

**Minutes of the Governance and Search committee meeting GSC20.2 held on Tuesday 19 January 2021
Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge**

Present: Alison Miles (GSC Chair), Anne Adamson, Yolanda Botham, Charlie Brown, Karen Everitt and Ian Wilson

In attendance: Tinashe Chitakasha (Governance Assistant)

Clerk: Anne-Marie Diaper

Ref **Actions:**

GSC20.2.1 Apologies for absence
None

GSC20.2.2 Declarations of Interest
None

GSC20.2.3 Request for any other business
None

GSC20.2.4 Minutes of the meeting GSC20.1. held on 3 November 2020, and GSC20.x (additional meeting) held on Wednesday 9 December 2020
With no amendments, the minutes of the GSC20.1 and the GSC20.x meetings were both approved as a true and accurate record of the meetings.

GSC20.2.5 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda
GSC20.1.7 Conflicts. It was agreed, following a short discussion at the recent Board meeting, that the committee would consider this again. The committee reviewed the discussion at the Board on 8 December along with some key points raised since by a Governor who was not a GSC member.

Committee members and the Clerk put forward views about the risks and perceptions, notwithstanding the perceived or real ‘conflicts’, created by members having Board membership of numerous educational institutions in one locality, alongside the benefits of creating a diverse governing body for LRSFC with a wide range of individual views and perspectives.

Charlie Brown joined the meeting at 4.45pm.

The committee agreed that it was not the intention to prohibit LRSFC Board members from being members of any other educational institution, but by strengthening the Conflicts of Interest policy, by taking a pragmatic approach, and by clarifying that each case would be likely to be different and so should be taken on merit, it was possible to minimise any unintentional negative consequences from such scenarios.

Ref	The committee agreed that the Clerk should work offline with GSC Governors and draft appropriate amendments for the Conflict of Interests policy, for Board consideration in March.	Actions: Clerk/ Board
GSC20.2.6	<p>Board composition and Governor vacancy review, including succession planning</p> <p>The paper for the committee covered re-appointments, new applicants, upcoming vacancies, and elected offices.</p> <p>The Clerk prompted the committee to consider the re-appointment of Independent Governor, Audit committee Chair Maria Ferguson, who was approaching the end of her first term of office. The committee carefully considered this and asked the Clerk to follow up directly with the Governor to ascertain whether she would like to remain for a second term. A recommendation may then go forward as appropriate at the 16 March Board meeting.</p>	Clerk/ Board
	<p><u>3 new prospective Governor candidates.</u> The committee considered 3 new applications from prospective candidates some of which had financial/accountancy or educational backgrounds. The committee was pleased to receive such rich applications and asked the Clerk to set up interviews (by VC) for all 3 candidates.</p>	Clerk
	<p><u>Elected offices.</u> The Clerk had briefed the committee of the circumstances surrounding the resignation of Ciara Moore, in early December. Since then further activity had led to the successful election of Steve Fosher as Parent Governor. His term of office would be from 15 December 2021 until July 2022.</p>	
GSC20.2.7	<p>Update on Governor training in 2020-21 inc Governor training/strategy day</p> <p>Whole Corporation training sessions had taken place at the October and December Board meetings (Safeguarding and then Equality & Diversity respectively). The Governors conveyed their thanks to the staff for these valuable training sessions.</p> <p>The committee considered the upcoming training/training day (February) and pondered over an additional session to occur later in the year. It had not been possible to identify a strategy specialist or futureologist within budget as discussed at the last meeting, plus the committee felt the latest curriculum reform of AGQs seemed to be more of a pressing matter for the Corporation and something on which Governors might best have an early session.</p> <p>The committee discussed a February half day virtual session (3 hours max with a break in between) on curriculum strategy/reform, covering AGQs and T-levels. The Principal and Vice Principal would lead sessions and share briefings and background reading (AoC and SFCA briefings) but the day overall with breakout sessions would provide good education/training for Governors to later contribute towards strategic decisions. The sessions would be likely to include some points picked up in the recent SFCA winter conference.</p>	

Ref

Actions:

The meeting touched on other matters, such as risk assurance, cyber essentials and GDPR, that might involve reading, or online modules, with a deadline to be set for Corporation members, some of which were likely to be mandatory.

Clerk

AoC/SFCA training. SFCA webinars continued to run, with mixed reviews. Sessions were available either live or to watch as a recorded session, afterwards. The Clerk reminded the committee that the AoC governance development programme (AoC GDP) provided comprehensive and relevant online learning, and included a Safeguarding module tailored to FE. **Governors agreed £200 was a cost effective approach and asked the Clerk to remind all Corporation members of how to access the SFCA and AoC programmes.**

Governor reviews. The Clerk was in the process of working with Governors and drafting paperwork for Governor reviews to occur during the current academic year. The Clerk asked the committee to consider a slightly different arrangement for the Corporation Chair review, since only one newly appointed Vice Chair was likely to be in post when he Corporation Chairs review was due. It was agreed that the co-opted member would lead the Chair's review on this occasion. The Clerk would coordinate according to the policy.

GSC20.2.8 Governor visits 2020-21

The Clerk asked the committee to give a steer on visits possible during the current academic year, in view of a 3rd lockdown currently, and College operating fully remotely, and how and when they might be conducted.

Governors were keen to continue to demonstrate support to the College. Suggestions for Governor involvement included meetings with support departments (marketing, admissions, guidance, registry, student volunteering coordinator). A Governor suggested a visit to an online lesson. The Principal and Governors agreed that visits were best carried forward to the spring.

The Principal suggested that 'governance' sessions for new staff should be inbuilt to staff induction, and those sessions could be opened up to any College employee. This was supported by the committee and the Clerk.

GSC20.2.9 Governor review and development scheme (GRD) update

The committee was presented with an updated GRD Policy and procedure, with amendments shown as track changes, for Board approval.

The committee discussed the proposed amendments, and suggested a couple of further tweaks, and then agreed to recommend the policy/procedure for Board approval.

Board

Ref		Actions:
GSC20.2.10	<p>Committee review of key policies <u>Impropriety policy/procedure</u>. The Clerk brought forward a policy due for review. She asked the committee to consider in the light of other policies in place eg. the Code of Conduct for Corporation members, Whistleblowing policy and the Conflict of Interests policy and others, what more this policy contributed to effective governance. The committee agreed. As withdrawing such a policy was a Board consideration, the committee suggested the Clerk check that other policies covered all eventualities, at which point the committee would recommend to the Board that the policy be withdrawn.</p>	Board
GSC20.2.11	<p>Governance Improvement plan (GIP) 2020/21 The committee reviewed the updated GIP, focussing on areas relevant for the GSC. A couple of amendments were suggested. The committee touched on the timeframe for feedback from surveys on remote learning; policy review with work to be done on this in the various committees, and the Principal commented that policies may be brought for committee/Board review on the basis of risk.</p> <p>On Section 11, the Corporation Chair commented that he hoped that Easter would be a suitable timeframe for an evaluative report (governance SAR/annual report).</p> <p>On section 13 the committee suggested the Clerk work up a briefing note for Corporation members, working with the College DP Officer, on the proper handling, storage and disposal of hard copy and electronic data.</p>	Clerk
GSC20.2.12	<p>Any other business None</p>	
GSC20.2.13	<p>Date of next meeting <i>Tuesday 11 May 2021, 4.30 pm</i></p>	