares information on pay and bonuses and this is discussed in colleges in which it is not accurate. Rachael Cornwall shared her professional view that there is always rumour and so it is not appropriate to continue to discuss it. She suggested that the Committee and Board just draw a line and move on. The necessary steps have been taken to secure the GVO. The DoG apologised for the misunderstanding that had led the team to believe that ‘locking’ a folder of information would also make the contents confidential. **ACTION: RHB will share the case study on confidentiality with all Board members as background reading as a matter for information.**	 **RHB** **RHB** **RHB** **RHB**
8)	**Information** i. **Advice note –** key messages from the FE Commissioner II. **Briefings** for October, November and December 2025	

	The SGR Committee noted these items.	
9)	**Any Other Business** None has been notified to the Director of Governance.	
10)	**Confidential Part B – this item was taken as a confidential minute**	
11)	**Date of next meeting** **The meeting ended at 17.00** The next meeting will be Tuesday 12 May 2026 at 16.00	