

**Minutes of the Governance and Search committee meeting GSC22.2 held on Tuesday 10 January 2023,
Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge**

Present: Gemma Long (GSC Chair), Gerry Bolton, Yolanda Botham (Principal) and Karen Everitt

Clerk: Anne-Marie Diaper

Ref

GSC22.2.1 Apologies for absence
None.

GSC22.2.2 Declarations of Interest
None

GSC22.2.3 Request for any other business
None

GSC22.2.4 Minutes of the meeting GSC22.1 held on Tuesday 15 November 2022
With no suggested amendments, the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

GSC22.2.5 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda
The GSC Chair asked about deputy committee Chair roles, and the Clerk suggested that this be revisited later in the academic year.

Agenda

GSC22.2.6 Board composition and Governor vacancy review, including succession planning
The Clerk spoke to her written paper which gave an overview of the Board composition and current committee membership.

The Clerk reminded the GSC that there were presently two Independent Governor vacancies, with one application pending (with an interview date scheduled for 24 January). The committee touched on diversity in connection with recruitment and the Clerk shared her approach for taking affirmative action. Other than the all staff Governor vacancy (elected office) which would arise in March 2023 and the teaching staff Governor coming to the end of his 4-term of office in October 2023, no other vacancies were expected.

The Corporation Chair was keen to proactively succession plan so to avoid future 'cliff edge' scenarios. Governors would be asked to continue to identify in their personal and professional networks possible candidates.

The GSC noted that this committee was next to receive new members, due to the low numbers/number of vacancies. Subsequently the Audit committee would be in focus for the remaining Independent Governor member, as and when recruited.

GSC22.2.7 Governor development

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Wednesday 8 February 2023 Governor training/strategy day. Following a recent meeting between the Principal and the Clerk, and first draft of the strategy day agenda had been drafted and was now presented for committee consideration. A guest speaker had been identified/booked. An accessible venue had been secured, with suitable facilities.

Governors commented on the timing and the order of the sessions. Committee members were keen to make the day interactive and the sessions would need to be planned in detail to take account of a range of recent and imminent strategic developments, whilst also taking account of Governors own identified training needs. The GSC discussed the core of strategy day to centre around the strategic direction of the College. It was agreed to provide a range of pre-reading in order to prompt questions from Governors, then to determine the order of the day. The Principal intended to do more work with her senior team to flesh out the session and the running order.

Governors discussed the possible sessions: scene setting by the guest speaker (to include the national picture), something on local developments affecting LRSFC, curriculum reform briefing, and a relevant update on the financial position. There had been key policy changes at a national level since the strategic future working group (SFWG) had made a recommendation, which resulted in a Board decision on May 2022, and the Corporation needed to be briefed on these policy changes, raising some important questions again about the strategic direction of travel for the College going forward. It was unlikely that any key strategic decision would need to be made in February 2023.

Update on R&D scheme. The Clerk had provided a spreadsheet detailing which Governors were due their review. The Clerk had allocated responsibility for the 9 Governors and the paperwork had been circulated to 6 of those already. A Governor suggested two small amendments so that Governors would have served at least one academic year cycle, before having to undergo a formal review.

Governor visits. The Clerk briefed the meeting on approach for scheduling Governor visits and informed the meeting that Governors had now been asked to express an interest in the various departments to enable visits to occur during the current academic year. The meeting touched on some of the departments listed, in terms of priority. Governors who had doubled-up for recent visits had found it helpful.

This agenda item touched on new Governor induction which was scheduled for 27 January.

GSC22.2.8

Governance

Governance SAR for 2021/22. The Clerk had drawn together a summary template of the governance self-assessment for 2021/22. The report showed a range of matters to be taken forward as a governance improvement plan with input from all committees.

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The meeting touched on the two sections of the template where no text had been added, noting that this document would be provided as part of the external review of governance, due to be completed by July 2024. The template/summary was not intended to be a narrative presentation of all work covered by the committees. It would be updated before each committee meeting and Board.

External review of governance preparation, review draft specification/scope, and list of providers. The Clerk had worked up a initial draft outline of possible governance review elements/specification, and a list of independent providers, for committee consumption. The meeting discussed the timeframe and the various possible independent firms that might be approached to do the work (with an example specification being included on the file, received on the date of this meeting). The committee was keen that a provider be chosen with experience of reviewing SFCs, using a selection approach similar to that for other auditors, based on availability, experience, cost, expertise etc. The committee discussed options for obtaining a range of specifications.

The draft outline/specification/scope was discussed. The Clerk agreed to check it against the DfE guidance for external reviews which was not prescriptive about the outcome of a review. The committee was keen that the independent review process added value, and would possibly support help identify improvements in governance at the College.

The 8 February strategy event would be a good opportunity to update Governors on the external review process progress.

GSC22.2.9 Review risks

The committee touched on the one relevant risk, 1.3, rated medium but which at the last meeting was more likely to be a low risk.

Governors discussed to what extent the external review of governance could be deemed as a risk (not included presently in the College operational risk register). The committee noted that it was not an inspection and may not result in an overall judgement but was something which would suffice to complement the 'governance' review cycle already in place at LRSFC. As an external requirement, the Principal agreed to liaise with the Finance Director (as risk management process lead in College) and the risk group about adding it to the College risk register.

Principal

GSC22.2.10 Any other business

None

GSC22.2.11 Date of next meeting

GSC22.3 Tuesday 25 April 2023, 5pm.